



# Ninety-Five Theses to the Episcopal Church

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Signed and composed by members of the Episcopal Fellowship for Renewal, under the patronage of St. Jude<sup>1</sup>

*“We all want progress, but if you’re on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; in that case, the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive.”*

~ C.S. Lewis, *The Case for Christianity*

The following statements are coming from parishioners and priests of the Episcopal Church who are committed to its flourishing and faithfulness. In true Protestant fashion, and in honor of our faith tradition, they will be framed as ninety-five theses in hopes that, unlike the Roman leaders during the Reformation, the Episcopal Church will honor the call to return to the traditional values of the English Reformers, the Doctors of the Anglican Church, the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Catechism of the Book of Common Prayer, the Book of Homilies, the Church Fathers, and the Creeds—Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian. Additionally, the three Anglican authorities: Scripture, Tradition, and Reason.

1. Christian bishops, priests, deacons, and other ministers must affirm that Jesus is truly God and truly man.
2. Christian ministers must affirm that Jesus physically and bodily rose from the dead.
3. Christian ministers must affirm that Jesus was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
4. Christian ministers must affirm the Second Coming of Christ.
5. Christian ministers must affirm the reality of Eternal Life.
6. That since the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds affirm all the above doctrines, Christian ministers who publicly recite them in their churches, while privately or subtly denying them, are liars.<sup>2</sup>
7. Christian ministers must affirm the authority of Scripture as the Word of God. Any denial of Scripture’s authority in the determination of doctrine and administration of discipline shall not be tolerated.
8. Christian ministers must affirm the authority and divine inspiration of Holy Scripture and avoid questioning it on the basis that it is a culturally relative or historically unreliable text.
9. Christian ministers must readily affirm the promise of Eternal Life after death in the New Creation, so that the faithful may be given true hope in Christ.
10. Christian ministers who attack the authority of Christ, the Apostles, the Church Fathers, the English Reformers, or the Doctors of the Church attack the very ground they stand on.
11. Christian ministers must affirm the existence of miracles, as Scripture testifies.<sup>3</sup>
12. The Church must affirm the reality of original sin.
13. The Church must affirm the reality of God’s judgment upon sin.

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<sup>1</sup> This document was inspired by Redeemed Zoomer’s Ninety-Five Theses to the Presbyterian Church USA.

<sup>2</sup> 1 John 2:4

<sup>3</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:14-20



14. The Church has no authority to explicitly deny the existence of eternal damnation, given that Jesus Christ spoke so plainly of it.
15. The Church must affirm that God is all-powerful, or omnipotent.
16. The Church must affirm that God is all-knowing, or omniscient.
17. The Church must affirm that God is all-good, or omnibenevolent.
18. The Church must affirm that there is only one true God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as described in the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds.<sup>4</sup>
19. The Church must affirm that Christ is the only way to God.
20. The Church must affirm that Christianity is absolutely true and the only way to salvation.
21. Given that the foundational documents of the Anglican Church, principally the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of 1571, uphold all of the above doctrines, the Church does not have the authority to deny said doctrines.
22. While liberation theology and the social gospel contain elements of truth, they cannot take the place of the Biblical Gospel, as they change its message from redemption of sin and eternal life into belief in an earthly utopia.
23. Pantheism is heretical as it denies the true nature of God. God is not to be understood as an all-encompassing spiritual oneness.
24. Process Theology denies God's absolute, eternal nature and replaces it with pantheism; therefore, it should not be taught in Christ's church.
25. While we can unite with other religions in earthly matters, such as promoting understanding and the common good, we cannot unite with them in spiritual matters.<sup>5</sup>
26. Agnostic, Atheistic, Hindu, Buddhist, Pagan, Wiccan, Satanist, or otherwise occultic religious beliefs, practices, symbols, rituals, and idols are to be utterly rejected and should never be allowed in Christ's Church.<sup>6</sup>
27. There is only one God in the Old and New Testaments and to deny that is to make God relative, changeable, and not absolute.<sup>7</sup>
28. The purpose of studying theology is to approach the absolute truth about God and reflect on what he has revealed to us.
29. Our theology should not relativize absolute truths about God that have been revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.
30. Ministers should not affirm theology that is essentially Unitarian Universalist.
31. The Church should be much quicker to discipline ministers who deny the divinity of Christ than to discipline ministers who will not bless same-sex unions or who decline to ordain women to the priesthood.
32. Everyone should be held to the same standard of Christian sexual ethics regardless of orientation or personal situation. Hypocritically condemning some sin while ignoring others is not righteous.
33. Churches should spend more time talking about Eternal Life in Christ than about contemporary political issues.
34. The aim of priests should be to teach their congregations Christian doctrines, rather than casting doubts about such doctrines into the minds of the faithful.
35. The Church should be more concerned about theological doctrine than about political and social ideologies.

