

*A Statement of  
Scriptural and Confessional Principles*



**THE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
MISSOURI SYNOD**

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## I CHRIST AS SAVIOR AND LORD

**W**e believe, teach and confess that Jesus Christ is our Savior and Lord, and that through faith in Him we receive forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation. We confess that “our works cannot reconcile God or merit forgiveness of sins and grace, but that we obtain forgiveness and grace only by faith when we believe that we are received into favor for Christ’s sake, who alone has been ordained to be the mediator and propitiation through whom the Father is reconciled” (AC, XX, 9).

We believe that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven and that all who die without faith in Him are eternally damned. We believe that those who believe in Christ will enjoy a blissful relationship with Him during the interim between their death and His second coming, and that on the last day their bodies will be raised.

We therefore reject the following:

1. That we may operate on the assumption that there may be other ways of salvation than through faith in Jesus Christ.
2. That some persons who lack faith in Christ may be considered “anonymous Christians.”
3. That there is no eternal hell for unbelievers and ungodly men.

## II LAW AND GOSPEL

**W**e believe that the two chief doctrines of Holy Scripture, Law and Gospel, must be constantly and diligently proclaimed in the church of God until the end of the world, but with due distinction (FC, SD, V, 24).

The Law, as the expression of God’s immutable will, is to be used by the church to bring men to a knowledge of their sins as well as to provide Christians with instruction about good works (FC, SD, V, 17-18).

The Gospel receives the primary emphasis in the ministry of the New Testament, for it is the message that “God forgives them all their sins through Christ, accepts them for His sake as God’s children, and out of pure grace, without any merit of their own, justifies and saves them.” (FC, SD, V, 25)

We therefore reject the following:

1. That the Gospel is any message or action which brings good news to a bad situation.
2. That the Gospel is a norm or standard for the Christian life, or that the Gospel, in effect, imposes a new law upon the Christian.
3. That what God’s Law declares to be sinful (for example, adultery or theft) need not be regarded as sinful in all times and situations,
4. That Christians, as men who have been freed from the curse of the Law, no longer need the instruction of the Law to know what God’s will is for their life and conduct.

### III MISSION OF THE CHURCH

We believe, teach and confess that the primary mission of the church is to make disciples of every nation by bearing witness to Jesus Christ through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.

Other necessary activities of the church, such as ministering to men's physical needs, are to serve the church's primary mission and its goal that men will believe and confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

We therefore reject any views of the mission of the church which imply that an adequate or complete witness to Jesus Christ can be made without proclaiming or verbalizing the Gospel.

### IV HOLY SCRIPTURE

#### The Inspiration of Scripture

We believe, teach and confess that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit and that God is therefore the true Author of every word of Scripture. We acknowledge that there is a qualitative difference between the inspired witness of Holy Scripture in all its parts and words and the witness of every other form of human expression, making the Bible a unique book.

We therefore reject the following views:

1. That the Holy Scriptures are inspired only in the sense that all Christians are "inspired" to confess the lordship of Jesus Christ.
2. That the Holy Spirit did not inspire the actual words of the Biblical authors but merely provided these men with special guidance.
3. That only those matters in Holy Scripture were inspired by the Holy Spirit which directly pertain to Jesus Christ and man's salvation.
4. That noncanonical writings in the Christian tradition can be regarded as "inspired" in the same sense as Holy Scripture.
5. That portions of the New Testament witness to Jesus Christ contain imaginative additions, which had their origin in the early Christian community and do not present actual facts.

#### The Purpose of Scripture

We believe that all Scripture bears witness to Jesus Christ and that its primary purpose is to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. We therefore affirm that the Scriptures are rightly used only when they are read from the perspective of justification by faith and the proper distinction between Law and Gospel.

Since the saving work of Jesus Christ was accomplished through His personal entrance into our history and His genuinely historical life, death and resurrection, we acknowledge that the recognition of

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

the soteriological purpose of Scripture in no sense permits us to call into question or deny the historicity or factuality of matters recorded in the Bible.

