

THE GOSPEL

Declaration of Faith

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.” – Romans 10:9-10 NLT

“Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” – John 17:3 NIV

Statement - We believe in the only true God. We believe that our sins separate us from God and that we need to be forgiven of our sins and saved from an eternal separation from God. We believe that Jesus Christ is the only One that can save us and restore us to God. We believe in Jesus Christ's birth, life, death, resurrection, and promised return. By placing our faith in Jesus Christ, we receive God's grace, mercy, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life with God. We believe this is the Good News that is central to the message of the Bible (John 17:3; Romans 5:10-12 & 18-19; John 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-10).

KEY BELIEFS

The Bible

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” – 2 Tim 3:16-17 NASB

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. – Hebrews 4:12 ESV

Statement - Scripture, what we call "The Bible," is uniquely inspired by God. The Bible reveals God Himself, documents His activity and interaction with certain people, demonstrates His plan to save and restore His fallen creation, and serves as His standard of communication with us and guide for right beliefs, practices, and lifestyles (2 Tim 3:14-17; Heb 1:1-3; 2 Peter 1:19-21).

The Triune God

“Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only true God!” – Deuteronomy 6:4 CEV

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” – Matthew 28:19-20 NIV

Statement - The Father, The Son (Jesus Christ), and The Holy Spirit are individual members of the Trinity, a mysterious unity of three persons in One God who is infinite, all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, and perfect in love (Deut 6:4; Matt 28:19-20; John 1:1, Acts 5:3-4; Phil 2:5-6; Matt 1:23; Matt 3:16-17; 1 Timothy 1:17; Romans 11:33-36; 1 John 4:8, 5:6-8).

Our Father

“Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.’” – Matthew 6:9-13 ESV

“But a time is coming—and now is here—when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such people to be his worshipers. God is spirit, and the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” – John 4:23-24 NET

Statement - God The Father goes by many names and titles in Scripture but desires that we call Him "Father." He sustains, provides, protects, and forgives (John 4:23-24; Eph 2:4-5; Matt 6:9-13; James 1:17; Rev 4:8-11; 5:13).

Jesus Christ

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” – John 1:1-5 NKJV

“The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.” – John 1:14 MSG

Statement - Jesus Christ is the Son of God, "God With Us," God in human form, and the source of grace and eternal life through His virgin birth, His sinless life, His death on the Cross, and His resurrection (Isaiah 7:14; John 1:1-18; Matt 1:23; 1 Cor 15:3-8; Col 1:15-20).

The Holy Spirit

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.” – John 14:16-17 NLT

“But I tell you that I am going to do what is best for you. That is why I am going away. The Holy Spirit cannot come to help you until I leave. But after I am gone, I will send the Spirit to you. The Spirit will come and show the people of this world the truth about sin and God’s justice and the judgment.” - John 16:7-8 CEV

Statement - The Holy Spirit of God lives in every true follower of Jesus Christ, guiding and empowering them to live and act like Jesus Christ, and providing special gifts to those who believe. The purpose of these gifts is to strengthen the Church and to reveal to others the character of God. The Holy Spirit also convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment and speaks only what comes from The Father and from The Son, Jesus Christ (John 14:16-17; John 16:7-14; 1 Cor 12:1-11; Gal 5:16-26; 1 John 3:23-24; 1 John 4:13-16).

Sin

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.” – Romans 3:23 NLT

“As it is written: ‘None is righteous, no, not one.’” – Romans 3:10 ESV

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” - 2 Peter 3:9 NIV

Statement - Sin separates us from God. The punishment for sin is eternal separation from God. But because of God’s promise, there is hope (Matthew 25:46; Romans 3:10 & 23; 2 Peter 3:9).

Grace and Salvation

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” – Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV

“My sheep recognize my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them real and eternal life. They are protected from the Destroyer for good. No one can steal them from out of my hand. The Father who put them under my care is so much greater than the Destroyer and Thief. No one could ever get them away from him.” – John 10:27-29 MSG

Statement - We can experience the grace and forgiveness of God and the promise of eternal life by committing ourselves to Jesus Christ by faith. We cannot earn God’s grace; we only receive it as a gift because of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Because this gift is given by God to us on the perfection of Jesus Christ alone, and not as a result of our own efforts, nothing can separate us from God’s Love (Romans 5:10-12, 18-19; 6:23; Acts 16:31; Eph 2:8-9; 1 Cor. 15:3-8; Romans 8:38-39; John 10:27-30).