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<sup>4</sup> 1 John 5:7

<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:33, Proverbs 13:20

<sup>6</sup> 1 Samuel 15:23, Revelation 21:8, 2 Chronicles 33:6, Galatians 5:19-21, Deuteronomy 18:10-14

<sup>7</sup> Hebrews 13:8, Isaiah 40:8, Psalm 119:89, Psalm 102:27, Psalm 90:2, Psalm 33:11, Malachi 3:6, James 1:17



36. The Church should be united in essential theological beliefs and grant individual Christian liberty in non-essential beliefs, rather than the inverse.
37. Preaching about God's love without preaching about God's holiness and wrath toward sin is just as bad as the inverse.
38. To make sin *merely* about systemic injustices reduces the Gospel to an ineffective political message with no spiritually redemptive power.
39. Social justice is an important part of the Gospel but not the whole of the Gospel, and it too often has become a euphemism for a partisan political agenda.
40. Priests should strive not to give their congregations the impression that God makes no moral demands of them.
41. Parishes should hold their members to high personal moral standards.
42. Priests should not hesitate to preach against personal sin.
43. Incumbents should not be denied the tenure of the office of Rector. Bishops should abolish the office of Priest-in-Charge for all but interim situations.
44. All parishes should present a clear theological message consistent with Scripture, the doctrines of historic Anglicanism, and the example of the Early Church.
45. Homilists should not hesitate to preach theological dogma from the pulpit.
46. It is crucial for every parish member to be directed toward having a vibrant, living faith in Jesus Christ. We need to get to know Him for who He truly is, as was taught in Scripture.
47. There should be limits on theological diversity within the Church, especially when it reaches the point of denying the essentials of the faith as defined by our historic creeds.
48. Children are to be taught the Scriptures, theology, and Catechism of the Book of Common Prayer so that they know why they come to church, what to do whilst in church, and how to live their faith outside of church.
49. It is necessary that parish leaders teach Christian apologetics to children and adults so that they know how to defend the Christian faith before others.
50. Confirmands are not to be confirmed if they do not profess belief in the essentials of Christianity.
51. People with Agnostic, Atheistic, Hindu, Buddhist, Pagan, Wiccan, Satanist, or otherwise non-Christian beliefs must not be admitted to or allowed to remain in positions of leadership, teaching, or authority in the Church.
52. Priests should not invite non-believers to receive the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist "lest they bring judgment upon themselves."<sup>8</sup>
53. The Church does not have the authority to prevent the Eucharist from being offered to believers in its churches on any grounds other than excommunication or lack of Trinitarian baptism.
54. Churches and their congregations ought to regularly engage in evangelism.
55. The point of missionary work should be to address people's spiritual needs by telling them about Christ and the Good News of his Resurrection, in addition to attending to their physical needs.
56. The Church must do social justice work on its own terms, not on the terms of any secular political factions. Christ and His true Gospel are to be the primary motivations for the charity and social justice work done by the Church.

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<sup>8</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:29



57. The words of Scripture and the Creeds should not be changed to insert “gender-inclusive” or “gender-neutral” language that changes the meaning of the original text. Likewise, the Hymnal and the Book of Common Prayer should not be altered for similar purposes, such as the rites of Holy Matrimony being rewritten to insert “marriage” between two men, two women, or anything else outside the union of one man and one woman into one flesh.<sup>9</sup>
58. All are to be baptized in the name of the “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit [or Holy Ghost],” not in any alternatives such as “Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer;” nor should feminine pronouns be applied to God in these texts, as that renders their baptism invalid and ineffective.<sup>10</sup>
59. While the divine essence of the Lord has no gender, God has revealed Himself as “He,” so He is to be referred to as such. Jesus Christ was, is, and forever shall be a man; thus, He should always be referred to in the masculine, as doing otherwise denies his historicity and humanity.<sup>11</sup>
60. We should be more concerned about our worship language being offensive to God than it being offensive to our worldly culture.
61. The Church should avoid alliances with any secular political factions.
62. Scripture, reason, tradition, and natural law—not contemporary culture and politics—should be the sole authorities for the Church’s stances on issues of sexuality and gender.
63. The Church must strongly condemn adultery, extramarital sex or fornication, polygamy, sexual activity involving minors, incest, rape, and bestiality.<sup>12</sup>
64. The Church must strongly condemn pornography.<sup>13</sup>
65. There must never be risqué or sexually-themed displays in the Church.
66. Due to not only the teaching of Holy Scripture, but also scientific advancements such as ultrasound technology, it is obvious that abortion is the direct taking of a human life.
67. The Church should support societal efforts to protect the safety of innocents, including the unborn, as well as encourage the upholding and following of secular laws consistent with Scripture and Christian righteousness.
68. Christian ministers are to model Biblical morals for their congregations and dioceses and to be held to a high standard of holiness.
69. Bishops should not wield episcopal authority to discipline churches, priests, bishops, or parishioners who have not explicitly rejected the doctrines and practices of Anglican Christianity or who have otherwise done nothing wrong according to Biblical morality.
70. Bishops should use episcopal authority to discipline ministers who misuse the sacraments, perform un-Christian ceremonies, teach heretical beliefs, or lead notoriously sinful lives.
71. The use of legal action to seize the property of dissident parishes is poor conduct by Church ministers and is to be avoided.
72. The Church should continue to condemn drunkenness, drug abuse, excessive gambling, and all self-destructive vices whilst providing support to those struggling with them.

