



# 55 Theses to The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Reformation Day, October 31st, 2025

Out of love for the truth, and from a desire to elucidate it, we, PCC Renewal, composed of members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, intend to call the Church to return to the Word of God as her supreme authority. We lament that the Church is straying from the historic Christian faith in ever-increasing degrees. We long for her to rediscover the joy of the gospel, to be rooted in Scripture, and to bear fruit in mission. We appeal to all who share similar concerns to remain steadfast and not depart, lest we further grieve the Holy Spirit through schism. We are open to discussion and correction on anything in this letter and invite all to dialogue with us.

Our website is [pccrenewal.ca](http://pccrenewal.ca), and our email is [pccrenewal@gmail.com](mailto:pccrenewal@gmail.com). God bless!

“I find myself . . . obliged to believe that in our Christian life there is nothing more important than true doctrine, nothing more imperative to the life of the Church than right belief. . . . It is sheer folly to believe that a man can be anything that matters at all in this world, who does not possess the most serious, deep-grounded and right convictions concerning what God essentially is, and concerning those necessities which alone secure a right relation with Him. . . .

What, in the very depths of his own soul, a man knows himself to be, what he genuinely believes God to be—i.e., what his essential understanding of existence itself is—will determine absolutely what he himself will be, and what he shall be enabled to do in this world.”

(W. W. Bryden, *Why I Am a Presbyterian*)

## God and His Word

1. When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” and commanded baptism “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” he willed that we confess the one true God—the *Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*—who alone deserves worship.  
(John 14:6–10; Matt. 28:19)
2. Since he is the *way*, we must confess him as the sole mediator between God and man, and there is no other name by which we must be saved.  
(1 Tim. 2:5)
3. Since he is the *truth*, all tradition, reason, experience, knowledge, and philosophies must be subject to him.<sup>1</sup>  
(1 Cor. 1:18–25; Col. 2:8–10)
4. Since he is the *life*, we must admit that we are dead in sin unless we follow him.  
(Eph. 2:1–5)
5. Since all things were created in him, through him, and for him, his *glory* is the ultimate purpose of the world.  
(Col. 1:16)
6. God speaks through the Scriptures, which are the *Word of God* and the authoritative rule for faith and life.<sup>2</sup> They are “necessary, sufficient, and reliable, revealing Jesus Christ, the living Word.”<sup>3</sup>  
(2 Tim. 3:16–17; 2 Pet. 1:19)
7. God has revealed himself in the *fullness* of his love, mercy, holiness, righteousness, and wrath against sin; none of his attributes are to be diminished, so we may know him rightly.  
(Ps. 103:8; Rom. 1:18)

## Creation

8. We are God’s creation, *made in his image, male and female*, created with *equal dignity and value*.  
(Gen. 1:26–27)
9. We were created good, but we are fallen. *Sin* corrupts every heart, every system, and every body.<sup>4</sup> To minimize sin is to cheapen grace; to confess it is to magnify the mercy of Christ.  
(Ps. 14:1–3; Eccl. 7:29; Rom. 5:12; 8:7–8)
10. We are *equally fallen* before God. Every sin can be forgiven except for blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, which is continual unrepentance.  
(Matt. 12:31; Rom. 3:23)
11. Since we are image-bearers, we have *inherent worth*.  
(Gen. 1:27; Rom. 2:11)

<sup>1</sup> The Committee on Church Doctrine, “Living Faith” (Kelowna, BC: Wood Lake Publishing, 1984), 5.1 (hereafter LF).

<sup>2</sup> The Westminster Assembly, “The Westminster Confession of Faith,” in *Creeds, Confessions, and Catechisms: A Reader’s Edition*, ed. Chad Van Dixhoorn, rev. ed. (1788; repr., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022), 1.2 (hereafter WCF).

<sup>3</sup> LF 5.2.

