

Statement of Faith

A. The Holy Scriptures

1. The Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God. The Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation, verbally inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed (1 Cor 2:7-14; 2 Pet 1:20-21; 1 Thes 2:13; 1 Cor 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16).
2. A literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture is foundational to understanding the Word of God. We embrace and defend that a literal, 6 day, 24 hour creation account as recorded in Genesis 1 lays the foundation for how one understands all of the Scriptures. The Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Gen 1:31; Ex 20:11, 31:17; Matt 5:18, 24:35; John 10:35, 16:12-13, 17:17; 1 Cor 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15-17; Heb 4:12; 2 Pet 1:20-21).
3. God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man without error in the whole or in the part (2 Pet 1:20-21; Matt 5:18; 2 Tim 3:16).
4. Whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it (John 7:17, 16:12-15; 1 Cor 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20).

B. The Godhead

The Triune God, eternally exists in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit, co-eternal in being, coincidental in nature, co-equal in power and glory and having the same attributes and perfections (Deut 6:4; 2 Cor 13:14).

1. The Person and Work of God the Father

- a. God the Father who is Holy, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent, so loved the world that He gave His son, Jesus Christ, to become our only means of salvation, and is sovereign and calls the sinner, and becomes the believer's Father at the new birth.
- b. God the Father sends the Holy Spirit to abide in the believer forever in response to the Son's request, and that this takes place at conversion.
- c. God the Father answers believing prayer when asked in accord with His will in Jesus name.

2. The Person and Work of Christ

- a. The Lord Jesus Christ, is the Eternal and only begotten Son of God, second Person of the Trinity,

who is co-equal, co-substantial, and co-eternal with the Father, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (John 1:1-2, 14; Luke 1:35; Matt 1:21).

b. By His perfect obedience to God and by His suffering and death as the immaculate Lamb of God, He secured forgiveness of sins and the gift of perfect righteousness for all who trusted in God prior to the cross and all who would trust in Christ thereafter. Through living a perfect life and dying in the place of all who believe, the Just for the unjust, Christ bore their punishment, appeased the wrath of God against them, vindicated the righteousness of God in their justification, and removed the condemnation of the law against them. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion (Is 53:4-12; John 1:12-13, 29; Heb 9:12; 1 Pet 2:24).

c. Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body and Bride, unto Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thes 4:13-18; Rev 20).

d. The Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23):

- Believers at the Bema (Judgment Seat) (1 Cor 3:10-15; 2 Cor 5:10)
- Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matt 25:31-46; 2 Thes 1:7-8)
- Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Rev 20:11-15)

e. As the only Mediator between God and man, the Head of His Body the church, and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David, He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (1 Tim 2:5; Eph 1:22, 5:23; Col 1:18; Is 9:6; Luke 1:31-33; Matt 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Thes 1:7-8).

3. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

a. The Holy Spirit is a Person who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and that He is the supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Cor 12:12-14; Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13-14).

b. He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth; and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (John 16:13; 1 John 2:20-27; Eph 5:18).

c. God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; that gifted men holding the office of evangelists, pastor-teachers; and other gifted believers, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues, and the working of sign miracles were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers, and therefore, have ceased (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:4-11, 13:8; Eph 4:7-12; 2 Cor 12:12; Heb 2:3,4).

d. The Holy Spirit is given by God to believers, to conform them to Christ-likeness, and also intercedes in believer's prayers, and that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted, for example (Rom 8:26-28; John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15).

C. The Total Depravity (Inability) of Man

Man was created in the image and likeness of God, free from any sin and in innocence, perfect in all his faculties, but that in Adam's sin, the race fell, inherited a sinful nature and became alienated from God; and ever since abiding under God's wrath, and that man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable and unwilling to remedy his lost condition. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gen 1:26-27, 2:16-17, 3:1-19; Isa 64:6; Jer 13:23, 17:9; John 3:18, 36; Rom 3:23, 5:12,17-19, 6:23; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 2:1-3,12; 1 Tim 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

D. Salvation

1. Salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins, and not on the basis of human merit or works, but solely on the merit of Jesus Christ and His righteousness, and His shed blood (Eph. 2:5-10; John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; I Peter 1:18-19).

