**CARM Statement of Faith**

1. **Introduction**
	1. CARM is a conservative Christian Ministry based on the teachings of the Bible (66 books, excluding the Apocrypha). It is open to a variety of theological positions as long as they do not violate the Essentials of the Christian Faith.
2. **Bible**
	1. The Bible is the Word of God, and its original manuscripts are free from all errors and contradictions. It is the one and only infallible, authoritative, and trustworthy rule for faith and life (2 Pet. 1:21, 2 Tim. 3:16). The [Apocrypha](https://carm.org/roman-catholicism/the-apocrypha-is-it-scripture/) is not inspired and is not part of the canon of scripture. The Bible is to be taken as literally as possible except where obviously figurative. Genesis, for example, is literal, and Adam and Eve were actual people. Psalms use poetry. Each must be interpreted according to their genre as they relate to the whole of Scripture.
3. **God**
	1. There is only one God (Isa. 43:10; 44:6, 8; 45:5), the Christian God, who is the one and only (1 Tim. 1:17; Isa 40:18), necessary (Exo. 3:14-15), Trinitarian Being (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14), consisting of three simultaneous and distinct persons, the Father (Phil. 1:2), the Son (John 1:1,14; Col. 2:9), and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). The Trinity is spiritual in nature (John 4:24; Luke 24:39), who has always existed (Deut. 33:27; Psalm 90:2), is non-contingent (Isa. 44:24; Acts 17:25; 1 Tim. 6:16), unchanging (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 9:22), transcendent (Exo. 3:14; Isa. 44:24), and sovereign (Isaiah 46:10). He is the ultimate source (Rom. 4:17) of all truths (Psalm 31:5; Eph. 1:11), all actualities (Gen. 1:1; Isa. 44:24), and all potentialities (Luke 10:13; John 15:22). He created the universe (Gen. 1:1; Isa. 42:5). He does whatever He pleases (Psalm 115:3; Dan. 4:35) and ordains all that occurs (Eph. 1:11). He possesses infinite knowledge (1 John 3:20), wisdom (Psalm 147:5), presence (Psalm 139:7–12), and power (Genesis 18:14) that manifest out of His good and holy nature (1 Pet. 1:16). That which is good is revealed by God’s nature (Mark 10:18) which is consistent with His holiness (1 Sam. 2:2; 1 Pet. 1:16). He has revealed Himself in creation (Rom. 1:20), Scripture (Exo. 20:1–5; John 5:39), and Jesus (John 1:1,14; Heb. 1:3). There is no condition in which the Christian God might exist or could not exist (Ex. 3:14; Psalm 90:2) since that would not be the God of the Bible.
4. **Trinity**
	1. The Trinity is one God in whom are three eternal, distinct, and simultaneous persons - the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. All three are the one God, coeternal, coequal, etc. Yet there is only one God, not three gods, and not one person who took three modes, offices, or forms. (Isa. 44:6,8; 45:5; Gen. 1:26-27; 3:22; Matt. 3:17; 28:19; Luke 9:35; 2 Cor. 13:14). Personhood relates to the characteristics of identity, such as having a will, being able to love, recognizing others as well as oneself, etc. It is not saying that each person is human or that each person is a god.
5. **Jesus**
	1. Jesus Christ is the Word (God) who became a man (John 1:1,14; Col. 2:9). He is both human and divine and, therefore, has two natures (Hypostatic Union). Yet, He is one person, not two. He is not part God and part man. He is presently a man, in a glorified body, as one person, with two natures where one nature is wholly God and the other wholly man. (Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:5-13; John 1:1-3,14). Jesus will eternally remain as a man and intercede for us eternally as a high priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 6:20; 7:25). The attributes of both natures are attributed to the one person of Jesus. This is called the communicatio idiomatum. So, Jesus claimed the attributes of humanity when He said, "I am thirsty," (John 19:28), and the divine attributes when he said, “Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was," (John 17:5).
