

ORDINATION STATEMENT OF REV. JOHN P. JOHNSTON

I believe the Bible to be God's word, and that it is the final revelation from God. Nature is a revelation from God but does not supply the knowledge a sinner needs. The Bible being a much more specific revelation of the character of God.

I start with Bibliology because all my knowledge, that is a ground of my faith, comes from the scripture. Of course, natural theology does afford much ground for faith, I only say my faith rests in God's word.

I accept as canon those books of both the Old and New Testaments which has historically been accepted by God's people and as found in the King James Authorized Version. I receive this not only by tradition but also because these books support each other in history and in doctrine. The many proofs do not convince me as much as the testimony of the Spirit. However, I find the argument from fulfilled prophecy irrefutable.

I believe the Scripture to be the Word of God as II Tim. 3:16 says. On the subject of inspiration, I do not hold to a natural or intuition theory, nor to a mechanical, nor to an illumination view of inspiration. I believe the orthodox view of verbal, plenary inspiration. By that I mean that the Word of God is fully and equally inspired in all its parts also that each word was chosen by God. I believe I Peter 1:21 tells us that the men were controlled by God in such a way to render the writing infallible but yet did not ignore the man.

I believe the Bible to be a revelation from God about God.

I believe the Bible contains all we need to know concerning our present relationship to God.

THEOLOGY

I believe in the existence of one God, who is both, personal & eternal. He is the Creator & Sustainer of all things.

God is one in essence & being. "Hear, O Israel the Lord our God is one Lord." Deut. 6:4

There is no God besides the one true God. The mode of God's existence is spiritual - "God is spirit," John 4:24 and He is an infinite spirit. That is, there are no boundaries to God. God, being a spirit, cannot be discovered by physical means. God is a personal God, by that I mean that God has personality - He has will, intellect and self-consciousness, emotion.

The attributes of God are perhaps without number since He is an infinite being, but He has chosen to reveal some to us.

Putting His attributes in two classes, natural and moral, we say the natural attributes pertain to His being and His moral attributes pertain to His righteousness.

Under His natural attributes I would list His self-existence, eternity, unity, immutability, omnipresence (while some claim that has to do with creation), omnipotence & his omniscience.

Under His moral attributes I would list His goodness (to all His creation), justice, truthfulness, love, and wisdom, Holiness.

I believe love is an attribute rather than a definition of God. "God is love" of I John 4:8 should be taken to describe the character of God rather than the being of God.

I believe that in the Godhead there exist at least 3 persons. These 3 persons are one God as we see in Matt. 28:19 where name is singular. "... In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Spirit." These 3 persons are the same in substance and equal in glory. Their names indicate a covenant relationship rather than inequality in glory or difference in being.

I believe the 3 persons are distinct and not just one God in 3 different relationships, ie. the Father, the Son & the Holy Spirit co-exist as one. In covenant relationship there may be subordination and is a question of office not of nature.

CHRISTOLOGY

I believe that the Lord Jesus is God. I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is man. I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the God-man.

I believe that as the Son of God, the Lord as an eternal existence, that He is and always was the Son of God; that is His covenant relationship in the God head.

That is relation to creation, He is creator and sustainer of all things.

That in a point in time He took upon Himself humanity, both body and soul, so that He is every bit man. That in this union He retained His personality so that He is one person, yet His natures remain unconfounded. His natures being, one human, one divine. This union of Deity with humanity is the incarnation. In the incarnation both the body and soul was prepared by an immediate act of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary. This preparation was in such a way so that the scripture says He was "made of a woman" and that He was "conceived" in the Virgin Mary.

I believe the humiliation of Christ consisted not in the laying aside of Deity, but rather in laying aside His glory. In this act He laid aside the independent use of His Divine attributes. In His humiliation He became subject to the Holy Spirit and worked by that Person; "How that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power," Acts 10:38. This humiliation consisted further in His voluntary surrender of His Divine powers in becoming obedient unto death, Phil. 2:8.

I believe, in His exaltation, He has resumed the independent exercise of His attributes. Also, that He has withdrawn any limitations of the communication of His divine to His human nature.

I believe the offices of Christ to be threefold, prophet, priest and king. I believe the prophetic office of Christ was exercised in His revealing God to men. That as prophet He revealed God to men prior to the incarnation, but His office as prophet was more specific and in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies in His visible presence. In His office as priest He made the perfect sacrifice for sins, when He voluntarily laid down His life for sinners. That He now intercedes for His elect on the basis of His atonement. Prior to death He interceded on the basis of His death also, John 17. That now our High Priest is in the most Holy place, making intercession for us and invites us to come to Him for grace to help in time of need.

