

IN GOD WE TRUST

THE CHRIST-CENTERED
THEOLOGICAL & PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS
OF VERITAS CHRONICLES



*One of the key objectives of Veritas Chronicles is to gather and share faith stories: Publishing Good Stories of Good. (How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! *Isaiah 52:7*)*

*Christians have many different denominational and life experiences. We observe feet firmly planted, enjoying faith in Christ and worship experiences, with or without an organized church, able to experience the fruits of the Spirit: faith, healing, miracles, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, etc (see *1 Corinthians 12 / Galatians 5*), while perhaps simultaneously enduring "the dark night of the soul" (St. John of the Cross), seeing oneself as a ragamuffin, and as a joint heir with Christ.*

No matter where any of us find ourselves on life's journey, we can be united in reverent belief and unity for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Herein is our summary of the foundational doctrines that we believe all Christians have in common, and are able to confidently share.

The Apostle Paul speaks of a future condition where: *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. Paul continues, God hath revealed [these things] unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things — yea — the deep things of God (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).*¹ Paul also comments about humanity's limited mortal sight: *We see through a glass, darkly ... now [we] know in part; but [when we are in the presence of God] then shall [we] know even as also [we are] known (1 Corinthians 13:12).*

We mortals do not and cannot know everything about God's plans while still here on planet earth, however, we are invited to ask and receive, knock, and have knowledge revealed, and obtain spiritual wisdom and understanding (see *Matthew 7:7-8; James 1:5; Colossians 1:9*).

The fact that we know very little in some aspects of our existence should not dissuade us from the search for truth (Latin: *veritas*). Yes, the majority of the world's history remains shrouded in mist. True, not much has been revealed about what came before. Acknowledged, we do not have a detailed report of that which is promised in the life after this mortal sojourn. Still, we have enough for this journey of life, enough to know where to place our hope and faith.

There is much that we can suppose, or wonder, or ask, or reflect upon, or investigate, or supplement, or question, or observe, or wish, or hope, or research, or test, or accept, or refine, or hold by tradition, or hold by training, or even doubt. Yet, through careful exploration of the scriptures,

1 Note: the King James Version of the Bible is used herein, as it is historically the most widely used English version. This choice is simply a function of the inclusive objective of this document rather than a statement about which version any person should favor for their own study and worship.

and communion with God through pondering and prayer, the core doctrines, principles, and fruits, of a Christ-centric life can be realized. Paul gave us good counsel for our studious efforts: *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good* (1 Thessalonians 5:1).

For the purpose of this invitation and the Christ-centered faith stories we have set out to collect and publish – good stories of good – we have set aside factional certainty, to walk simply and circumspectly in the light of the foundational tenets of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

With the Bible and the Holy Spirit as guides, we join with any and all others who are pursuing the journey of joy and discovery, the journey of bearing witness of that which we can know, to every person, be they many or few. Whatever else comes or goes, whatever else we discover, whatever else may be out there, herein is a reliable foundation of trust and confidence in the ultimate good of this world, the purpose of the universe, God's intentional plan, and above all, His love. We believe that God's infinite love is the inciting, sustaining, and motivating force of creation. It is entirely the center of, the reason for, the progress and journey of, and the blessed destiny of mankind (1 John 3:1).

We join with other warriors and conquerors who glory in His name. *In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For [we are] persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Romans 8:37-39).

Though we are called to be warriors and conquerors, we are also invited to be trusting like little children (Matthew 18:2-3). Every one of us that is capable of reading and resonating with this document is too old and too battle-scarred with life's experiences to actually be as innocent as children. It is only by God's grace that a constructed innocence is possible. Yet because of and despite all our experiences,

we can make this irrevocable choice: to receive all that God has revealed and will yet reveal with childlike faith, willing to submit to all things as a child submits to a loving parent. Perhaps we find ourselves empathic with the man who brought his afflicted son to the Savior to be healed. Jesus said to the boy's father: *If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*. The man said, *Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief* (Mark 9:23-25).

It is impossible for any person confined to this mortal frame to plumb the depth and breadth and height of belief, faith, knowledge, creation, behavior and possibilities, or to comprehend the mind of God, or to see ahead of time the future He has ordained. And so, we simply choose to believe, and wait upon the Lord.

With implicit trust in God, and reasonable certainty about these few and central gospel tenets, we can choose to act deliberately upon the injunctions of Jesus Christ. He summarized all of His commandments thus: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets* (Matthew 22:36-40).

Christ's parting commandment to His disciples was this: *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always[s], even unto the end of the world. Amen* (Matthew 28:19-20).