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<sup>9</sup> Genesis 2:24, Mark 10:7-8, Matthew 19:4-5, Ephesians 5:31

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 28:19

<sup>11</sup> John 18:6-8, Isaiah 43:25

<sup>12</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Matthew 15:18-19, Leviticus 18:20, Leviticus 18:23, Deuteronomy 22:25

<sup>13</sup> Matthew 5:28-29, James 1:14-15, 1 John 2:16, Galatians 5:19, Ephesians 5:11-12



73. The Church must not ignore the voices of those who call the Church to repentance, as the Reformers did during the Protestant Reformation.
74. The Church should allow itself to be corrected by evangelical churches and thinkers in certain aspects, as when John Wesley inspired Anglicans to correct some of their errors.
75. In order to revive itself, the Church ought to adopt a more evangelical mindset and elevate the role of personal conversion, evangelism, discipleship, and confession.
76. The Church will likely die out if it continues to drift away from the historic faith.
77. The Church has a commitment to diversity yet is not itself diverse, due to its lack of evangelism and its de-emphasis of Biblical theology.
78. Despite its progressive ideals and desire to “dismantle and heal white supremacy,”<sup>14</sup> the Church remains one of the least diverse religious groups in the United States.<sup>15</sup>
79. Progressive Anglicans claim to want to elevate non-white voices, yet ignore the cries for repentance and calls to obedience to God’s law from overwhelmingly non-white Anglicans from the Global South.
80. The Church claims to uphold the traditions, beliefs, and practices of Anglicanism, yet tolerates countless theological errors that the foundational Anglican texts such as the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion and the Book of Homilies explicitly declare to be heretical.
81. The Church bears the name of “church,” yet tolerates theological errors that the Church Fathers explicitly declare to be heretical.
82. The Church speaks constantly of inclusivity, yet largely fails to create an environment inclusive of those who hold orthodox Biblical views.
83. The Church usually calls for justice only in ways that are acceptable to the political left and theological liberals.
84. The Church’s rhetoric on social issues and current events is frequently indistinguishable from that of progressive political commentators.
85. The Church is quick to criticize evangelicals for conflating faith and politics, yet dedicates a far greater share of its rhetoric to political issues than do evangelicals.
86. In offering solely a progressive political message, the Church offers people nothing they cannot get from secular culture, which is one reason why it gains so few new members.
87. The progressive faction of the Church is seldom self-critical, except to repent of not being progressive enough.
88. The Church keeps pushing for more and more alterations to Christian doctrine, despite the risk that they will further divide the body of Christ and cause more schism.
89. Convicting people of sin and showing them their need for a Savior, as opposed to making people feel affirmed, should be our focus; convicting people of sin, when done in a spirit of love and charity, is healthy and will help us to grow in our faith in God.
90. Bishops, priests, deacons, and other ministers who claim the title of Christian while rejecting the essentials of the faith risk facing God’s judgment.
91. Bishops, priests, deacons, and other ministers who lead their congregations astray risk facing God’s judgment.

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<sup>14</sup> [Racial Reconciliation](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Pew Research Center](#)



92. Seminary professors who make it their goal to replace the godly values of seminarians with heretical beliefs and political ideology risk facing God's judgment.
93. Seminaries must not make affiliations with any group that affirms heretical beliefs or practices lest they risk facing God's judgment.
94. Bishops, priests, deacons, and other ministers who not only tolerate but affirm and encourage what they know to be sin according to Scripture for the sake of not offending people risk facing God's judgment.
95. Bishops, priests, deacons, and other ministers who lie to the public and claim to represent Christ while denying His humanity, divinity, commandments, and teachings are using the Lord's name in vain and risk facing God's judgment.

We call for these concerns to be addressed at the next General Convention. This is part of our commitment to being God's servants and to help restore the Church we revere. This document will be sent to as many congregations and leaders in the Episcopal Church as possible. We believe that retreatism only leads the Church to falter further. Hence, we are not trying to form a new Anglican province; we are calling for reform within The Episcopal Church.<sup>16</sup> We welcome Episcopalians with similar goals to join and participate in this same mission, and we encourage those who believe in the cause of renewing The Episcopal Church to sign this theses by visiting our website.

*Let us return to the Lord, and long live the Episcopal Church!*

Sincerely,

 **The Episcopal Fellowship for Renewal**

Responses should be directed to the Episcopal Fellowship for Renewal: [www.episcopalrenewal.org](http://www.episcopalrenewal.org), [episcopalrenewal@gmail.com](mailto:episcopalrenewal@gmail.com), [@episcopalrenewal](https://www.instagram.com/episcopalrenewal)

To get involved, visit <https://www.episcopalrenewal.org/join>

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<sup>16</sup> We understand that not all theses may apply to every church; however, we want to include them all as a reminder—if not an attempt—to guide the Church back onto the true Christian path.