

A Personal Statement of Faith

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I believe in an all-powerful God who is beyond our ability to comprehend and by whose will all things were created for God's glory. All theology, doctrine, and confessions are an attempt to know this God. Any time we stray from the purpose of knowing God, we lose our theology.

I believe that God is love as expressed in Holy Scripture: "Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love." (1 John 4:8). The love of God draws God to know us and because of that love, God created us - male and female - in God's image. God loves us so much, God created us with free will which means we can love God or we can choose to reject God. It is only through our choice to love God freely that desires are truly expressed and God is truly known.

I believe that humanity ultimately rejected a personal and intimate relationship with God. God chose to restore this relationship by becoming like us and walking among us as both human and divine. Through his atonement for sins he did not commit, Jesus became the means by which a fallen humanity can come back to a full relationship with God. Crucified, Jesus paid the price for our sin; risen, Jesus reigns with God in heaven for they are one God.

As we seek to live our lives in relationship with a God who is both personal and yet completely incomprehensible, we seek the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit upholds us by making us aware of God's presence in our lives. Through the Holy Spirit, God is with us in all times including joyous times when God rejoices with us and difficult times when God upholds us.

As a "priesthood of all believers", we have the privilege and joy of being connected to God through prayer which is the means by which we share all times and experiences of our lives with God as we would with someone on earth. Prayer is listening as well as talking. It is praising God as well as petitioning and even pleading with God. Prayer is sharing with God the intimacy of our lives and pouring out the very anguish of our souls.

The Church, as the earthly Body of Christ, is connected to God in and through sacraments which were instituted by Jesus himself. These sacraments have many levels of depth and familiarity. Baptism by water is an outward sign of an inward reality that a person has come to a relationship with God. The means of baptism is not important so much as the person acknowledges that they have entered into a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The Lord's Supper was given by Jesus as a memorial of his sacrifice. As believers, we share in this meal as a means of remaining in relationship

with Jesus and with each other. In sharing in this meal, we acknowledge our hope for the day when we share in the heavenly feast in God's presence.

I believe it is the ultimate desire of God to know us and be known by us in a deep, personal, and intimate relationship. The first point of catechism is that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy God forever. The pursuit of intimacy with God should be the belief and desire of every believer thus forming the basis of our theology.