2. Regeneration, born-again or born from above, is that change brought about in the soul by the Holy Spirit, by which a new nature and a spiritual life, not before possessed, are imparted, and the person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus; a holy orientation is given to the mind, the will subdued, the dominion of sin broken, and the affections changed from a love of sin and self, to a love of holiness and God. This change is instantaneous, immediate, and effected solely by the power of God, in a manner incomprehensible to reason; the evidence of it is found in a changed attitude of mind, the fruits of righteousness, and a newness of life, and without regeneration salvation is impossible.

3. Justification is God's gracious and full pardon upon which He declares those who, by faith alone, believe in Christ Jesus alone, and repent of their sins. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God, and is apart from any work or virtue of man.

4. Election is the eternal act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners (Rom 8:28-30; Eph 1:4-11; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 2:10; 1 Pet 1:1-2).

a. Sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of believers to share the Gospel, nor of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Eze 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Rom 9:22-23; 2 Thess 2:10-12; Rev 22:17).

b. Since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith, and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).

c. The unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part or to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Eph 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Pet 1:2).

d. Election is not based on random, haphazard, or abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Rom 9:11-16).

e. This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character

as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, and will exclude boasting and promote humility (Matt 11:25-28; 2 Tim 1:9).

5. Repentance and Faith are two sides of the same coin - in that they are a solemn obligation and inseparable graces. True faith is always accompanied by repentance from sin. Repentance is agreeing with God that you are sinful, confessing your sins to Him, and making a conscious choice to turn from sin and pursue Christ and obedience to Him. It isn't enough to believe certain facts about Christ, even Satan and his demons believe in the true God, but they don't love and obey Him. True saving faith always responds in obedience (Luke 13:3,5; 1 Thess 1:9; Matt 11:28-30; John 17:3; I John 2:3; James 2:19; Eph 2:10).

6. The Lordship of Jesus Christ - Jesus is Lord (Master, Ruler) over all creation and that all judgment has been committed to Him, and that His Lordship is essential to the salvation of His people and must be the ruling concern in the life of the church. Submission to Jesus' Lordship is not a secondary act of salvation by the believer entering into discipleship - we do not make Jesus Lord, He is Lord. Therefore, He has absolute authority over our lives and we owe Him absolute allegiance, obedience, and worship (Luke 6:46; Tit 2:12-14; Col 1:16; Ps 103:19; Rom 10:9).

E. The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers

1. All the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1,38-39; I Cor. 1:4-8; I Pet 1:5).

2. It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

F. The Current State of the Believer

1. Every saved person is a new creature in Christ and at salvation our old self was crucified with Him and the new spiritual man was, in the likeness of God, created in righteousness and holiness of the truth (2 Cor 5:17; Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:24).

2. In this respect, every saved person is involved in a daily conflict - the new creation in Christ doing battle against the old unredeemed flesh - but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. While total eradication of sin is not possible in our earthly life, the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin (Gal 5:16-25; Eph 4:22-24; Phil 3:12; Col 3:9-10; 1 Pet 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

G. Separation

1. Out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious Lord is so worthy of our total consecration and loyalty, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God such that they do not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. Therefore, all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord, and that separation from all religious apostasy, heresy, and false teaching, and all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God (II Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1).

2. Regarding marriage and sexuality, we believe and teach that God has ordained marriage for His glory. It is the sacred union between a man and a woman. The purposes of marriage are companionship (Gen. 2:18) and procreation (Gen. 2:18). It also serves to deter sexual immorality. (I Cor. 7:9). We believe and teach that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of a man and a woman in holy matrimony before God. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23).

H. Missions

It is the obligation of the saved to witness by life and word of the truths of Holy Scripture and to seek to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 5:19-20).

I. The Church

1. Jesus Christ is the Head over all things to the Church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present age (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27; I Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2).
2. The establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:27; 20:17,28-32; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).
3. The church is distinct from Israel and is a mystery not revealed until this age (1 Cor 10:32; Eph 3:1-6; 5:32).
4. The autonomy of the local church free of any external human authority or control is clearly taught (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; I Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7,13; I Pet 5:1-4).
5. The one supreme authority for the church is Christ and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, overseers; and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Cor 11:3; Eph 1:22; Col 1:18; Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11; 1 Tim 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet 5:1-5).
6. These leaders are to lead or rule as servants of Christ and have His authority in directing the church, and the congregation is to submit to their leadership (1 Timothy 5:17-22; Heb 13:7, 17).

