

# **GRACE CHAPEL**

## **FAITH STATEMENT**

### **Sec. 2.1 -Statement of Faith**

- (A) The Holy Scriptures. We believe the Old and New Testament Scriptures are the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God- breathed and are, therefore, the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. The pastor, taking the lead in agreement with the elders, shall expound a faithful interpretation of Scripture, consistent with Grace Chapel's statement of faith. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)
  
- (B) We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined rules of life that define man's responsibilities in successive ages. God divinely ordered stewardships to direct man according to His purpose. The law, the church, and the kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:2-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6)
  
- (C) The Godhead. We believe there is one living, eternal and true God, manifested in three distinct persons – The Father, the Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Equal in divine perfection they execute distinct yet harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption. (Deut. 4:35, 6:4, Matthew 28:19, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, Ephesians 4:4-6)

(D) God the Father. We believe in God the Father, an infinite personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom power and love; that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men; that He hears and answers prayer; and He saves from sin and death all who come to him through Jesus Christ. (Matt. 5:48, Matt. 6:9, Matt. 7:11, John 3:16, John 16:23, James 1:13,17)

(E) The Person and Work of Christ

(1) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, 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. (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8)

(2) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His sinless life and death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36, Romans 3:24-25, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 2:24, 1 Peter 2:5-8)

(3) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2)

(F) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

- (1) We believe the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, the third Person of the Trinity. In the present age He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness, He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony, He is the agent in the new birth, indwells all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, baptizes them into the body of Christ, seals them unto the day of redemption and every believer is commanded by God to be continually filled by the Holy Spirit, and He bestows gifts as He wills. (Acts 1:8, Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Ephesians 5:18-20, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17)
- (2) We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)
- (3) We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the church to do the work of the ministry. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12)
- (4) We believe that the experiences, gifts and movings of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts have not ceased but are available to believers for strengthening, encouragement and comfort. (1 Cor. 12 & 14; Acts 2,8 & 10)

(G) The Depravity of Man. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a

sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is depraved and, of himself, unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

(H) Salvation. We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that all sins, except blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, are forgivable. (Matt. 12:31-32; John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 1 John 1:9)

(I) The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.

(1) We believe that once a person is saved, he is kept by God's power and remains secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1, 38-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; 1 Pet. 1:4-5)

(2) We believe that 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)

(J) The Church

(1) We believe that the Church, which is the Body and the espoused Bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again believers. (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27)

- (2) We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1- 13; Titus 1:5-11)
- (3) We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or controls, and any affiliations, societies, organizations, associations, or agencies this church affiliates with to further the objectives stated in the Purpose Statement are not authoritative in matters of church practice or belief. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19- 31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)
- (4) We recognize water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:36-38; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)
- (K) Separation. We believe that believers should maintain a godly testimony and live in such a way that that their lives do not bring reproach upon their Savior. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, sinful pleasures and practices and to refrain from all immodest appearances. We stand against any and all worldly philosophies that seek to destroy or undermine the truth of Biblical Christianity. (Lev. 19:28; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)
- (L) The Second Coming of Christ. We believe in that blessed hope, the personal, imminent return of Christ, who will rapture His church. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints, to

establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom. (Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

**(M) The Eternal State.**

- (1) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, 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)
- (2) We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, 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. (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6)
- (3) We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment 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 eternal conscious punishment and torment. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)

**(N) The Personality of Satan.** We believe that Satan is the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

- (O) Creation. We believe that the Genesis account of creation is God's historical account of His creation of the universe. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11)
- (P) Civil Government. We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every member is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey the state unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith at which time we must obey God rather than the state. (Matt. 22:15-22; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Titus 3:1-2; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)
- (Q) Human Sexuality.
- (1) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery, identity or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

- (2) We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman for life. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

**(R) Family Relationships**

- (1) We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)
- (2) We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife sacrificially as Christ loves the church and gave himself for it. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle examples and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3- 5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

- (S) Divorce. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)



- (T) Abortion and the Value of Human Life. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44, Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)
- (U) Love. We believe that we should demonstrate God's love and forgiveness for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)
- (V) Lawsuits Between Believers. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between Grace Chapel congregants. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from congregant's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32; Matt. 18:15-17)

- (W) Missions. We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to go to local, domestic and foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)
- (X) Giving. We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17- 18; 1 John 3:17)
- (Y) **Poor and Needy.** We believe the Bible speaks of our responsibility to show love to the poor and needy of this world by giving of our time, money, and resources, both as individuals and the church. Our response to the needs of "the least of these" is a reflection of our love for Jesus Christ and demonstrates true faith through our actions. (James 1:27, 2:15-16, Matt. 25:37-40, Gal. 2:10).

## SECTION 2.2 ROLE OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, are the teachings of this church.