

What Evangelicals Believe

Final statement, based on a survey among members of the EEA Theological Commission and the board of FEET (Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians)

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Evangelicalism or Evangelical Christianity is a worldwide, trans-denominational movement, that has developed within Protestant Christianity.

It is a very diverse movement of churches, organisations and individuals, which takes on local colours all over the world. What they have in common are the following doctrines and characteristics:

A. Classic Christian doctrines

Evangelicals hold to the classic Christian doctrines of God the Almighty Creator of all things, the Trinity of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), and of Jesus-Christ being truly God and truly man.

In accordance with the Apostolic Confession, Evangelicals believe the eternal life, the resurrection of the body, and the return of Jesus-Christ to establish the Kingdom of God in the renewed/new creation.

B. Classic Protestant convictions

Evangelicals hold to the classic Protestant convictions concerning salvation. Considering the reality of sin as a consequence of the Fall, Evangelicals believe that the essence of the Gospel consists of salvation, forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God, only by the grace of God, and solely through faith in Jesus's death and resurrection

C. Evangelical characteristics

1. Salvation received through faith and conversion

Evangelicals are persuaded that a personal decision of turning to God the Father in repentance and faith through the mediating and redemptive work of Christ Jesus is needed to receive salvation. This conversion, which is initiated by the Holy Spirit, and which can be gradual or instantaneous, is sometimes (but not systematically) called 'being born again'.

2. Importance of sanctification and Christian service

Emphasising the call to follow Jesus Christ in daily private and public life, Evangelicals recognise the importance of sanctification, spiritual growth and Christian service, through the Holy Spirit who instructs, guides and equips the believer.

3. Authority of the Bible

Evangelicals consider the Bible as the inspired word of God, his revelation to humanity, accurate in all that it teaches, and the supreme authority in matters of belief and conduct.

4. Emphasis on witness and spreading the Gospel

Evangelicals emphasise the calling to bear witness to the Christian message and to spread it to all mankind, considering Jesus-Christ to be the unique Lord and Saviour.

5. Unity of all believers and participating in a local Church

Evangelicals believe in the unity of all who believe in Jesus-Christ for their salvation and their daily conduct. This universal or 'invisible' Church transcends denominations and institutions. At the same time they emphasise the need to be part of a local church community.