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STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following statements are the basic elements of Christianity that will be taught, and which the policies and practices of *Heritage Study Center* shall reflect, at all grade levels.

The Bible

Our chief aim in life and death is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. God teaches us how to do this in His written Word, that is, the Bible. He does reveal Himself in His creation, through His providence, and by means of the human conscience (Ps 19:1-6; Rom 1:19-20; 2:14-15), but this revelation is insufficient to give that knowledge of God and His will that is necessary for salvation. It leaves mankind inexcusable for not loving, serving, and worshipping God. Only the Holy Scriptures, which God has given by the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit, teach what we are to believe about God and what duty He requires of us. This is the only rule for faith and practice (2Tim 3:16-17; 1Ths 2:13).

God

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in all that He is. He is one God in three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – our Creator, Lawgiver, Judge, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. He is all knowing, all-powerful, and everywhere present, as well as holy, loving, merciful, gracious, and abounding in goodness and truth.

Creation

God created all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible (Gen 1:1; Col 1:16), and He preserves and governs every creature and every action (Ps 135:6; Mt 10:29:30; Col 1:17), so that all things serve for His own glory and the good of His people (Rom 8:28; 11:36).

Man

God created man, male and female, after His own image (Gen 1:27) in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness (Col 3:10; Eph 4:24), and entered into a covenant of works with man (Gen 2:16-17; Hos 6:7), promising life upon the fulfilling and threatening death upon the breach of this covenant.

The Fall

The Covenant of Works was made with Adam as the covenant head of the human race, so that when he broke the covenant and fell into sin, all his descendants fell into sin with him (Rom 5:12). Thus, all human beings are conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity (Ps 51:5), so that by nature we are children of wrath (Eph 2:3), under the just condemnation of God, totally depraved in both soul and body, and prone to evil and liable to eternal death in hell. We cannot be delivered from this dreadful state of sin and misery apart from the unmerited grace of God (Eph 2:8-9).

Grace

God does not leave all people to perish in their sin and misery, but out of His mere love and mercy delivers His elect by means of the Covenant of Grace (Rom 3:20-22; Heb 8:8-13). It is of grace because God provides the Redeemer, Jesus Christ; accepts the work of the Redeemer on our behalf; and bestows the gift of faith on us that we might believe in and be saved by this Redeemer.

Christ

Jesus Christ is the eternal and only begotten Son of God, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made. He was born of a woman, born under the Law (Gal 4:4), that He might redeem all the elect who were chosen from before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:3-14). He rendered perfect obedience to the righteousness of God on behalf of His people, and He bore the penalty due to them in His own body on the cross. He rose from the dead on the third day and ascended into heaven, where He makes continual intercession for us. He has all authority in heaven and on earth, and reigns over all things as Head of His church. He shall come again with glory and in great power to judge the living and the dead in righteousness.

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Holy Spirit

The redemption accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ is effectually applied to all His people by the Holy Spirit, who both regenerates and sanctifies us, working faith in us and uniting us to Christ, so that we are enabled more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness until the day we are received into glory.

The Gospel

God requires that out of the sight and sense of the danger, filthiness, and odiousness of our sins, and upon apprehension of God's mercy in Christ, we grieve for and hate our sins, and turn from them all to God, and receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation. Thus being united to Christ, we receive forgiveness of sins and are accepted in God's sight, only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Good Works

All those who have been regenerated and believe in Christ are required by God to show gratitude for their salvation by performing good works (sincere obedience) according to what God has commanded in His Word. These good works are the fruit and evidence of a true and lively faith, and the ability to render such obedience is not of ourselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ, who enables us to walk in those works which God has prepared for us beforehand (Eph 2:10).

The Church

God has instituted His Church in the world and has entrusted it with the ministry of the Word and sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper) in order that through these means, the riches of His grace in the gospel may be made known to the world, and by the blessing of Christ and the working of His Spirit in those who by faith receive them, the benefits of His redemption may be communicated to His people. It is mandatory that all Christians join themselves to the visible body of Christ (Heb 13:17) and participate in these means of grace with diligence, preparation, and prayer so that through them they may be instructed and strengthened in faith, and equipped to live in holiness and love (Proverbs 2:1-5; 8:33-36).

The Future

At the last day, when Jesus Christ comes again in power and glory to judge the world in righteousness, there will be a general resurrection of the dead, both of believers and unbelievers, and the selfsame bodies of the dead will be raised up by the power of Christ (Acts 24:15). Immediately following this resurrection will be the general and final judgment of angels and men, when the wicked will be cast into hell and be punished with unspeakable torments in both soul and body forever, and the righteous will be received into heaven, be forever freed from all sin and misery, and be filled with inconceivable joy in the immediate presence of God the Father, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:6-7, 14-15; Mt 25:46).

We acknowledge and agree that all classes offered by *Heritage Study Center* will be taught in a manner consistent with *Heritage Study Center's* Statement of Faith (at least one parent/guardian must sign).

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

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