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God's Empowering Presence

Pneumatology = the doctrine of the Holy Spirit

- Is it underdeveloped in the non-Pentecostal Protestant West?
- Like air in motion, intangible yet powerful
- Giver of life → fullness, freedom, love
- Application of salvation in Christ

I. The Giver of Life: Pouring Out Common Grace

A. *The Creator Spiritus*

- = the Spirit of creation
- Genesis 1:2; Psalm 33:6, 104:29–30; Matthew 5:45
- Most generally related and most particularly intimate divine Person

B. *The “Cultural Mandate”*

- Genesis 1:28–31
- Common grace = sustaining provision of life and restraint of wickedness
- Stewardship, care, delight

II. The Giver of New Life: Applying Christ's Redeeming Grace

A. *Conversion*

- Repentance = change of mind and heart
- Faith/baptism (intellect, emotion, will)
- Event (Paul) and/or process (the 12)?

B. *Sanctification and Consecration*

TRADITIONAL MODELS

- Lutheran; Reformed; Wesleyan; Pentecostal; Keswick; Contemplative
- ###### BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL SYNTHESIS

C. *Assurance and Perseverance*

MAJOR VIEWS

- Arminian (possibility of apostasy); Calvinist (perseverance of saints); Lutheran; popular
- ###### THEOLOGICAL TENSIONS
- Assurance = confidence in being God's beloved child, awaiting a heavenly inheritance

III. Giver of the Church: Extending Love's Reach

Charismata = spiritual gifts lavished by the Holy Spirit upon the church

Cessationism = view that certain sign gifts ceased after the apostolic era

Continuationism = view that sign gifts continue and should be actively pursued

Nicene Creed (381)

We believe in one God, | the Father, the Almighty, | maker of heaven and earth, | of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, | the only Son of God, | eternally begotten of the Father, | God from God, Light from Light, | true God from true God, | begotten, not made, | of one Being with the Father; | through him all things were made. | For us and for our salvation | he came down from heaven, | was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary | and was made man. | For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; | he suffered death and was buried. | On the third day he rose again | in accordance with the Scriptures; | he ascended into heaven | and is seated at the right hand of the Father. | He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, | and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, | who proceeds from the Father [and the Son], | who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, | who has spoken through the prophets. | We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. | We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. | We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Summary Theses

1. *The Creed: Faith Seeking Understanding*—Christian theology is a communicative practice of faith seeking understanding, in response to the Word of the Triune God accompanied by the Holy Spirit.
2. *The Ten Commandments: A Community's Moral Formation*—Christian beliefs are integrated with behavior, extending Israel's moral tradition from the Ten Commandments to establish human community in the love of God and neighbor.
3. *The Lord's Prayer: The Church's Spiritual Formation*—Christian beliefs are integrated with belonging as well as behavior, reforming Israel's spiritual tradition to inaugurate a community of grace among Jesus's followers, as epitomized in the Sermon on the Mount and especially the Lord's Prayer.
4. *The Triune Name of God*—Christian orthodoxy teaches that the one true God is triune, existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—who are undivided in the external works that reveal the divine identity.
5. *The Character of Providence*—From creation to consummation, providence reveals the Triune God's perfections of power, wisdom, love, and holiness; the drama of redemption is the setting in which the Bible addresses the mystery of divine sovereignty and human responsibility along with the meaning of evil.
6. *The Goodness of Creation*—Creation out of nothing is an article of Christian faith according to which the Triune God has spoken the world into existence—granting dignified life, dependent freedom, and delightful fellowship to creatures in their materiality, sociality, and temporality.

7. *Human Beings*—Human beings are uniquely created to commune with God and to communicate what God is like; for this calling God has made them embodied souls and relational selves, with each person and culture having dignity established by God’s love and their diversity being an occasion of divine delight.

8. *The Identity of Jesus Christ*—The orthodox identity of Jesus Christ involves the hypostatic union: in the Incarnation the fully divine Son of God has assumed a fully human nature, to serve as the One Mediator of revelation and redemption.