We therefore reject the following views:

1. That knowing the facts and data presented in the Scripture, without relating them to Jesus Christ and His work of salvation, represents an adequate approach to Holy Scripture.
2. That the Old Testament, read on its own terms, does not bear witness to Jesus Christ.
3. That it is permissible to reject the historicity of events or the occurrence of miracles recorded in the Scriptures so long as there is no confusion of Law and Gospel.
4. That recognition of the primary purpose of Scripture makes it irrelevant whether such questions of fact as the following are answered in the affirmative: Were Adam and Eve real historical individuals? Did Israel cross the Red Sea on dry land? Did the brazen serpent miracle actually take place? Was Jesus really born of a virgin? Did Jesus perform all the miracles attributed to Him? Did Jesus' resurrection actually involve the return to life of His dead body?

### The Gospel and Holy Scripture (Material and Formal Principles)

We believe, teach and confess that the Gospel of the gracious justification of the sinner through faith in Jesus Christ is not only the chief doctrine of Holy Scripture and a basic presupposition for the interpretation of Scripture, but is the heart and center of our Christian faith and theology (material principle). We also believe, teach, and confess that only "the Word of God shall establish articles of faith" (SA, II, ii, 15), and that "the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged" (FC, Ep, Rule and Norm, 1) (formal principle). The Gospel, which is the center of our theology, is the Gospel to which the Scriptures bear witness, while the Scriptures from which we derive our theology direct us steadfastly to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We reject the following distortions of the relationship between the Gospel and the Bible (the material and formal principles):

1. That acceptance of the Bible as such, rather than the Gospel, is the heart and center of Christian faith and theology, and the way to eternal salvation.
2. That the Gospel, rather than Scripture, is the norm for appraising and judging all doctrines and teachers (as, for example, when a decision on the permissibility of ordaining women into the pastoral office is made on the basis of the "Gospel" rather than on the teaching of Scripture as such).
3. That the historicity or facticity of certain Biblical accounts (such as the Flood or the Fall) may be questioned, provided this does not distort the gospel.
4. That Christians need not accept matters taught in the Scriptures that are not a part of the "Gospel."

### The Authority of Scripture

We believe, teach and confess that because the Scriptures have God as their author, they possess both the divine power to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (causative author-

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

ity), as well as the divine authority to serve as the church's sole standard of doctrine and life (normative authority). We recognize that the authority of Scripture can be accepted only through faith and not merely by rational demonstration. As men of faith, we affirm not only that Holy Scripture is powerful and efficacious, but also that it is "the only judge, rule, and norm according to which, as the only touchstone, all doctrines should and must be understood, and judged as good or evil, right or wrong." (FC, Ep, Rule and Norm, 7)

We therefore reject the following views:

1. That the authority of Scripture is limited to its efficacy in bringing men to salvation in Jesus Christ.
2. That the authority of Scripture has reference only to what the Scriptures do (as means of grace) rather than to what they are (as the inspired Word of God).
3. That the Scriptures are authoritative for the doctrine and life of the church, not because of their character as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, but because they are the oldest available written sources for the history of ancient Israel and for the life and message of Jesus Christ, or because they were written by the chosen and appointed leaders of Israel and of the early church, or because the church declared them to be canonical.
4. That the Christian community in every age is directly inspired by the Holy Spirit and is therefore free to go beyond the doctrine of the prophets and apostles in determining the content of certain aspects of its faith and witness.

### The Canonical Text of Scripture

We believe, teach and confess that the authoritative Word for the church today is the canonical Word, not precanonical sources, forms or traditions, however useful the investigation of these possibilities may on occasion be for a clearer understanding of what the canonical text intends to say. We therefore reject the following views:

1. That there are various "meanings" of a Biblical text or pericope to be discovered at various stages of its precanonical history, or that the meaning a canonical text has now may differ from the meaning it had when it was first written.
2. That Biblical materials that are judged to be "authentic" (for example, "authentic" words of Jesus, "authentic" books of Paul, or "authentic" ideas of Moses) have greater authority than "non-authentic" Biblical statements.
3. That certain pericopes or passages in the canonical text of Scripture may be regarded as imaginative additions of the Biblical authors or of the early Christian community and therefore need not be accepted as fully authoritative.
4. That extracanonical sources may be used in such a way as to call into question the clear meaning of the canonical text.
5. That the essential theological data of Biblical theology is to be found in the precanonical history of the Biblical text.
6. That certain canonical materials have greater authority than other canonical materials because of their greater antiquity or because they are allegedly more "genuine" or "authentic."