6. **Jesus and spiritual death**
	1. Some false teachers within Christianity teach that Jesus died spiritually. False teachers have used this statement to mean that Jesus stopped being divine, needed to become born again, physically went to hell in our place, and/or finished the atonement in hell. Such teachings are false and should be rejected since they deny the sufficiency of the cross and attack the true nature of Christ. During Christ's crucifixion, there was, however, an effect upon Christ in relationship to God the Father, for it says in Matt. 27:46, "About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?' that is, 'MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?'" Jesus was not separated from God the Father at the crucifixion (which would deny the Ontological Trinity), nor did the Father abandon the Son, nor did the Father turn away from Christ when Jesus became sin (2 Cor. 5:21). We do not know the extent and the nature of the effect that Jesus' becoming sin had in the Trinitarian communion, and we should be cautious when teaching about what it means.
7. **Virgin Birth**
	1. Jesus Christ was miraculously conceived and born of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:42) by the Holy Spirit's power (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35). Mary was a virgin after the birth of Jesus until Joseph, and she had relations and had other children (Matt. 1:25; 13:55; Mark 6:2-3; John 2:12; Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 9:4-5; Gal. 1:19).
8. **Resurrection**
	1. Jesus rose from the dead in the same body He died in after being in the grave for three days (John 2:19-21). He was raised in a glorified, physical body (still retaining his crucifixion wounds, John 20:25-28). He ascended bodily into heaven (Acts 1:9-11), sits at the Father's right hand, and rules heaven and earth (1 Cor. 15:25; Eph. 1:22). Likewise, we Christians will be raised bodily from the dead (1 Cor. 15:35-45) and spend eternity with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:16–17; John 12:26).
9. **Substitutionary Atonement**
	1. God the Father so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16), to die for us (Rom. 5:6, 8). Jesus, the Word (John 1:1), became man (John 1:14), bore our sins in His body on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24), and died in our place (Isa. 53:4-10). Jesus suffered physical death (Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3) that was due to us (Isa. 53:4-6) as well as suffering the effect of being forsaken by the Father (Matt. 27:46). He became sin on our behalf (2 Cor. 5:21). His sacrifice was a legal substitution for us (1 John 2:2; John 19:30; 1 Pet. 2:24). It was legal since sin is breaking God's Law (1 John 3:4) and substitutionary since Christ took our punishment (Isa. 53:4-6). As a result, God's justice was satisfied. Christian believers are released from eternal punishment by faith alone (1 Pet. 3:18; Matt. 1:21; 25:46; Rom. 3:28; 5:1; John 2:2). Their sin debt has been canceled at the cross (Col. 2:14), and they are justified when they believe (Rom. 3:28; 4:5; 5:1).
10. **Baptism**
	1. Baptism is an important act of obedience for a Christian and signifies a person's public identification with Christ. Baptism is not necessary for salvation. It is an outward manifestation of an inward reality of trust in the sacrifice of Christ, which is our conversion. The act of water baptism does not save anyone. We are made right before God by faith, not by faith and baptism (Rom. 3:28-30; 4:3,5; 5:1; Gal. 2:16, 21; Phil. 3:9; see also Acts 10:44-48). Note: See article on 1 Pet. 3:21.
11. **Man's Condition**
	1. Man is fallen, corrupt, and wicked. Man believes in God by God's grace through faith (John 6:28-29; 15:5; Phil. 1:29), is unable to come close to God through his own efforts (John 6:44; Rom. 3:10-12), is born again not of his own will (John 1:13), cannot understand the spiritual things of God on his own (1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7), cannot earn salvation by his attempt at good works combined with faith (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 4:1-6; Matt. 7:22-23), nor once saved does he maintain his salvation by his works (Gal. 3:1-5). Conscious eternal punishment in hell and separation from the blessed presence of God are the consequences of the unregenerate person's sinfulness who has not trusted in the redemptive sacrificial work of Christ on the cross (Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 6:23).
