

For your information, inspiration and intercession, please study this ICCP Discussion Document from the Reformation 500 Church Consultation in Wittenberg, Germany, October 2017, in preparation for the upcoming [Reformation 500 Global Church Council Zürich](#) , 15-19 July 2019.

If you have any suggestions on how these may be improved, or to communicate the support of your church, mission, or ministry, write to the [International Church Council Project](#) .

ARTICLES of AFFIRMATION and DENIAL

Article I

We affirm that only Christians will spend eternity with God in Heaven and that all unbelievers will spend eternity in hell.

We deny that the doctrines of universalism, annihilationism, conditional immortality, reincarnation, purgatory and post-death conversion may be derived from Scripture.

Matthew 25:46; Revelation 22:11, John 5:28-29; Romans 1:20-25

Article II

We affirm that the doctrine of the conscious eternal punishment of the lost must be derived from the scripture and from scripture alone. We further affirm that the doctrine of the conscious eternal punishment of the lost has always been the teaching of the mainstream church.

We deny that the doctrine of life after death may be based upon “near death” or “after death” experiences, or through the testimony of mediums or other supposed contacts with the dead.

Hebrews 9:27; Matthew 13:40-42.

Article III

We affirm that God’s justice and eternal wrath are ontologically and rationally consistent with His love and mercy. We further affirm that the wrath of the Lamb is the same as the wrath of God and that the Son is not more merciful than the Father.

We deny that it is unjust for God to grant mercy those who believe and not to those who reject Him. Justice is what we deserve. Mercy is God’s undeserved favour.

Matthew 25:41; 2 Corinthians 5:19

Article IV

We affirm that God is the Judge of all mankind and that all humans will be resurrected and judged. Those whose names are not found in the Book of Life will be consigned to the lake of fire for eternity.

We deny that there are any other options than Heaven and Hell and we deny that there is any escape for those consigned to the lake of fire.

Revelation 14:11, Revelation 20:10-15,

Article V

We affirm that God's integrity would be violated if He did not punish sin, but we also affirm that God justly assigns degrees of punishment to those in hell.

We deny that eternal torment in the lake of fire is inconsistent with the Bible and with the Holiness and Justice of God.

Matthew 11:21-24; Revelation 20:10; Matthew 10:15; Romans 6:23; Galatians 6:7; Isaiah 6:3

Article VI

We affirm that the suffering in the lake of fire is real, conscious and without end.

We deny that it is Biblical to diminish or compromise the reality and consciousness of the unending punishment in hell.

Matthew 10:28; Mark 9:43-47; Luke 16:24-26; Matthew 13:49-50, Revelation 20:10

Article VII

We affirm that there is no Salvation for anyone apart from Christ's Atonement: neither for those who have heard, nor for those who have not heard the Gospel. We further affirm that the benefits of Christ's Atonement can only be obtained during one's present life on earth.

We deny that there is any Salvation or escape from hell after one's death.

Acts 4:12; John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Romans 1:20-25; Titus, 2:14; Luke 16:26

Article VIII

We affirm that the false doctrines of universalism, annihilationism, conditional immortality and post-death Salvation diminish the importance of preaching, the reality and terror of hell and the necessity of repentance in this life and thus minimize the importance and urgency for missions and Evangelism.

We deny that these false doctrines will, by taking away the threat of eternal punishment, induce the lost to more readily accept God's message of Salvation.

Luke 16:31; Matthew 28:19-20; Daniel 12:1-2

Definitions:

"Universalism" Every human will eventually be saved from Adam on.

"Annihilationism" Unsaved humans will cease to exist after death at some point.

"Conditional immortality" Immortality is only conferred upon believers.

"Post-death conversion" Humans have a 2nd chance to be saved after death.

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