We embrace the promise that He will always be with us, and love to be part of the evangelical mission He assigned to all His disciples. § KSR/PRR

Written by Kristen Star Borchers and Peter R. Rancie | Published by VeritasChronicles.org | VeritasChronicles was established on a foundation of Christ-centric faith, to publish "good stories of good," no matter where they are found, in science, the arts, medicine, health, energy, socio-economic advances, and faith. In God We Trust was written intentionally with the least factional, most basic, most inviting, and most inclusive language we could imagine. Recipients are welcome to share at will if what they read herein resonates with their own witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE ESSENTIAL HELD-IN-COMMON BELIEFS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

1. **WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD:** We, all humanity, are the spirit offspring of God the Father (Acts 17:28-29; Romans 8:16). As His children, we rely upon His Love (John 3:16), His Omnipotence (Revelation 19:6), and His Omniscience (Acts 17:26). We are also invited to be His heirs, joint heirs with Christ, and partakers of Their glory (Romans 8:17).
2. **GOD IS OUR CREATOR:** He is the Author, the Architect and Creator of the universe (Hebrews 1:2; 11:3; Revelation 14:7), with His crowning act being the formation of man and woman in His image (Genesis 1:26-27). Thus, His primary interest is the human race (Isaiah 45:12,18). He is a personal God, with infinite and intimate care for each of us (Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 65:24; Jeremiah 33:3); He invites our prayers (Matthew 6:6-16); He answers our petitions (Matthew 7:7-11); and He abides with us as we abide in Him (John 15:9-11).
3. **JESUS CHRIST IS SAVIOR:** Jesus Christ, from the beginning, was and is, the central figure in the Father's plan: *For God so loved the world, that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved* (John 3:16-17). Consistent with God's laws of justice and mercy, the atonement of Jesus Christ was the only means by which the Father could overcome the transgression of Adam and Eve, which brought sin and death into the world. Christ's atoning sacrifice provides the means for the Father's children to return to His presence, despite the sin and death to which all are subject (1 Corinthians 15:20-22).
4. **WE ARE REDEEMED THROUGH CHRIST:** To bring about this salvation, God sent *His Only Begotten Son* into this world. He was born of Mary (Luke 2:5-14), thereby becoming human, and able to understand and take upon Himself all human frailties (1 Peter 2:24). In taking upon Himself all sins and weaknesses, He descended below all (see Ephesians 4:9). He was also born of the Father, and therefore retained His Godhood even during His mortal sojourn (Matthew 3:17; 16:16-17). He lived a perfect, sinless life (Ephesians 4:13). He was baptized by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-15). He called apostles and established a ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). He completed His mission of atonement and redemption in Gethsemane and at Golgotha (John 19:30), and ascended above all (see Ephesians 4:10) to break the bands of death in His glorious resurrection (Luke 24:36-40).
5. **JESUS IS THE LIVING CHRIST:** Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father (Hebrews 1:3). He is our Savior, our Redeemer, and our Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). He will come again to cleanse the earth from corruption (see 2 Peter 3:10-13). He will deliver judgment (John 5:27). He will claim those who are joint heirs with Him, and bring them into the presence of God (Romans 8:17).
6. **SALVATION IS ONLY THROUGH CHRIST:** No one can save themselves. Never. Not under any conditions. Jesus Christ did it all (Ephesians 2:8-9). Christ's declaration from Calvary, *It is finished* (John 19:30), rings across all time, space, and people. Whatever He desires of us in terms of bent knee, bowed head, sacraments, or other symbols of our penitence and gratitude, let that form of worship and covenant be whatever it will be for each of us. Whatever we do, we are invited to do it in remembrance of Him (Luke 22:19).
7. **ALL WILL KNOW HIM:** Eventually, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11). Those who love Him will not need to fear judgment (John 3:18), rather, they will give praise, and enjoy the peace of God's presence (Psalm 95:2; Revelation 7:13-17).
8. **THE SPIRIT IS OUR PERSONAL REVELATOR:** The Holy Spirit (also, the Spirit of God, the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, The Comforter, use whatever name satisfies), bears witness of the Father and the Son, brings personal revelation (John 16:13), and reinforces our trust in Them (John 15:26). The Spirit not only administers Their goodness to all mankind, but also delivers knowledge and power to each of us, as we ask for it (Matthew 7:7-8), sufficient to accomplish Their purposes, in and through us (John 14:17; 14:26; Acts 1:8). The manifestations of the Spirit are given to [everyone] to profit equally (1 Corinthians 12:7), and include: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, [speaking in and interpretation of] tongues (1 Corinthians 12:7-10), plus love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Galatians 5:22-23); for as Apostle Peter noted, *if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ* (see 2 Peter 1:3-8).
9. **SCRIPTURE IS OUR GUIDE:** The Bible – the Old Testament and the New Testament – are the Word of God, the world's primary witness of the intentions of God, His interest in us, His plan for us (minus much detail of what went before and what is to come), sufficient to bring us to faith – wise unto salvation – by putting our trust in, and using it, with the companionship of the Spirit, as our living guide (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Corinthians 2:1-16).
10. **GOD BECKONS, WE CHOOSE OUR RESPONSE:** God will not impose belief or foist His will upon us. Thus, we must choose to believe in and respond to the sacred invitation of God the Eternal Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, to receive Their abundant gifts, and the testimony of the prophets and apostles They sent (2 Peter 1:16-18). At the beginning and at the end of all learning and experience is faith, belief, trust, and choice (Mark 9:23-25). *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint* (Isaiah 40:31). §