12. **Divine Election**
	1. God elects/chooses people for salvation. "But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth" (2 Thess. 2:13). And, "From all eternity, God chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will," (Eph. 1:4-5). And, "So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy" (Rom. 9:16). And, "Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies; 34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us" (Rom. 8:33–34).
13. **Salvation**
	1. Salvation is being saved from the righteous judgment of God upon the sinner. Salvation is obtained by grace alone, through faith alone, in the work of Christ alone (John 3:16) and not by our good works (Rom. 3:28; 4:1-5; 5:1; Eph. 2:8-9; Gal. 3:1-4; Matt. 7:22-23). We are chosen for salvation by God (2 Thess. 2:13) and cannot lose our salvation (John 6:37-40). See "Eternal Security"
14. **Justification by Grace through Faith Alone**
	1. Justification is being declared legally righteous by God (Rom. 4:5; 5:1; Phil. 3:9). This justification is obtained by faith alone (Rom. 3:28; 4:5) in Christ alone (Acts 4:12). It is based on the work of Christ, who fulfilled the Law in his earthly ministry (Matt. 3:15; 5:17; 1 Pet. 2:22), where he bore our sins in his body on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24). He canceled the sin debt by his sacrifice on the cross (Col. 2:14). This justification is received by faith without any ceremony, sacraments, or baptism (Rom. 4:1-6), and without any works of the Law (Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:21). It is based on what Jesus did, not on what we do in addition to His sacrifice (Titus 3:5). Our justification is a gift from God (Rom. 3:24).
15. **Regeneration**
	1. Regeneration is the work of God that occurs with faith. This regeneration means the believer is made a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17) and is then able to resist his sin and seek to increase in sanctification before the Lord. Thus, those regenerated do not seek to abide in sin, though they do fall into it, but war against it and repent of sin before the Lord (Rom. 7:14-25).
16. **Eternal Security**
	1. "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. 38 “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 “This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day," (John 6:37-39). And, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:27-28). Christ has done all that is needed for our salvation, and he says that those who have eternal life will never perish since Jesus cannot lose any (John 6:37-40). Those who appeared to be Christian but fell away were never Christians, to begin with (1 John 2:19). Eternal security does not mean that we have a license to sin (Rom. 5:21-6:2). Those who say it is a license to sin do not understand eternal security and how God regenerates the sinner, turns his heart to repentance (2 Tim. 2:25), and brings us to war against sin (Rom. 7:14-25). Because of the diversity of opinions on this issue, CARM does not condemn or pass judgment upon those who believe it is possible to lose one's salvation. However, CARM opposes the position that a person's security before God is maintained through his good works or sincerity of heart since these would be works of righteousness.
17. **Sanctification**
	1. Sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit makes us more like Christ in all that we do, think, and desire. Our sanctification increases our ability to repent from and resist sin, which is accomplished by God's grace (1 Thess. 4:7; Eph. 2:10; 1 Tim. 4:4; 1 Pet. 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:25). This process continues all of the Christian's life and is the result of salvation, not a cause of it, nor a contributing factor to it. Furthermore, the effort of sanctification does not maintain the believer's salvation.
18. **Free Will**
	1. Free will is the ability of a conscious being to make choices that are not coerced and are consistent with his nature. Free-will choices require the ability to be aware of a choice to be made. Free will does not necessitate the option of choosing between good and bad; otherwise, God would not be free since he cannot choose to sin. All people possess free will and exercise it according to the conditions revealed about it per the scriptures (1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 6:14-20). However, man's free will is under the sovereign work of God (Eph. 1:11; Prov. 21:1).
19. **Calvinism and Arminianism**
	1. CARM considers the official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church regarding Mary and Salvation to be non-Christian and lead to damnation. Yet, CARM recognizes that there are Christians within the Roman Catholic Church and are such, despite official Catholic Teaching. Likewise, Eastern Orthodoxy also has false teachings regarding salvation and is likewise a false church. Yet, like Catholicism, there are undoubtedly saved individuals with that organization.