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

7. That various statements of Jesus recorded in the Gospels may not actually be from Jesus and therefore lack historical factuality or the full measure of His authority.

### The Infallibility of Scripture

With Luther, we confess that “God’s Word cannot err” (LC, IV, 57). We therefore believe, teach and confess that since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, they contain no errors or contradictions but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth.

We hold that the opinion that Scripture contains errors is a violation of the *sola scriptura*, for it rests upon the acceptance of some norm or criterion of truth above the Scriptures. We recognize that there are apparent contradictions or discrepancies and problems which arise because of uncertainty over the original text.

We reject the following views:

1. That the Scriptures contain theological as well as factual contradictions and errors.
2. That the Scriptures are inerrant only in matters pertaining directly to the Gospel message of salvation.
3. That the Scriptures are only functionally inerrant that is, that the Scriptures are “inerrant” only in the sense that they accomplish their aim of bringing the Gospel of salvation to men.
4. That the Biblical authors accommodated themselves to using and repeating as true the erroneous notions of their day (for example, the claim that Paul’s statements on the role of women in the church are not binding today because they are the culturally conditioned result of the apostle’s sharing the views of contemporary Judaism as a child of his time).
5. That statements of Jesus and the New Testament writers concerning the human authorship of portions of the Old Testament or the historicity of certain Old Testament persons and events need not be regarded as true (for example, the Davidic authorship of Psalm 110, the historicity of Jonah, or the fall of Adam and Eve).
6. That only those aspects of a Biblical statement need to be regarded as true that are in keeping with the alleged *intent* of the passage (for example, that Paul’s statements about Adam and Eve in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 11 do not prove the historicity of Adam and Eve because this was not the specific intent of the apostle; or that the virgin birth of our Lord may be denied because the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke did not have the specific intent to discuss a biological miracle).
7. That Jesus did not make some of the statements or perform some of the deeds attributed to him in the Gospels but that they were in fact invented or created by the early Christian community or the evangelists to meet their specific needs.
8. That the Biblical authors sometimes placed statements into the mouths of people who in fact did not make them (for example, the claim that the “Deuteronomist” places a speech in Solomon’s mouth which Solomon never actually made), or that they relate events as having actually taken place that did not in fact occur (for example, the fall of Adam and Eve, the crossing of the Red Sea on dry land, the episode of the brazen serpent, Jesus’ cursing of the fig tree, John the Baptist’s

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

experiences in the wilderness, Jesus' changing water into wine, Jesus' walking on water, or even Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead or the fact of His empty tomb).

9. That the use of certain "literary forms" necessarily calls into question the historicity of that which is being described (for example, that the alleged midrashic form of the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke suggests that no virgin birth actually occurred, or that the literary form of Genesis 3 argues against the historicity of the Fall).

### The Unity of Scripture

We believe, teach and confess that since the same God speaks throughout Holy Scripture, there is an organic unity both within and between the Old and New Testaments. While acknowledging the rich variety of language and style in Scripture and recognizing differences of emphasis in various accounts of the same event or topic, we nevertheless affirm that the same doctrine of the Gospel, in all its articles, is presented throughout the entire Scripture.

We reject the view that Holy Scripture, both within and between its various books and authors, presents us with conflicting or contradictory teachings and theologies. We regard this view not only as violating the Scripture's own understanding of itself, but also as making it impossible for the church to have and confess a unified theological position that is truly Biblical and evangelical.

### Old Testament Prophecy

Since the New Testament is the culminating written revelation of God, we affirm that it is decisive in determining the relation between the two Testaments and the meaning of Old Testament prophecies in particular, for the meaning of a prophecy becomes known in full only from its fulfillment. With the Lutheran Confessions, we recognize the presence of Messianic prophecies about Jesus Christ throughout the Old Testament. Accordingly, we acknowledge that the Old Testament "promises that the Messiah will come and promises forgiveness of sins, justification, and eternal life for His sake" (Apology, IV, 5) and that the patriarchs and their descendants comforted themselves with such Messianic promises (cf. FC, SD, V, 23).