9. *The Ministry of Reconciliation*—Jesus Christ’s ministry of reconciliation as the Mediator between God and humanity is signaled by his virginal conception; continues throughout his earthly ministry as messianic prophet, priest, and king; climaxes in his atoning passion; and commences a newly exalted phase in his resurrection and ascension.

10. *Sin and Salvation*—All of Adam and Eve’s descendants are born dead in sin, which is based in idolatry and inevitably results in injustice. The Spirit’s application of Jesus’s reconciling work brings salvation from sin’s past, present, and future effects; justification removes sin’s penalty, regeneration removes sin’s power, and glorification removes sin’s presence from those who are united with Christ.

11. *The Gospel in Christian Traditions*—The gospel takes cultural form in Orthodox Christianity, emphasizing a tradition of *theosis*; in Catholic Christianity, emphasizing the sacramental renewal of creaturely being; and in seven major traditions of Protestant Christianity, emphasizing the gospel’s freedom for biblical reform.

12. *God’s Empowering Presence*—The Holy Spirit is the divine Giver of creaturely life, pouring out common grace, and the divine Giver of new life, applying Christ’s redeeming grace as God’s empowering presence—fostering conversion, consecration, assurance and perseverance, and shared ministry.

13. *Scripture*—The authority of Holy Scripture emerges from God’s final Word having been spoken in Jesus Christ; by the Holy Spirit, the written words and message of the prophets and apostles faithfully proclaim divine truth and powerfully rule over the church—even, with appropriate nuance, through various translations and the process of interpretation.

14. *Church*—The Bible identifies the church as God’s people in Christ; the Spirit graciously uses various practices for shaping the church as a community of worship, nurture, and witness; along with Word and “sacrament,” institutional order marks the church, yet traditional models of polity require wise modern implementation and humble acknowledgment of communal brokenness.

15. *All Things New*—The vital Christian hope that God will make all things new has both cosmic and personal dimensions: cosmically, involving the return and reign of Christ as anticipated in biblical prophecy; personally, involving resurrection of the body and final judgment. This hope is already inaugurated but not yet completely fulfilled—thus serving as an impetus for mission and an incentive for martyrdom in whatever form becomes necessary.

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	<i>View of tradition</i>	<i>Fundamental aspect of salvation</i>	<i>Sacraments?</i>	<i>Polity?</i>	<i>Cultural/political engagement</i>	<i>Emphases in Christian life</i>
Orthodox:	liturgical Tradition	<i>theosis</i>	2 chief sacraments	patriarchates	caesaropapist	ascetic, mystical (icons)
Catholic:	magisterial Tradition	beatific vision	7	papal	synthetic, w/ subsidiarity	sacramental, cooperative (classically: monastic)
Lutheran:	<i>sola Scriptura</i> , as necessary	justification by faith alone	2 chief, as effective signs	moderately episcopalian	paradoxical 2 kingdoms	getting used to justification
Reformed:	<i>sola Scriptura</i> w/ ministerial tradition	covenantal union w/ Christ	2, as signs and seals	presbyterian	transform.	progressive growth in union w/ Christ via means of grace
Anabaptist:	radical <i>sola Scriptura</i>	discipleship	generally 2 ordinances	congreg.	separatist	progressive growth in discipleship
Anglican:	<i>sola Scriptura</i> , as necessary w/ prudence	?!	various	episcopalian	originally estab. ch. w/ missions	progressive growth in grace but broad church
Baptist:	noncreedal <i>sola Scriptura</i>	?!	2 ordinances	congreg.	separatist w/ exceptions	often Keswick (filling w/ Spirit moving carnal Christians to spiritual consecration)
Wesleyan:	<i>sola Scriptura</i> w/ prudence and exper.	forgiveness and holiness	2	moderately episcopalian	transform. re holiness and justice	growth in holiness and second blessing of perfect love
Pentecostal:	<i>sola Scriptura</i> w/ prophecy and exper.	forgiveness and holiness	generally 2 ordinances	generally denom.	separatist and/or trans.	baptism w/ Spirit after conversion, often w/ initial evidence of tongues