20. **Catholicism & Eastern Orthodoxy**
	1. CARM considers the official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church regarding Mary and Salvation to be non-Christian and lead to damnation. Yet, CARM recognizes that there are Christians within the Roman Catholic Church and are such, despite official Catholic Teaching. See CARM's section on Roman Catholicism. Likewise, Eastern Orthodoxy also has false teachings regarding salvation and is likewise a false church. Yet, like Catholicism, there are undoubtedly saved individuals with that organization.
21. **Christian Church**
	1. God calls Christians to His Church where the Word of God is preached, where baptism and the Lord's Supper (communion) are administered, where believers are discipled, and where believers serve to build up one another (1 Thess. 5:11; Eph. 4:29). There is no one true earthly ecclesiastical body that is "the true church" with a hierarchical structure. Rather, the True Church consists of all true believers wherever they might be.
22. **Church Membership**
	1. Church membership varies in structure and requirements among different churches and denominations. Nothing in Scripture speaks of church membership regarding a local body where individuals commit to submission to that body via signed documents. In some churches, membership is assumed to be in place by simple regular attendance, even though there is no legal, official agreement. Other times it is a formalized (and often legal) contract where a person agrees to be subject to the ecclesiastical body of the local congregation. Formal agreements are not a requirement to be a member of the body of Christ at large since it is not found in the New Testament.
23. **Church Officers**
	1. God calls qualified Christians to be ordained and to serve Jesus Christ in special leadership capacities, i.e., Elders, Deacons, Ministers of the Word, and Evangelists. The offices of pastor and elder are limited to qualified men only called by God, recognized by the body, and meet the biblical standard of eldership (Tit. 1:5-9). Women are not to be pastors or elders and are not to hold positions of spiritual authority in the Christian Church, where that authority is exercised over men (1 Tim. 2:11-15; 3:11-13; Tit. 1:5-9).
24. **Rapture**
	1. The event where, upon Jesus' return, those who have died in Christ and those Christians who are then alive will be physically caught up to the clouds and meet the Lord Jesus in the air. We will then forever be with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:16-5:2). Because of the diverse opinions among Christians regarding the rapture, CARM considers pre-tribulation rapture, mid-tribulation rapture, and post-tribulation rapture to be within the scope of Christian orthodoxy.
25. **Second Coming & Preterism**
	1. Jesus Christ will bodily and visibly return from heaven to earth with great glory and majesty as is prophesied in Acts 1:9-11. CARM rejects full preterism, the teaching that Jesus returned in 70 A.D. (refuted by Acts 1:9-11), but affirms that partial preterism is also within orthodoxy. Partial preterism states that much of what was proclaimed by Christ was fulfilled in the first century and much will be fulfilled before the return of Christ.
26. **Millennium**
	1. Because of the diverse opinions among Christians regarding the millennium, CARM's position is that amillennialism, premillennialism, and postmillennialism are each within the scope of Christian orthodoxy.
27. **Spiritual Realm**
	1. There is a spiritual realm of angels and demons. Angels serve God and carry out his will. Generally speaking, demons are fallen angels (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6) who war against God and who will ultimately face eternal punishment (Matt. 25:41; 2 Per. 2:4). Christians cannot be demon-possessed (Matt. 12:44–45).
28. **Eternal Judgment**
	1. All who are not justified by faith in Christ and his sacrifice on the cross will face eternal, conscious, and agonizing judgment away from the presence of God (Matt. 8:12; Luke 16:19-31; Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8)
29. **Evangelism**
	1. All Christians ought to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, which states that Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead three days later (1 Cor. 15:1-5). As a whole, we are called to proclaim the gospel to all people in every nation (Matt. 28:19-20). Also, evangelism includes the Christian's attempt to refute false doctrines, false religions, and whatever else might contradict the word of God. But we are to do this without insult (1 Pet. 3:15) so that, if perchance, God would grant them repentance (2 Tim. 2:25).
