

Grace Chapel's Statement of Faith

Preamble: As a body of God's believing children, the faith of this membership is based in that revelation of God's holy will found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Scripture stands alone as the sole authority in all matters of faith and doctrine. We acknowledge and openly accept that there are differences in interpretation on some matters, e.g., mode of Baptism, order of end time events, etc. Therefore, the preceding statement does not in any way replace the Scriptures or claim to be an exhaustive or exclusive statement of Biblical truth. It is intended rather to relate us to the continuing body of historic Christianity which finds its basis in the person and work of Jesus Christ as given in the Gospels and the significance of that person and work expressed in the Old and New Testaments. We would be one with all true believers in Christ both past and present.

The Bible

We believe that the Bible, consisting of 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is inerrant in its original text, was given by divine inspiration, and is the Word of God (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:19-21; I Thess. 2:13), and that it constitutes the only perfect rule and final authority in all matters pertaining to Christian faith and practice (Acts 17:11; Isa. 8:20).

The Godhead

We believe there is only one living and true God, perfect, infinite, and eternal (Matt. 5:48; I Kings 8:27; Psalms 90:2), Who is unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, love, and truth (Mal. 3:6; I Tim. 1:17; Gen. 17:1; Isa. 6:3; Psalms 19:9; Ex. 34:6; John 3:16), Who is the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the Universe (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3; Neh.

1:2, 3; Psalms 103:19; Eph. 1:11), Who eternally exists in three persons; namely, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who are equal in their divine perfection and harmonious in the execution of their distinct offices (Matt. 28:19; John 5:17; John 14:16, 17; John 15:26; Eph. 2:18).

Man

a. His Creation

We believe that man was created by a special act of God; that man was created in the image and likeness of God, possessing personality and innocence; that man was endowed with power or rational and responsible choice in view of moral ends; and that the purpose of the creation of man was to glorify God (Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10; Acts 17:24-28; Isa. 43:7).

b. His Fall

We believe man was subject to trial in the Garden of Eden, in order to test man's loyalty to his Maker (Gen. 2:15-17); under trial, man lost his holy estate, was alienated from God, and became depraved physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually, by voluntarily transgressing His positive command and yielding to the enticement of Satan. In consequence of the fact of disobedience, the entire human race became involved in guilt and in corruption, so that in every heart, there is, by nature, that evil disposition which eventually leads to responsible acts of sin and to just condemnation (Gen. 3:1-6; Rom. 5:12, 13; 3:10-12, 23; 1:18-31; Eph. 4:18; I John 1:8-10).

The Son

We believe that in the fullness of time, the eternally pre-existent Son humbled Himself and assumed man's nature by being born of the virgin Mary, thus uniting organically and indissolubly the divine and human natures in their completeness in the unique

person of Jesus Christ (Isa. 9:6; Matt. 1:18-25; John 1:14; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:14).

We believe that God has provided redemption for man through the mediatorial work of Christ, who voluntarily offered Himself on the Cross of Calvary as a perfect sacrifice for sin, the just suffering for the unjust, bearing sin's curse, and tasting death for every man (Matt. 20:28; Heb. 9:11, 12; 1 Pet. 3:18; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 2:9; I Tim. 2:5, 6).

We believe that on the third day, He rose from the dead and appeared to various of His followers and that He ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He performs the ministry of intercession. He shall come again, personally and visibly, to complete His saving work and to consummate the eternal plan of God (1 Cor. 15:3-8; Luke 24:39; Rom. 8:34, 10:14; Acts 1:11; Jude 6:1; Thess. 4:17).

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He proceeds from the Father and the Son (John 15:26). His principal ministry since His advent at Pentecost is:

- To reprove or convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8-11);
- To restrain the progress of evil until God's purposes are accomplished (II Thess. 2:7);
- To bear witness to the truth preached (Acts 5:30-32);
- To regenerate those who repent of their sins and exercise faith in Christ (John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5);
- To instruct, comfort, and guide God's children (John 14:16-18, 26; 16:13);
- To sanctify them (II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:1-3);
- To empower them for life and service (Rom. 8:2; Acts 1:8; Eph. 3:16; I Cor. 2:1-4; I Thess. 1:5);
- And to quicken their mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11).

Salvation

We believe that salvation is wholly of grace (Eph. 2:8; Titus 3:5), being planned by the Father, provided by the Blood of the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13; John 3:3-5).

In justification, the believer is absolved of guilt and declared righteous in the sight of God (Rom. 5:1; 4:4, 5; Acts 13:39).

In adoption, the believer is constituted a member of the household of God (Rom. 8).

In regeneration, the principle of a new life is implanted in the believer's heart (John 3:3; Titus 2:14).

In sanctification, the principle of a new life is strengthened and developed increasingly (Rom. 6-8).

In glorification, this work will come to its perfect culmination in an ultimate and complete renewal of human nature (I Cor. 13; I John 5:11-13).

Repentance and faith are essential attitudes to be found in any one person who rightly claims the blessing of salvation.

Repentance and faith emphasize the fact that it is not through human merit of any kind but through the grace of God that redemption is achieved through the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

The Church

We believe that the church, invisible and universal, is an organism composed of the redeemed of all ages. We believe that the church is manifest locally and visibly through companies of believers in Christ, voluntarily joined together, and meeting at stated times for worship and to observe the sacraments. We believe that it is the duty of the church:

- To give the Gospel as a witness to all men (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8);

- To build itself up in the most holy faith (Jude 20, 21; Eph. 4:11, 12, 16; Acts 20:32); and
- To glorify God (I Peter 4:11).

Sacraments

We believe that Christian sacraments are outward rites appointed by Christ not as a means of salvation, but as visible signs and seals of the facts and realities of salvation.

a) Baptism

We believe that Baptism by water is the public confession of Christ as Savior and Lord. Baptism is a symbol of one's union by faith and covenant with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection unto newness of life (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38-41; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:11-12; Acts 8:36-39).

b) The Lord's Supper

We believe that the Lord's Supper should be observed by all believers in obedience to the command: "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). The Lord's Supper consists in partaking of the consecrated emblems of bread and wine and symbolizes the death of Christ for the remission of our sins and our continual dependence upon Him for our sustenance. The Lord's Supper witnesses the mystical union of the believer with Christ (John 15:4). The union of believers around the Lord's table should be open to all who are in right relationship with one another and with the Lord (Matt. 25:26-30; Luke 22:19-20; I Cor. 10, 11:23-26).

Last Things

We believe that at the end of the age, Christ will descend from Heaven, the dead shall be raised bodily, that they and those living at the end of the age shall be judged by God; and that those redeemed will enter into full possession of eternal bliss in the presence of God, that Satan will be bound, and the wicked shall be condemned to eternal death and separation from God (I Pet.

4:17; I Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Acts 1:11; Acts 24:15; Matt. 25:31-46).