

MTS CONVICTIONS STATEMENT

1. Authority

We know God only as he reveals himself to us.

He has revealed himself in the 66 books of Scripture. Every word of these books is divinely inspired and infallible, as originally given, and therefore the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

2. God

There is one unique and eternal God, who exists in an everlasting loving relationship of Father, Son and Spirit – distinct from one another, and not interchangeable – one God in undivided essence, whilst three in Person. God is sovereign in all things, including creation, revelation, redemption, judgment and the establishing of his kingdom. God is self-sufficient in himself. As sovereign loving creator and redeemer, he is worthy of all glory, honour and praise.

3. Creation

Creation exists by the will of God, separate to him, and for his glory. All things are made good and are not to be rejected if received with thanksgiving. The moral order that exists within this world is therefore grounded in God and his character. All of life is to be lived in joyful and thankful worship of the creator God. Humanity was created as both male and female, equally and fully in the image of God. Every human life begins at conception, and in accordance with its unique dignity, should be preserved from all unnecessary and preventable harm. Marriage, as intended by God, is a lifelong union between a man and a woman, and is the only proper context for sexual activity.

4. The Fall

As a consequence of the fall, humans universally are born with a sinful nature and are rightly guilty before God. Every human is therefore tragically subject, by nature, to God's righteous wrath and condemnation. God's judgment will express itself in the condemnation of those who are outside of the merciful provision of the grace of Christ, to an eternal and conscious state the Scriptures call Hell. Every dimension of human nature has been affected by the corruption of the fallen state. As a result of this state, no one is able truly to seek or please God. All are actively engaged in rebellion against him. We are therefore doubly indebted to God. As creatures we are utterly dependent on God. Because of the fall, we are also utterly at his mercy.

5. The Gospel: Jesus and Salvation

God's saving purposes find their ultimate centre in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. For our salvation, God the Son took on human nature. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He was both fully God and fully man, though without sin. It is only possible for a person to be redeemed from the guilt, penalty and power of sin through the sacrificial death, as our representative and substitute, of Jesus Christ. In that death God demonstrates his love to us most perfectly and establishes his victory over Satan and all his foes. He rose bodily from the dead, as the first act of God's new creation. He rules now as the saving Lord of heaven and earth. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.

The work of the Holy Spirit is necessary to make the benefits of the death of Jesus effective in an individual's life, as He unites us to Christ. This work is only applied to those whom the Father appointed to eternal life, before the creation of the world. This appointment was not based on any foreseen virtue, merit or faith in those appointed. The Holy Spirit irresistibly enables the sinner to repent and put their faith in Jesus Christ, and persevere in living out that faith, so that salvation is entirely of God's grace, not human merit.

6. The Christian Life

Christians now enjoy the blessings of union with Christ and secure relationship with God. We are already declared righteous, forgiven, adopted as his sons and daughters, cleansed, sanctified and incorporated into the church. The Holy Spirit continues to convict us of our sin, to lead us into genuine repentance, and to empower us to live righteous lives, conformed more and more to the likeness of Christ. While we are never sinlessly perfect in this life, we strive to become more godly through putting to death sin, and practising righteousness, in dependence upon Christ. We believe Satan's work in the moral realm is effectively undone by the work of Christ applied through prayer, preaching the word and calling people to repentance and faith, without the necessity of exorcisms. We still await the final consummation of our hope with the return of Christ, the resurrected transformation of our bodies, the complete spiritual perfection of our innermost being and life with him eternally.

7. The Church

In coming to Christ, all spiritually regenerated believers, both Jew and Gentile, are united together into one body – the church of the firstborn, the spiritual body of Christ. The visible church is a tangible expression of Christ's spiritual body. The life, doctrine and ministry of the visible church is to be ruled by the supreme authority of Scripture. This rule is administered and applied by godly leaders, who must not lead in a way which contradicts or undermines Scripture, nor which is inconsiderate of the conscience of individual Christians. We believe the mature course for church life should focus upon gathering for fellowship, prayer, and biblical instruction; proclamation of the gospel to the world; as well as godliness and loving acts of service, all for the glory of Christ.

God continues to give gifts to his people for the loving edification of his church, although no particular gift is evidence of a fullness of the Spirit. Both men and women should be encouraged to seek proper expression of their gifts for the service and edification of God's people. However, as in human families, the Bible makes clear that in the family of God, the church, some roles of men and women are not interchangeable. In particular, ultimate pastoral oversight is the responsibility of biblically qualified men. Likewise, so too is the primary responsibility for biblical instruction within the mixed public assembly, although it is recognised that within the MTS movement, women may preach occasionally under this authority. We are committed to expressing appropriate biblical differences within relationships of mutual love, respect and interdependence.

8. The Mission

As God's redeemed people there are many important duties and good deeds he has prepared for us to do. However the mission that we are explicitly and uniquely called to, and entrusted with, is to making disciples of all nations. Christlikeness will include growing in a desire to see all people saved. We believe that the gospel should be urgently and courageously proclaimed to all people so that through the preaching of God's Word by the power of God's Spirit all people might believe and be saved. Good deeds ought to accompany faithful evangelism, but they are not a substitute for the proclamation of the Gospel itself.

9. The Future Hope

Christ will physically return to earth at an unknown time, to deliver the final judgement of all and to make everything new. Those who received Christ in this life will be resurrected to everlasting life, while all those who did not receive him will be resurrected to everlasting condemnation. True physical healing, moral perfection and immediate experience of God comes only with the new creation.