A FEW OF THE COMMANDMENTS JESUS CALLS UPON HIS DISCIPLES TO LIVE

1. **BE BORN AGAIN:** John 3:3-5: *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*
2. **REPENT:** Matthew 4:17: *Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* Luke 5:32: *I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.*
3. **COME TO HIM, RECEIVE HIS REST:** Matthew 11:28-30: *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*
4. **BELIEVE IN HIM:** John 14:11-14: *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.*
5. **KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS:** John 14:15: *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*
6. **ABIDE IN HIM:** John 15:4: *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.* John 8:31-32: *"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*
7. **FOLLOW HIM, WITHOUT RESERVATION:** Matthew 16:24-26: *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*
8. **LOVE GOD AND LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR:** Matthew 22:37-40: 36: *Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou*

shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Mark 12:28-34: *And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He: And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.* Luke 10:25-37: *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he [the scribe], willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. §*

WHAT IT ALL MEANS — FREEDOM IN CHRIST

The New Testament proclaims a resounding truth: through Christ, we are set free. This freedom, however, often seems elusive in daily life as we wrestle with questions of worthiness and the balance between faith and works. Freedom in Christ cannot be earned, nor is not constrained by peripheral matters, such as, the cut of a suit, the balance of a bank account, the model or newness of a motor vehicle, or dependence on public transport, the length or style of a dress, tattoos or not tattoos, rings or skin piercings, or not, the use of alcohol, or not, the use of tobacco, or not, struggles with substance abuse, or not, the color of one's skin, one's race, or cultural or ethnic heritage, poverty or wealth, whether one attends a church, or not, uses technology, or not. Nothing that could be added to the list of peripherals can ever earn or deny the grace Jesus offers us. None of them does or can constrain the freedom He has delivered to anyone and everyone who will receive His gift.

THE FOUNDATION OF FREEDOM: REDEMPTION THROUGH CHRIST

1. Jesus declares, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). This freedom is not merely political or social but a liberation from sin, death, and the Law's condemnation. Paul echoes this truth in Galatians 5:1, urging believers to "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."
2. The root of this freedom lies in Christ's sacrifice. Romans 8:1-2 proclaims, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Our chains are broken not by our merit but by God's grace, poured out through Jesus' atoning work on the cross.

WHY ARE WE PREOCCUPIED WITH WORTHINESS?

3. Despite this freedom, many believers struggle with a preoccupation with worthiness. This stems from a misunderstanding of grace. Ephesians 2:8-9 clarifies, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Grace, by definition, is unmerited favor. Yet, human nature inclines us to strive for what we believe we must earn.
4. This tension often arises from the remnants of a performance-based mindset. Under the Old Covenant, righteousness was pursued through adherence to the Law. But the New Covenant, established by Christ, shifts the focus from human effort to divine provision. Hebrews 10:14 affirms, "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."
5. Our preoccupation with worthiness reflects a failure to fully trust in God's promises. In Romans 5:1-2, Paul writes, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus

Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Our worthiness is not found in ourselves but in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

FAITH AND WORKS: FINDING THE BALANCE

6. The relationship between faith and works has been a source of debate throughout church history. James writes, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). At first glance, this seems to contradict Paul's teaching that salvation is by grace through faith alone. However, a closer examination reveals harmony.
7. Paul emphasizes that salvation is a gift, not a reward for works (Ephesians 2:8-9). James, on the other hand, speaks of the evidence of genuine faith. "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18). True faith inevitably produces good works as its fruit.
8. Jesus Himself taught this balance. In John 15:5, He said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Our works are not the root of our salvation but the fruit of our union with Christ.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

9. To live in the freedom Christ provides, we must rest in His finished work while walking in obedience. Galatians 5:13 instructs, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Freedom in Christ is not a license for sin but an empowerment to live righteously.
10. Paul's words in Philippians 2:12-13 capture the balance beautifully: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Our obedience flows from God's work within us, a response to His grace rather than an effort to earn it.

CONCLUSION

Freedom in Christ is both a gift and a responsibility. It liberates us from the bondage of sin and the need to prove our worth, grounding our identity in His finished work. At the same time, it calls us to walk in obedience, demonstrating the reality of our faith through love and good deeds. As we embrace this freedom, we echo Paul's declaration in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." In Christ, we are free indeed—free to rest in His grace, free to live for His glory, and free to reflect His love to the world. §