That as King He rules in the hearts of His subjects, that someday His office will be visible manifest to the whole world. That He is coming again as "King of Kings," Rev. 19:16; and He will rule the earth from "the throne of His father David."

I believe that Christ died as a substitute for sinners, that His death was vicarious. That in this vicarious death satisfaction was made to God. This satisfaction being penal, it required the blood of the guilty, and Christ was made sin for us, II Cor. 5:12. I believe that this satisfaction was to God to satisfy the demands of a violated, Holy Law. This satisfaction was not identical, not identical in nature nor degree. This satisfaction was equivalent in that God can accept it on the behalf of any believing sinner. The death of Christ is sufficient motive for God to invite all sinners unto Himself and that in virtue of the intrinsic value of the death of Christ. In its merit or worth the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient to save every and all sinners. In its purpose we see that Christ died to "give eternal life to as many as thou (the Father) has given Him" John 17:2. And that "He shall see the travail of His soul" Isaiah 53:11.

I believe in the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. That the body that was buried by His friends was glorified and came out of the tomb. That His resurrection is the sign of the satisfaction

of the most Holy Law. That in His resurrection, He is the "first born from the dead" Col. 1:18, and as such is the guarantee of the resurrection of all men. That He took up His own life.

PNEUMATOLOGY

I believe the Holy Spirit to be a divine person. That He is truly God and that He is a real person. That the Holy Spirit was active in the creation and is active in the sustaining of it. The Holy Spirit is active in sustaining man.

I believe that the Holy Spirit's ministry to the saints of the prior dispensation was that of regenerating, indwelling and fitting men for special functions. That His ministry in this dispensation is His work in relation to the finished work of Christ on the cross; that He witnesses to the believers as sons of God; that His work is not so much a national object as it is concerned with the church.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the author of the Holy Scriptures; that He moved men to write independent of their own thinking, I Pet. 1:10-12, and II Pet. 2:21.

That in relationship to the church, He was the element in the baptism of the church on the day of Pentecost. That He confers gifts and graces upon individual believers for service in the church. I believe the Holy Spirit appoints the place of service for all Christians. That He is the administrator of the church in all things. The Holy Spirit is truly the Vicar of Christ.

In relation to the unsaved the Holy Spirit convicts of sin. He is the one informing the heathen that there is a God. In relation to the elect, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and to convict of righteousness. It is the Holy Spirit that reveals Christ to the heart, creating faith within.

ANTHROPOLOGY

I believe that man has his origin in an immediate creative act of God. that God created one man, Adam from the dust of the earth and from Adam created Woman. I believe that all men have a common origin and are therefore of common species. The fact that multiple races exist and therefore were in the past developed or distinguished by God even though they have Adam as their progenitor. Acts 17:26.

I believe that in the original state, man was moral and righteous so that He was inclined to obey God. That he had a free will so that he could choose to sin and he did.

I believe that Adam was placed in paradise as the federal head or representative of all men. That in his sin, all men became under legal condemnation. This identification is spoken of in Romans 5:12, "All have sinned ..." and the condemnation in Romans 5:18 where it is said "... by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation"

I believe that in the fall Adam lost his federal headship so that neither his future sins nor his future repentance was imputed to his posterity.

I believe that posterity of Adam not only inherited the guilt of Adam's sin but also inherited his fallen nature; So that in the present state, unregenerate man has a nature that is totally depraved, by thee we mean depraved in all its faculties. That in the present condition man "cannot please God," Romans 8:7. Even so in this condition man may do things which are commendable by society.

I believe that when man is born again, he receives a new principle in which he desires to please God for good and right motives. That this new state is not the same as the original as seen in the fact that there was no struggle from within against Holiness.

I believe in the final state the elect will not be as Adam in that they will be confirmed in Holiness.

I believe that man has a material part and an immaterial part. The material part being the physical part of man. The immaterial being the spirit and soul of man.

I believe that in the fall that the death pronounced by God was more than merely a legal pronouncement, but was such that man is now spiritually dead: that in regeneration such terms are

used, "quicken," "made alive," "born again," and the giving of a "new spirit;" these new terms used to describe "new born ones," "new creatures" and the "new man." That with such action involved one would think that this is a radical difference between the unconverted and the converted. However the lack of power to believe unto salvation lies not in the absence of any faculties but in the unwillingness, John 5:40.

Concerning the origin of the soul of man I favor the traditional theory. This seems to be more in harmony with the scripture and with systematic theology.

I believe that in the original creation man was created in the image of God. This image was natural and moral but certainly not physical. God is spirit. In the fall this image is defaced but not obliterated.

I believe that man has an endless existence. This existence is spiritual and is conscience after death. That someday the bodies of all men will be reunited to their souls and exist as body and soul in eternity.

