

APPENDIX I: Statement of Faith

Statement of Faith of Providence Church (with the Abstract of Principles (1858) as its base)

I. The Scriptures

The Scriptures were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience. The Bible's 39 Old Testament books and the 27 New Testament books are regarded as inerrant and infallible in their respective Hebrew and Greek original manuscripts.

II. God

There is but one God, the Maker, Preserver and Ruler of all things, having in and of Himself, all perfections, and being infinite in them all; and to Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence and obedience.

III. The Trinity

God is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being. Each person of the trinity is co-equal and co-eternal and there is perfect unity and harmony within.

IV. Providence

God from eternity, decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and all events; yet He does so in a manner that He is neither the author nor approver of sin nor does He destroy the free agency and responsibility of intelligent creatures.

V. Election

Election is God's unconditional eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life- not because of foreseen merit in them, but of His mere mercy in Christ—in consequence of which choice they are called, justified and glorified.

VI. The Fall of Man

God originally created humanity in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, Adam transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby all of humanity were cursed and his posterity inherit a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law and are under condemnation. All our actual transgressions proceed from this original corruption, by which we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and totally inclined to all evil.

VII. The Mediator

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the divinely appointed mediator between God and humanity. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He ever lives to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

VIII. Regeneration

Regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who brings to life the dead in trespasses and sins enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone, apart from which humanity is powerless to positively respond to God.

IX. Repentance

Repentance is an evangelical grace, wherein a person, by the Holy Spirit, is made sensible of the manifold evil of his sin and humbles himself with godly sorrow, detestation of his sin, and self-aborrence. The consequence of which is a purpose and endeavor to turn from sin and walk before God so as to please Him in all things.

X. Faith

Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatsoever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness.

XI. Justification

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners, who believe in Christ, from all sin, through the satisfaction that Christ has made; not for anything wrought in them or done by them; but on account to the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith.

XII. Sanctification

Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified, by God's word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of Divine strength, which all saints seek to obtain, pressing after a heavenly life in obedience to all Christ's commands.

XIII. Perseverance of the Saints

Those whom God has accepted in the Beloved, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

XIV. The Church

The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular societies or churches; and to each of these churches He has given needful authority for administering that order, discipline and worship which he has appointed. As Christ's body, the church exists to glorify God in all things. The regular officers of a Church are bishops or elders, and deacons.

XV. Baptism

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein each is immersed in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of his giving himself up to God, to live and walk in newness of life. While not required for salvation, it is a prerequisite to church fellowship, and to participation in the Lord's Supper.

XVI. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and wine, and to be observed by His churches till the end of the world. It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate His death, to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge and renewal of their communion with him, and of their church fellowship.

XVII. The Lord's Day

The Lord's Day is a Christian institution for regular observance, and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private.

XVIII. Liberty of Conscience

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left us free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His word, or not contained in it. Because civil authorities are ordained of God, Christians must obey all laws to the extent they don't conflict with Scripture, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

XIX. The Resurrection

Human bodies after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God—the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked, to be reserved under darkness to the judgment. At the last day when the Lord Jesus returns in bodily form, the bodies of all the dead, both just and unjust, will be raised.

XX. The Judgment

God has appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when every one shall receive according to his deeds: the wicked, those apart from Christ, shall go into everlasting punishment; the righteous, those who are justified, into everlasting life.