We therefore reject the following views:

1. That the New Testament statements about Old Testament texts and events do not establish their meaning (for example, the claim that Jesus' reference to Psalm 110 in Matthew 22:43-44 does not establish either the psalm's Davidic authorship or its predictive Messianic character).
2. That Old Testament prophecies are to be regarded as Messianic prophecies, not in the sense of being genuinely predictive, but only in the sense that the New Testament later applies them to New Testament events.
3. That the Old Testament prophets never recognized that their prophecies reached beyond their own time to the time of Christ.

### Historical Methods of Biblical Interpretation

Since God is the Lord of history and has revealed Himself by acts in history and has in the person of His Son actually entered into man's history, we acknowledge that the historical framework in which

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

the Gospel message is set in Scripture is an essential part of the Word.

Furthermore, we recognize that the inspired Scriptures are historical documents written in various times, places and circumstances. We therefore believe that the Scriptures invite historical investigation and are to be taken seriously as historical documents. We affirm, however, that the Christian interpreter of Scripture cannot adopt uncritically the presuppositions and canons of the secular historian, but that he will be guided in his use of historical techniques by the presuppositions of his faith in the Lord of history, who reveals Himself in Holy Scripture as the one who creates, sustains, and even enters our history in order to lead it to His end.

We therefore reject the following views:

1. That the question of whether certain events described in the Scripture actually happened is unimportant in view of the purpose and function of Holy Scripture.
2. That methods based on secularistic and naturalistic notions of history, such as the following, may have a valid role in Biblical interpretation:
  - a. That the universe is closed to the intervention of God or any supernatural force.
  - b. That miracles are to be explained in naturalistic terms whenever possible.
  - c. That the principle of the economy of miracles may lead us to deny certain miracles reported in the Scriptures.
  - d. That the doctrines of Holy Scripture are the result of a natural development or evolution of ideas and experiences within Israel and the early church.
  - e. That the message of Scripture can be adequately measured by laws derived exclusively from empirical data and rational observation.
  - f. That man's inability to know the future makes genuine predictive prophecy an impossibility.
3. That our primary concern in Biblical interpretation is not with explaining the meaning of the primary sources, namely, the canonical Scriptures, on the basis of the sources themselves.
4. That if the use of historical methods leads to conclusions at variance with the evident meaning of the Biblical text, subconclusions may be accepted without violating the Lutheran view of Scripture or our commitment to the Lutheran Confessions (for example, the claim that it is permissible to deny the existence of angels or a personal devil because of literary, historical or theological considerations).

## V

### ORIGINAL SIN

**W**e believe, teach and confess that God, by the almighty power of His Word, created all things. We also believe that man, as the principal creature of God, was specially created in the image of God, that is, in a state of righteousness, innocence and blessedness.

We affirm that Adam and Eve were real historical human beings, the first two people in the world, and that their fall was a historical occurrence which brought sin into the world so that "since the fall of Adam all men who are propagated according to nature are born in sin" (AC, II, 1 ). We confess that

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFSSIONAL PRINCIPLES

man's fall necessitated the gracious redemptive work of Jesus Christ and that fallen man's only hope for salvation from his sin lies in Jesus Christ, his Redeemer and Lord.

We therefore reject the following:

1. All world views, philosophical theories and exegetical interpretations that pervert these Biblical teachings and thus obscure the Gospel.
2. The notion that man did not come into being through the direct creative action of God, but through a process of evolution from lower forms of life, which in turn developed from matter that is either eternal, autonomous or self-generating.
3. The opinion that the image of God in which Adam and Eve were created did not consist of concreated righteousness, that is, a perfect relationship to God.
4. The notion that Adam and Eve were not real historical persons and that their fall was not a real historical event which brought sin and death into the world.
5. The opinion that original sin does not deprive all men of their spiritual powers and make it impossible for them to be in the right relationship to God apart from faith in Jesus Christ.

## VI

### CONFSSIONAL SUBSCRIPTION

We reaffirm our acceptance of the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, and our unconditional subscription to "all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God" (Constitution, Article II).