HAMARTIOLOGY

I believe that sin is a missing the mark or standard. That as an act, sin fails to measure up the Holy requirements of God. It is in this sense that it is called transgressing. Also sin is a nature in which a person is not guided by the principle of the Lawgiver, I John 3:4. (A.S.V.) I believe sin is also a state and to be in the state of sin is to be under the condemnation occurred by sin. John 8:24, ". . . ye shall die in your sins."

Sin apparently entered the universe when Satan set His will against God, Isaiah 14.

Sin entered the human race when Adam and Eve set their will against God's will.

Sin is discovered by the law, Rom. 3:20. "The wages of sin is death." The eternal aspect of the punishment of sin is to be forever separated from all that is good.

ANGELOLOGY

I Believe in the existence of angels. Angels are, apparently, the immediate creation of God and do not reproduce. God created the angels as spirit beings with personality. The angels are described as being a higher order of creation than man. One of these angels, Lucifer, who was of high office, became self-willed and fell from his sinless estate. In his fall Satan, or Lucifer, took a large part, apparently one third, of the angels of God with him to be his angels.

At the present time Satan and his angels are active in their battle against God and His people. Satan and his angels will be judged after the millennium.

The good angels have as their function the worship and service of God. In the service of God, one of their functions is ministering to the elect of God.

While man was created lower than the angels, yet in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, man is exalted above them so that their worship of God is centered on Christ Jesus.

SOTERIOLOGY

I believe that salvation is according to divine election. Election is that eternal act of God by which, in His sovereign pleasure and on account of no foreseen merit in them, He chooses certain, out of a number of sinful men, to be recipients of the special grace of His spirit and so to be made voluntary partakers of Christ's salvation.

God has the right to bestow more grace upon one subject than upon another; grace being unmerited favor to sinners. Rom. 9:20, 21 & Matt. 20: 12-15

I believe that men are called unto salvation and that calling is that act of God by which men are invited to receive salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There are two types of calling, one general and one special. The general call is to all men and is by providence, by the Word and by His

Spirit. That this call is sincere one only needs to consider that God has ". . . no pleasure in the death of the wicked," Ezek. 33:11; and that God loves righteousness; and it is the duty of all men repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore we can say that God sincerely desires the salvation of all.

The special call we would call efficacious or irresistible. By efficacious we mean that the operation of God is the origination cause of that new disposition of the affections and that new activity of the will by which the sinner accepts Christ. By irresistible we mean that when a man is so acted on that he will receive Christ, not that there is an outward constraint to do so. The cause is not in the response of the will to the presentation of motives by God, nor in any mere co-operation of the will of man with the will of God, but is an almighty act of God in the will of man, by which freedom to choose God as its end is restored and rightly exercised, John 1:12 & 13.

I believe that in order for sinners to be saved they must be born again or regenerated. Regeneration is the communication of the divine nature to man by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word and is evidenced by man's voluntary obedience in repentance and faith.

I believe the efficient cause of regeneration is the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit and that the Word is the instrument. This act of God is in accord with man's mental constitution and volition.

I believe that conversion is the voluntary act of man whereby he turns from sin to Christ. The turning from sin we call repentance. I believe that repentance, being essentially a change of mind in which sinners turn from, it involves a change of view, a change of feeling, and a change of purpose. The intellectual element recognizes sin as committed against goodness and justice. The change in purpose is that inward turning from sin to seek pardon and cleansing.

I believe that faith is that voluntary change in the mind of the sinner in which he turns to Christ. Being a change of mind it involves a change of view, a change of feeling and a change of purpose. The intellectual element recognizes God's truth as the ground for faith and salvation.

The emotional element is assent and admiration of God's power and grace in Jesus Christ as relating to the needs of the soul. The voluntary element is the active trusting the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is the calling, looking, committing, and receiving that is spoken of in the scripture.

Faith has the Lord Jesus Christ as its object, the Word of Promise as its ground and good works as its fruit.

I believe that justification is that judicial act of God by which, on account of Christ, to whom the sinner is united by faith, He declares that sinner no longer under the condemnation of the Holy law, but is restored to His favor. Justification involves the forgiveness of sins and the removal of guilt and punishment. Justification further involves the imputation of divine righteousness and a restoration to a position of favor. The restoration to a position of favor is sometimes called adoption and is termed sonship, John 1:12, Eph. 1:5, Romans 8:23, Gal. 4:4, 5. One of the best illustrations of justification is seen in Zechariah 3:4, "I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee; I will clothe thee with rich apparel."

We are justified by faith, not because faith is a work by which we merit justification, nor is faith accepted as an equivalent to obedience; but because we are united to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. Hence, we are not said to be justified on account of faith but by faith or through faith. Faith is the instrumental cause of justification while the grace of God is the efficient cause. The person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ is the merit and ground of justification.