<sup>4</sup> LF 2.5.4–6

12. Therefore, we are to *love* our neighbour as ourselves and repudiate mistreatment against human dignity.  
(Mark 12:31)
13. God has the *sole authority* over life and death.  
(Job 1:21; Deut. 32:39)
14. Therefore, the Church must affirm the *sanctity of human life* from conception to natural death, denounce unjust violence in accordance with the Scriptures, and rebuke the premature ending of human life.  
(Gen. 9:6; Exod. 20:13)
15. Our bodies are *temples* of the Holy Spirit, given by God and not our own.  
(1 Cor. 6:19–20)
16. Therefore, the Church must teach healthy, biblical sexual ethics, call all people to *holiness*, and rebuke all forms of sexual immorality. Abiding by God’s design for sexuality is for our joy and his glory.  
(1 Cor. 6:18; 1 Thess. 4:3–8; 1 Pet. 1:15–16)
17. The Fall has affected even our bodies, which can lead to painful *complexities* of sex and gender. Still, it is wholesome and fitting for all to receive their biological sex as given, insofar as it can be known, and to honour the *sex and gender distinctives* of God’s design.  
(Gen. 1:31; Deut. 22:5; 1 Cor. 11:13–15)
18. Therefore, the Church must lead those struggling with their identity to find peace in Christ and remind them that they have been *wonderfully made* by God, so they may reconcile with their body as a gift from him.  
(Ps. 139:14)
19. God created the two sexes to *complement* each other and ordained *marriage* to be between one man and one woman: “It is in men and women working and living together that the wholeness and goodness of God’s creation is reflected.”<sup>5</sup>  
(Gen. 2:18; Heb. 13:4)
20. Therefore, the Church should honour those called to *chastity* in singleness and encourage *faithful* marriages kept for life, reflecting Christ and the Church.<sup>6</sup> If divorce happens, the Church should come alongside in loving pastoral care.  
(Matt. 19:4–6, 11–12)
21. The Church’s care for creation must be rooted in her calling as a faithful *steward*, guided by the fear of God, rather than fear of the future.<sup>7</sup>  
(Gen. 1:28; 2:15)

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<sup>5</sup> The Committee on Church Doctrine, “Church Doctrine Report on Human Sexuality” (Toronto, ON: The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1994), 3.2 (hereafter HSR).

<sup>6</sup> LF 8.2.2–3.

<sup>7</sup> LF 2.4.1.

22. As God's creation, we find our *identity* and *meaning* in life from knowing, enjoying, and glorifying him.<sup>8</sup>  
(Neh. 9:6; Ps. 27:4, 73:25–26; 1 Cor. 10:31)

### The Gospel

23. The Scriptures testify that Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, lived a life of perfect righteousness, died for our sins, was buried, then raised on the third day, appeared to the apostles, ascended into heaven, and will come again to judge the living and the dead, raising some to everlasting life and others to punishment.  
(Matt. 1:20–23; John 5:28–29; 1 Cor. 15:3–6; Heb. 4:15)
24. Anyone who denies any of these *core doctrines* of the gospel is under a false gospel, and those who teach a contrary gospel are accursed according to apostolic witness.  
(1 Cor. 15:2; Gal. 1:8)
25. Therefore, the Church must stand firm upon the gospel as set forth in the Scriptures and clearly reject all other *false gospels* of our age. For example, universalism that denies judgment, relativism that denies revelation, syncretism that blends the living God with idols, and progressivism that subjects God's Word to the opinions of men.  
(Matt. 7:15; 2 Tim. 4:1–5)
26. It is only by *faith* in Christ that we will be saved, not by works, while true faith will be accompanied by good works.  
(Eph. 2:8–9; Titus 3:5; Jas. 2:26)
27. The primary command of Christ is to “*repent and believe*,” which precedes the greatest command to love God with all heart, soul, mind, and strength.  
(Mark 1:15; 12:30)
28. To emphasize the *ethics* of Christ above his primary command is to reduce the gospel to moralism.  
(John 6:28–29)
29. Social justice is a *fruit* of the gospel, but it is not the essence of the gospel itself.  
(Eph. 2:8–9)
30. Therefore, the Church's priorities must be *worship and evangelism*, lest she become a mere social institution.<sup>9</sup>  
(Acts 6:4)
31. “The gospel contains within it not only the demand for transformation but the *power* to achieve it.”<sup>10</sup>  
(John 8:11)
32. Those who receive Christ are *adopted* into God's family and called his children, and those who reject Christ's call remain children of wrath.  
(Gal. 3:26–27; Eph. 2:1–3)

<sup>8</sup> The Westminster Assembly, “The Westminster Shorter Catechism,” in *Creeds, Confessions, and Catechisms: A Reader's Edition*, ed. Chad Van Dixhoorn, rev. ed. (1647; repr., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022), 1, p. 411.

<sup>9</sup> LF 7.3.1.

<sup>10</sup> HSR 6.24.