We accept the Confessions because they are drawn from the Word of God and on that account regard their doctrinal content as a true and binding exposition of Holy Scripture and as authoritative for our work as ministers of Jesus Christ and servants of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

We accept the following clarifications of the nature of our confessional subscription:

1. We acknowledge that the doctrinal content of the Lutheran Confessions includes not only those doctrines of Holy Scripture explicitly treated in the Confessions but also those Biblical doctrines set forth somewhat indirectly or incidentally, such as the doctrines of Holy Scripture, creation, the Holy Spirit, and eschatology.
2. With the fathers, we recognize that not everything in the Lutheran Confessions is a part of its doctrinal content, but we reject all attempts to abridge the extent of this doctrinal content in an arbitrary or subjective manner. We recognize, for example, that subscription to the Lutheran Confessions does not bind us to all strictly exegetical details contained in the Confessions, or even to the confessional use of certain Bible passages to support a particular theological statement. However, since the Confessions want to be understood as Biblical expositions, we reject the notion that we are not bound by our confessional subscription to the exposition of Scripture contained in the Confessions or to the doctrinal content which the Confessions derive from individual Bible passages.
3. We recognize that the Confessions must be read and studied in terms of the historical situations in which they were written, but we reject the view that our confessional subscription means only

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFSSIONAL PRINCIPLES

that we regard the Confessions as a historically correct response to the problems encountered by the church when the Confessions were written.

4. We recognize that the doctrinal content of the Confessions centers in Jesus Christ and the Gospel of our justification by grace through faith, but we reject the view that the doctrinal content of the Confessions includes only those confessional statements which explicitly and directly deal with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Accordingly, we do not accept the idea that our subscription to the Lutheran Confessions permits us to reject such confessional positions as the existence of the devil and of angels or that Adam and Eve were real historical persons whose fall into sin was a real historical event.
5. We recognize that the Lutheran Confessions contain no distinct article on the nature of Holy Scripture and its interpretation, but we acknowledge and accept the confessional understanding of the nature of Holy Scripture and of the proper theological principles for its interpretation.
6. We recognize the Lutheran Confessions as a true exposition of Holy Scripture and therefore reject the opinion that our subscription to the Lutheran Confessions leaves us free to reject any doctrinal statements of the Confessions where we feel there is no supporting Biblical evidence.
7. We acknowledge that our subscription to the Lutheran Confessions pledges us to preach and teach in accordance with the entire Holy Scripture. We therefore reject the opinion that all Biblical matters not explicitly treated in the Lutheran Confessions are open questions.
8. We confess that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule and norm for faith and life, and that other writings “should not be put on a par with Holy Scripture” (FC, Ep, Rule and Norm, 1–2). We therefore reject the notion that it is legitimate to maintain the doctrinal conclusions of the Confessions without accepting their Biblical basis, or to regard formal confessional subscription as an adequate safeguard against improper exegetical conclusions.
9. Finally, we affirm that our acceptance of the Lutheran Confessions means not only that we tolerate the doctrinal content of the Lutheran Confessions as a viable option for Lutheran Christians today but that we in fact preach, teach, and confess the doctrinal content of the Lutheran Confessions as our very own.

## CONCLUSION

The 1971 convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirmed the Synod’s desire to abide by its doctrinal position as stated in its constitution (Article II). The Synod clearly stated its conviction that its confessional base is as broad as Holy Scripture and that the Synod accepts anything and everything that the Scriptures teach. Moreover, the Synod declared its right as a Synod to apply its confessional base definitively to current issues, and thus conserve and promote unity and resist an individualism which breeds schism.

This Statement expresses the Synod’s Scriptural and confessional stance on a number of important topics. It is hoped that the endorsement of this Statement will be of assistance to the Synod in the “conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith” (Constitution, Article III).

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFSSIONAL PRINCIPLES

### The Resolution of the Missouri Synod Adopting *A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles*

*In its July 6-13, 1973, synodical convention, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod officially adopted A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles as a “statement of belief” which “expresses the Synod’s position on current doctrinal issues.” The full text of the convention’s action is as follows:*

#### Preamble

The Formula of Concord, in the Lutheran Confessions, mentions Doctor Luther as asserting that “the Word of God is and should remain the sole rule and norm of doctrine, and that no human being’s writings dare be placed on a par with it, but that everything be subjected to it.” The next paragraph begins: “This, of course, does not mean that other good, useful, and pure books such as interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, refutations of errors, and expositions of doctrinal articles, should be rejected. If they are in accord with the aforementioned pattern of doctrine they are to be accepted and used as helpful expositions and explanations.” (FC, SD, Summary, paragraphs 9 –10)