Following Jesus

“And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.” – Luke 9:23-24 ESV

“But be sure you live out the message and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves. For if someone merely listens to the message and does not live it out, he is like someone who gazes at his own face in a mirror. For he gazes at himself and then goes out and immediately forgets what sort of person he was. But the one who peers into the perfect law of liberty and fixes his attention there, and does not become a forgetful listener but one who lives it out—he will be blessed in what he does.” - James 1:22-25 NET

Statement - Following Jesus is an all-day, every-day lifestyle. While we still commit sins, Jesus offers forgiveness and restoration when we turn back to Him. Also, being a follower of Jesus means more than simply believing what Jesus said. Being a follower of Jesus means doing what Jesus did (Luke 9:23-26; Romans 7:14-25; 1 John 1:9; James 1:22-25; John 14:12-14).

The Local Church

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” – Acts 2:42 NIV

“Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” – Hebrews

10:23-25 NIV

Statement - When connected to a local church gathering, followers of Jesus worship, train, and serve better. This is true in part because we need it, in part because God does big things when we're together, but ultimately because He wants us to be together (Hebrews 10:23-25; Acts 2:42-47; Acts 4:32-37; Revelation 2 and 3).

Baptism and The Lord's Supper

"Jesus left Galilee and went to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John kept objecting and said, "I ought to be baptized by you. Why have you come to me?" Jesus answered, "For now this is how it should be, because we must do all that God wants us to do." Then John agreed. So Jesus was baptized. And as soon as he came out of the water, the sky opened, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down on him like a dove. Then a voice from heaven said, "This is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with him." – Matthew 3:13-17 CEV

"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." - 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 ESV

Statement - Jesus instituted a public commitment ceremony we call "Baptism" and a memorial ceremony we call "The Lord's Supper" or "Communion." Being immersed in water is a physical representation of the decision to follow Jesus. The Lord's Supper is done to remember Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross, as well as to look forward to His return. We celebrate these regularly as visible expressions of our devotion to Jesus. (Matt 3:13-17; Matt 28:19-20; Matt 26:26-28; Luke 22:17-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26).

Christ's Return

"As they were still staring into the sky while he was going, suddenly two men in white clothing stood near them and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking up into the sky? This same Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will come back in the same way you saw him go into heaven." – Acts 1:10-11 NET

"Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done." – Rev 22:12 NIV

Statement - Jesus is coming back someday and we anticipate His Return with excitement! This return ushers in a new existence for all humanity, living and dead. God will exact judgment, Sin and Death will be destroyed, and followers of Jesus Christ will spend eternity together with God while those who reject Jesus Christ will remain separated from God (Acts 1:10-11; Rev. 20:11-15; Rev. 21:1-4; Rev 22:12).

Engaging Culture

"Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world." – 1 Peter 2:12 NLT

"In the Messiah, in Christ, God leads us from place to place in one perpetual victory parade. Through us, he brings

knowledge of Christ. Everywhere we go, people breathe in the exquisite fragrance. Because of Christ, we give off a sweet scent rising to God, which is recognized by those on the way of salvation—an aroma redolent with life. But those on the way to destruction treat us more like the stench from a rotting corpse.” – 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 MSG

Statement - Throughout history, local churches have taken specific stands on issues to act as “salt and light,” providing prophetic voices to their respective cultures and governing authorities. Accordingly, we recognize our responsibility to faithfully continue that responsibility to our cultures and governing authorities. We further declare that no government, group, nor individual may compel us to violate our convictions nor restrict our public expression and practice of these convictions for any reason, legislative or otherwise (Daniel 3:16-18; Matthew 5:13-16; 10:16-20; Mark 12:17; Acts 4:13-20; Romans 1:32; 2 Corinthians 2:14-16; 1 Peter 2:12, 3:15-16)

Humility in Faith

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” – Isaiah 55:8-9 NIV

“For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.” – Romans 12:3 ESV

Statement - We are committed to our convictions, beliefs, and practices, yet humble about ourselves and our finite understanding of such things. We recognize that only God has the complete picture and perfect understanding of anything. Ultimately, we put our full trust in God alone and rely exclusively on God's mercy and grace to make up for where we fall short in ourselves, and in our understanding, beliefs, convictions, and practices (Isaiah 55:6-11; Romans 12:3; Romans 11:33-36; Hebrews 11:1,6; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Sola gratia, sola fide, solo Christo, sola Scriptura, soli Deo gloria - AJM