I believe that sanctification is the separation and dedication of a person or object to and for God, to belong wholly to Him and to be used for His glory. There is a positional element in which, at conversion, the believer is set apart for the service of God. There is an experimental element which is progressive in which the believer is set apart from the world and sin. In the former sense sanctification is complete (Heb. 10:10) in the latter sense it is in degrees (I Thess. 4:3 & 4). The

sanctification of the believer will be complete at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (I Thess. 5:23). From the human side sanctification is accomplished in the life of the believer through Bible study and prayer.

ECCLESIOLOGY

I believe that the Church is a company of regenerate persons who voluntarily unite themselves together for the purpose of carrying out the will of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not only practical but necessary for a Church to be governed by the precepts and examples of the New Testament, that no Church has the right to set up Church government different than those principals.

I believe that membership in the Church is to be preceded by conversion and baptism. I believe that the model Church or New Testament Church is characterized by the following:

Baptism by immersion of believers to set forth the finality of the work of Christ. If immersion is not possible, then pouring of blessed pure water over the person's head each three times in the name of The +Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. These things also be done with Christenings

The autonomy of the Church in which Christ is the head and the Holy Spirit the administrator. That fellowship with Churches of like faith is wise as long as each Church retains its autonomy.

The priesthood of the believer where Christ Jesus is the only mediator between God and man. That as priests we not only have the privilege of access to God but the duty to intercede for one another.

That there are two ordinances to be continued in the Church, baptism and the Lord's supper. The Lord's supper is a commemoration of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The prerequisites to the Lord's supper is an orderly walk which includes, conversion, baptism and Church membership.

Individual soul liberty in which each believer is responsible for what he believes and practices.

Separation of Church and state where the Church does not dictate to the state and the state does not have authority over the Church except in those matters which are pertinent to state responsibility. Also by its preaching of righteousness the church should have great influence upon the state.

Three offices, Bishops, Priest and Deacons.

The Bishop is appointed by the Holy Spirit and is recognized by the Archbishops of the Church. The Priest is appointed by the Holy Spirit through the Bishops Apostolic Succession of Laying of the hands and is recognized by the Church. The deacons are also appointed by the Bishops Apostolic Succession of Laying of the hands and is recognized by the Church for specific needs. Neither office is a ruling office for the Church is a self governing body. The Apostolic Succession is passed down starting with Jesus Christ and Saint Paul to the Bishops of the Church. Only the Bishop may ordain its Priest and Deacons. Jesus Christ is the head of the church, Not any man.

Salvation by grace through faith apart from works.

That in the Church there should be unity of faith and purpose. The purpose of the Church is to be custodian of and propagate the truth. I believe the Church to be the institution to reveal His glory, preach the gospel and comfort and edify the saints in this age.

ESCHATOLOGY

I believe in the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to establish a 1,000 year rule on the earth. Prior to this 1,000 year rule there will be a 7 year period known as the "Tribulation" period and the 70th week in Daniel 9.

This Tribulation period will be proceeded by the rapture in which all those who are saved, both the dead and the living, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. This rapture has a twofold purpose, one is to remove the institution of the Church so that the focus will be on the nation of Israel and on the nations; once again God's dealing with men will be a national matter. The other purpose will be

the judgment seat of Christ in which the saints will have their position assigned to them for the 1,000 year rule.

The Tribulation period is a period in which the anti-Christ is revealed and reigns. It is also a period in which Israel turns to the Lord Jesus Christ. At the close of the Tribulation the Lord will return to the earth, judge the nations and occupy the throne of David for 1,000 years. This reign of Christ will be a glorious reign in which the whole earth obeys and serves Him.

At the end of this time Satan, who had been bound at the commencement of the kingdom, will be loosed for a season and he will deceive the unregenerate and do battle with the Lord. This battle is climaxed with the 2nd resurrection and the judgment of the great white throne.

Concerning death, I believe that in physical death the soul is separated from the body, and the soul of the justified is conscious in the presence of the Lord, and the soul of the damned is conscious in a place of torment awaiting the final judgment.

Spiritual death is the separation of the soul from God. The second death is the separation of the reunited body and soul from God. The second death takes place after the millennium, when the bodies of the unjust will be resurrected and reunited with their spirit to stand before the great white throne.

I believe in the scriptures of Matthew:28:19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew:28:20: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

John Chapter 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and [that] your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

These are my beliefs and of my Christian faith with my signature and ordination of May 02, in the year of Our Lord 1998 , The Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Dallas, Texas and of my seminary ordination of Holy Cross Theological Seminary

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