J. Angels Elect and Fallen

1. Angels are spirit beings created directly by God during the first week of creation. As created beings, angels were made to serve God and are not to be worshiped. We believe Satan is a created angel, originally made perfect by God, who incurred the judgment of God when he introduced sin into the universe by rebelling against his Creator. As a result of his rebellion, Satan and the angels who followed him (we now call demons), were removed from their exalted position in heaven (Ps 148:2-5; Job 38:4-7; Heb 1:14; Rev 19:10; 22:8-9; Is 14:12-17; Eze 28:11-19).
2. During this age, Satan and his demons actively oppose the plans of God and seek to deceive men from obeying God and His truth. Though Satan and his demons are presently active in the world today, they will ultimately be sent to the lake of fire for eternity (1 Pet 5:8; 2 Cor 4:3-4; Rev 20:1-10).

3. Though we believe that demon possession of unbelievers is possible, we do not hold that true Christians can be demon possessed or demonized. The Bible also nowhere encourages believers to engage Satan and demons directly, whether by speaking to them, binding them, or casting them out (Heb 2:14; 1 John 4:4).

K. The Last Things

1. Redeemed Souls - The souls of the redeemed at death are absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection when spirit, soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Rev 6:9-11; Luke 23:43; Phil 1:23; 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:21-24; 1 Thess 4:13-17; Rev 20:4-6; Phil 3:21; 1 Cor 15:35-44, 50-54; 2 Cor 5:8).

2. Unredeemed Souls - The souls of unbelievers after death remain in conscious misery until the second resurrection when, with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26; Matt. 25:26-41; II Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6,7; Mark 9:43-48; Rev. 20:11-15).

3. The bodily resurrection of all souls will take place, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5, 6, 12, 13).

4. Rapture of the Church - The first event to take place is the imminent, pre-tribulational, premillennial, coming of Christ for church age souls, to translate His church from this earth and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Thess 4:16; Titus 2:13; John 14:1-3; 1 Cor 15:51-53; 1 Thess 4:15- 5:11; 1 Cor 3:11-15; 2 Cor 5:10).

5. The Tribulation - Immediately following the removal of the church from the earth the 7 year tribulation will commence where the wrath of God in righteous judgment will be poured out upon an unbelieving world, and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth. This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (John 14:1-3; 1 Thes 4:13-18; Jer 30:7; Dan 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thes 2:7-12; Matt 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thes 2:7-12; Dan 9:24-27; Matt 24:15-31; 25:31-46).

6. The Second Coming and Reign of Jesus Christ - Upon Jesus Christ's physical return with His saints to this earth, Old Testament and deceased tribulation saints will be raised in glory, and the living will be judged in the Battle of Armageddon. Jew and Gentile believers alive at His coming, will enter the Millennial Kingdom in their mortal state. Then He will sit on the throne of David, and shall subdue all enemies and reign in righteousness for a thousand years (Dan 12:2-3; Rev 20:4-6; Matt 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-30; Rev 20:1-7; Eze 37:21-28; Dan 7:17-22; Rev 19:11-16; Dan 7:17-27; Rev 20:1-7; Isa 65:17-25; Eze 37:21-28; Zech 8:1-17; Deut 28:15-68; Matt 21:43; Rom 11:1-26; Jer 31:31-34; Eze 36:22-32; Rom 11:25-29).

7. The Judgment of the Lost - After these things shall be the judgment of the Great White Throne when the unsaved dead shall be raised and judged, this will result for them in eternal punishment in the lake of fire which is the second death (Rev 20:7-9; Matt 25:41; Rev 20:10; John 5:22; 28-29; Matt 25:41; Rev 20:11-15).

8. The Eternal State - At the end of the Millennium and judgment of unbelievers, the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved and replaced with a new earth, wherein only righteousness dwells. Following this, the heavenly city will

come down out of heaven and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another. Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (2 Pet 3:10; Eph 5:5; Rev 20:15; 21:1-27; 22:1-21; John 17:3; Rev 21-22; 1 Cor 15:24-28).