



Something to Chew On

Statement of Faith

The Bible

The sole basis of our belief is the Bible, composed of the 66 books of the Old and New Testament. We believe that the Scriptures in its entirety originated with God and that it was given through the instrumentality of chosen men. Scripture thus at one time speaks with the authority of God and reflects the backgrounds, styles, and vocabularies of the human authors. We hold that the Scriptures are infallible and inerrant in the original manuscripts. They are the unique, full, and final authority on all matters of faith and practice, and there are no other writings similarly inspired by God. (*2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21*)

God

We believe that there is one true, holy God, eternally existing in three persons— Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each of Whom possesses equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality. In the beginning God created out of nothing the world and all the things therein, thus manifesting the glory of His power, wisdom, and goodness. By His sovereign power, He continues to sustain His creation. By His providence, He is operating throughout history to fulfill His redemptive purposes.

(*Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Genesis 1:1; John 1:1; Colossians 1:15-17*)

Salvation

The central purpose of God's revelation in Scripture is to call all people into fellowship with Himself. Originally created to have fellowship with God, man defied God, choosing to go his own independent way, and thus was alienated from God and suffered the corruption of his nature, rendering him unable to please God. The fall took place at the beginning of human history, and all individuals since have suffered these consequences and are thus in need of the saving grace of God.

(*Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3*)

The salvation of mankind is, then, wholly a work of God's free grace, not the result, in whole or in part, of human works or goodness, and must be personally appropriated by

repentance and faith. When God has begun a saving work in the heart of any person, He gives assurance in His Word that He will continue performing it until the day of its full consummation.

(Ephesians 1:4-7; Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 3:19; John 3:16; Philippians 1:6)

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the eternal second Person of the Trinity who was united forever with a true human nature by miraculous conception and virgin birth. He lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father and voluntarily atoned for the sins of all by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which he lived and died. He ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, where He, the only Mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own. He shall come again to earth, personally and visibly, to consummate history and the eternal plan of God, the Father (*John 1:1; Luke 1:34-35; 1 John 2:1-2; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 Thess. 4:13-18*)

The Holy Spirit

The essential accompaniment of a genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ is a life of holiness and obedience, attained by believers as they submit to the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity. He was sent into the world by the Father and the Son to apply to mankind the saving work of Christ. He enlightens the minds of sinners, awakens in them a recognition of their need of a Savior and regenerates them. At the point of salvation, He permanently indwells every believer to become the source of assurance, strength, and wisdom, and uniquely endows each believer with gifts for the up-building of the body. The Holy Spirit guides believers in understanding and applying the Scripture. His power and control are appropriated by faith, making it possible for the believer to lead a life of Christlike character and to bear fruit to the glory of the Father. (*Ephesians 1:13; John 16:7-15; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Galatians 5:22-25*)

Human Destiny

Death seals the eternal destiny of each person. For all mankind, there will be a resurrection of the body into the spiritual world and a judgment that will determine the fate of each individual. Unbelievers will be separated from God into condemnation. God's judgment will reveal His justice in consigning them to perpetuate in eternal retribution their own rejection of God. Believers will be received into eternal communion with God and will be rewarded for works done in this life.

(Hebrews 9:27; 2 Peter 2:4-9; Matthew 25:46; Revelation 21:1-8)

The Church

The corollary of union with Jesus Christ is that all believers become members of His body, the Church. There is one true Church universal, comprised of all those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Scripture commands believers to gather together to devote themselves to worship, prayer, the teaching of the Word, the observance of baptism and communion as the sacramentarian ordinances established by Jesus Christ, fellowship, service to the body through the development and use of talents and gifts, and outreach to the world.

(1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:42-47; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Wherever God's people meet regularly in obedience to this command, there is the local expression of the church. Under the watchcare of elders and other supportive leadership, its members are to work together in love and unity, intent on the one ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ.

Faith and Practice

Scripture is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. This church recognizes that it cannot bind the conscience of individual members in areas where Scripture is silent. Rather, each believer is to be led in those areas by the Lord, to whom he or she alone is ultimately responsible. We believe the Statement of Faith to be an accurate summary of what Scripture teaches. All partners are asked to refrain from advocating doctrines that are not included in the Statement of Faith in such a way as to cause dissension.
(2 Timothy 3:16; Romans 14:1-5, 19; Romans 12:16-18)