Doctor Walther’s “Thirteen Theses,” which emerged during the Predestinarian Controversy in America, surely fit into this category. The first of these theses appeared in *Der Lutheraner*, 15 January 1880, and the last in the 1 May 1880 issue. The entire 13 were approved one year later by a vast majority at the synodical convention in Fort Wayne, 11–12 May 1881 (Missouri Synod Proceedings, 1881, pp. 35–36, 41)

Our Synod has continued to be greatly concerned with doctrine, as past convention resolutions indicate (1950–1971). Also, in order to clarify the status of doctrinal statements, the Synod approved Resolution 5-24, “Status of Synodically Adopted Doctrinal Statements,” at the Milwaukee convention, July 1971, which reads:

RESOLVED, That the Synod reaffirm the desirability of the formulation of doctrinal statements which clearly set forth the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and apply them to issues of our day; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod clearly state that such doctrinal formulations are subordinate to the Lutheran Confessions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod distinguish between resolutions concerning doctrine formulated and adopted at a convention and more formal statements of belief which are produced by officially authorized groups, and which are then presented to the congregations and clergy of the Synod for study and discussion, and which are subsequently adopted by a synodical convention; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod reaffirm the resolutions of recent conventions that the Synod “honor and uphold the synodically adopted statements as valid interpretations of Christian doctrine” (1969 Proceedings, p. 91); and be it finally

RESOLVED, That in the case of the aforementioned more formal and comprehensive statements of belief that the Synod declare

- (1) its position that these statements, together with all other formulations of doctrine, derive their authority from the Word of God which they set forth from the Holy Scriptures;
- (2) its insistence that the ministry of the church regard these formulations with special seriousness and that those who disagree with these formulations in part or in whole be held to present their objections to them formally to those officials whom the Synod has given the immediate supervision of their doctrine;
- (3) its conviction that as a result of joint study of the Word of God the Holy Spirit will lead the Synod into all truth, that possible errors in the aforementioned statements will be discovered and corrected, that instances of failure to submit to the clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures will be evangelically dealt with on an individual pastoral basis, and that the Synod can speak with a voice that is Scriptural, Gospel-oriented, truly Lutheran, and that we will continue to “walk together” as a true Synod.

## A STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURAL AND CONFSSIONAL PRINCIPLES

Accordingly, the following resolution is herewith submitted.

WHEREAS, A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles, issued by the President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in consultation with the vice-presidents of the Synod, 3 March 1972, addresses itself to the doctrinal issues troubling the church today; and

Whereas, A Statement presents what the Synod throughout its history has confessed and taught on these issues, as witnessed to by synodical statements, catechetical expositions, and convention resolutions; and

WHEREAS, A Statement is, therefore, neither a new standard of orthodoxy nor a document “based on private writings, but on such books as have been composed, approved, and received in the name of the churches which pledge themselves to one doctrine and religion” (FC, SD, Comp. Summary, paragraph 2); and

WHEREAS, The Synod’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations has evaluated A Statement as follows:

We find the doctrinal content of A Statement to be in accord with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and to contain nothing contrary to them. We also find the doctrinal content of A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles to be in accord with the doctrinal position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as it has been taught historically and expressed in the official doctrinal statements of the Synod [Adopted 3 November 1972]; and

WHEREAS, A Statement, in its entirety, has been presented to the congregations and clergy of the Synod, and during the past 16 months has been studied and discussed throughout the church, and has been approved by various synodical boards (Board of Control, Springfield; Board for Higher Education) and congregations; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran church in the past, when confronted with doctrinal controversy and crisis, has accepted expressions of belief which are in agreement with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, e. g., the Thirteen Theses of Doctor Walther, 1881; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod declare A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles, in all its parts, to be Scriptural and in accord with the Lutheran Confessions, and therefore a formulation which derives its authority from the Word of God and which expresses the Synod’s position on current doctrinal issues; and be it further

RESOLVED, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod declare A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles to be a “more formal and comprehensive statement of belief” in the sense of Resolution 5-24 of the 1971 Milwaukee convention, and that the Synod further declare that A Statement shall hold the status defined in said resolution (Preamble, above).

Action: Adopted  
Resolution 3–01  
1973 Proceedings, pp. 127-128