33. The Church has the duty to preach *both* God's judgment and his loving invitation of reconciliation.  
(John 3:16–18, 36; 2 Cor. 5:20)

### The Church

34. The *three marks* of the true and faithful church are the true preaching of the Word, the right administration of the sacraments, and proper church discipline, “whereby vice is repressed and virtue nourished.”<sup>11</sup>
35. It is the sacred task of all ordained ministers to rightly *preach the gospel* as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, set forth in the ecumenical creeds, and attested by the confessions of the Church.<sup>12</sup>  
(Titus 1:9)
36. Those who have vowed to do so and yet wilfully teach otherwise from the pulpit commit *false witness* and prove to be untrustworthy.  
(Rom. 16:17)
37. It is the sacred duty of the Church to rightly *administer the sacraments*, baptism and communion, teaching them as means of grace. Baptism is according to the Trinitarian formula.<sup>13</sup> Communion is solely for baptized and professing believers; for the elect, Christ's presence is spiritual.<sup>14</sup>  
(Matt. 28:19; John 6:53–56; 1 Cor. 11:27–29; 1 Pet. 3:21)
38. It is the solemn responsibility of the Church to guard Christ's flock through proper *church discipline* of clergy and members, seeking their repentance and restoration.<sup>15</sup>  
(Matt. 18:15–17; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Thess. 3:6; Titus 1:11)
39. The Church gathers before a consuming fire. *Worship* must be marked by reverence, awe, and joy—not by entertainment or novelty. God's Word alone directs acceptable worship.<sup>16</sup>  
(Heb. 12:28–29)
40. *Non-Christian worship* within the house of God is improper, for there can be no fellowship between Christ and any other master.  
(2 Cor. 6:14–18)
41. Since The Presbyterian Church in Canada is of the *Reformed tradition*, she must hold fast to the theology upon which she was founded and catechize her members accordingly—not for the sake of tradition, but because it most faithfully interprets Scripture and edifies the saints.
42. As myths and errors constantly seek to undermine the reliability of the Scriptures and the truth of the gospel, the Church must instruct her people in *church history* and *apologetics*, so that their faith may be steadfast.  
(Ps. 78:1–4; Jude 1:3)

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<sup>11</sup> John Knox, “The Scots Confession,” in *Book of Confessions: Study Edition*, trans. James Bulloch, rev. ed. (1560; repr., Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017), 47.

<sup>12</sup> LF 1.2–3.

<sup>13</sup> LF 7.6.2.

<sup>14</sup> WCF 29.7.

<sup>15</sup> WCF 30.3.

<sup>16</sup> WCF 21.1.

43. Christ is the vine; we are the branches. The Church only has *value* to offer the world insofar as she preaches Christ, rather than contemporary trends or philosophies.  
(John 15:5)
44. Although biblical teachings affect *political* views, political controversy should not engulf the Church. The world hungers and thirsts, not for the partisan speech of men, but for the gospel of Christ.  
(2 Cor. 4:5)
45. In *tertiary* issues where Scripture and historic teachings are not explicit, such as evolution or certain eschatological views, the Church should exercise cautious discernment, allow liberty where there is ambiguity, and show charity towards all.  
(Rom. 14:1; Eph. 4:2–3; Col. 2:16; 1 John 4:1)
46. The Church must *test* all reforms and adaptations by Scripture.  
(1 Thess. 5:21)
47. Christ prayed that his people would be one; therefore, the Church must strive for *unity in holiness*.  
(John 17:20–23)
48. “The Church is called to be a welcoming, nurturing, loving and supportive community, a true church *family*, where all are welcomed, nurtured, loved and supported.”<sup>17</sup>  
(Ps. 82:3)

### Church Polity and Seminaries

49. Theological schools must do more than produce academics; they must form *shepherds*. Leaders are to be rooted in truth, living in community, and sent into mission.  
(John 21:15–17; Eph. 4:11–16; Col. 1:28–29)
50. The *assets* of the Church are not ours to protect, but Christ’s to deploy.  
(Matt. 25:14–30; 1 Cor. 4:1–2)
51. God desires bold and *faithful* churches, not necessarily large and centralized ones.  
(Matt. 13:31–32)
52. The courts of the Church exist to *serve* the gospel, not to sustain themselves.  
(1 Pet. 5:2)
53. *Polity* is not bureaucracy; it is a form of discipleship ordered for mission.  
(Eph. 4:15–16)
54. *Authority* in the Church is founded upon faithfulness to God. The General Assembly is not the pope of the Church—it is the Church discerning together under God’s Word.<sup>18</sup>  
(Acts 1:8, 15:6; Eph. 4:11–13; 1 Cor. 12:12–28)
55. There can be no resurrection without death, no redemption without repentance. The Church must have the courage to bury what is dead—our pride, our bureaucracy, our false gospels—so that God may raise us to *new life*.  
(John 12:24; Acts 3:19; Col. 3:5; 1 John 1:8–10)

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<sup>17</sup> HSR 6.23.

<sup>18</sup> WCF 31.2–3.

May these statements glorify God and stay true to his teaching. Here we stand; may God help us to remain faithful. This letter will be sent to as many congregations and leaders as possible. We welcome like-minded Christians to join in this mission. Amen.

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PCC Renewal is a non-profit organization of Christians in The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC), dedicated to the Church's flourishing and faithfulness.

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