30. **Kingdom Work**
	1. Part of being a Christian means participating in expanding the Kingdom of God. Every Christian is to work for this end according to the gifts given him or her by the Lord (Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 12). Not all are pastors, evangelists, or teachers (1 Cor. 12:4-11), but each Christian is expected to do his or her part to promote the gospel whether it be by prayer and/or tithing, and/or teaching, and/or bearing and training children, and/or evangelism, etc.
31. **Morality and sexuality**
	1. Homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, pedophilia, bestiality, necrophilia, cross-dressing, transgenderism, fluid sexual identity, lying, bearing false witness, adultery, wife-swapping, pornography, fornication, coveting, etc., are all sinful practices, are against scriptural revelation, are contrary to proper living, and are not acceptable to the CARM ministry as normal or approved behaviors. Still, we do not hate or persecute those who practice these things. Instead, we pray for their deliverance and salvation while exposing their sins and calling them to repentance as we do with all people.
32. **Marriage**
	1. Marriage is between one man and one woman. Sexual intercourse is to be had only within that bond, not outside of it. Marriage is dissolved upon death. Marriage can also be dissolved due to adultery (Matt. 19:9) and abandonment (1 Cor. 7:15).
33. **Heresy**
	1. Heresy is any doctrine that deviates from the Christian Church's historical, orthodox, and biblical position throughout Church history as judged from a Protestant perspective. Some heresies are damnable (denying the Deity of Christ, denying Christ's physical resurrection, denying justification by grace through faith, etc.). Some heresies are not damnable (advocating women pastors, practicing polygamy, divorce for convenience's sake, etc.) But there are also teachings within Christianity that are debatable, whereas differences of opinion are not heresy (eating or not eating meat, worship on Saturday or Sunday, etc.) See Rom. 14:1-12.
34. **Open Theism**
	1. CARM rejects open theism. Open theism states that God does not exhaustively know all future events, that God learns, and that God can make mistakes in his expectations. Some open theists say that God self-limits his knowledge of peoples' future free will choices. Other open theists deny God's exhaustive knowledge of the present. Open theists advocate that human free will is the final deciding factor in God's choosing people regarding salvation. Open theism is not scriptural, and CARM rejects it as a false representation of God's attributes.
35. **Molinism**
	1. CARM rejects Molinism. Molinism advocates middle knowledge, which is the assertion that God knows what any free will choice would be of any person at any time in any circumstance and that God's final deciding factor in choosing people regarding salvation as well as choosing which future events to actualize are based on this knowledge. Molinism is similar to open theism in that it advocates human free will as the contributing, final cause of God's decrees. CARM does not assert that Molinists are not Christian but that they are holding to aberrant theology.
36. **Living**
	1. Where possible, Christians are to live in peace with all men, suffering wrongs, false accusations, and misrepresentations with love and patience. However, Christians are free to defend themselves (Luke 22:36) and promote the truth of Christianity by correcting false teachings and refuting error (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:15). They are free to use the political system and its laws in order to promote a more godly and moral society. Christians should live in the world as examples of godliness and are not to participate in the sinful passions of the world.
37. **Creation and Evolution**
	1. God created the universe and all that is in it by his sovereign effort. God brought the universe into existence by the exertion of his will. Within Christianity, there is room for the interpretation of the six creation days (Gen. 1:1-31) to be literal seven 24-hour periods and longer periods. Believing either does not negate one's Christian faith. Nevertheless, Adam and Eve were real people, created by God, just as Genesis says. CARM does not affirm macro-evolution (the formation of life on earth from a single cell that evolved via natural selection over millions of years into the species all over the earth) or theistic evolution (that God guided macro-evolution to bring humanity into existence). CARM denies them both. However, microevolution, the modification of existing species with existing genetic information that allows species to adapt to environments, is within the realm of Christian orthodoxy. We did not evolve from other species into our present state. God did not guide the evolution of species by which humanity, the animal kingdom, or the plant kingdom was developed. The general theory of evolution is unscriptural and counter-factual.