

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT OF GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

The Holy Scriptures:

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed. We believe in the normal, literal consistent interpretation of the Scriptures and in a dispensational understanding of God's progressive revelation (**2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12-13**).

The Godhead:

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (**Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14**).

The Person and Work of Christ:

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without sin, yet never ceasing to be God, was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man (**John 1:1-2, 14; Luke 1:35**).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice in providing an unlimited atonement for the sins of the whole world; and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (**Romans 3:24-25; 1 Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5; Hebrews 2:9; 1 John 2:2**).

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 ministries of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (**Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2**).

The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit:

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration; baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them at the moment of salvation, unto the day of redemption (**John 16:8-11; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14**).

We believe that 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; Ephesians 5:18**).

The Total Depravity of Man:

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and that man is totally depraved, and of himself, totally unable to remedy his lost condition (**Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12**).

Salvation:

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as the representative and substitutionary sacrifice for all people; and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that all who have repented of their sins and have put their trust in Him are saved by grace through faith on the basis of His shed blood. Such are kept by God's power, are accepted in the Beloved, and are absolutely secure in Christ forever (**John 1:12; 10:27-30; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 1:6-7; 1 Peter 1:5, 18-19; Ephesians 2:8-10**).

We believe that every saved person possesses an old nature and a new nature. The new nature is a direct result of the new birth, through the indwelling Holy Spirit of God. Because of this new nature, we are new creations in Christ, old things are passing away, and all things are becoming new. This new nature gives the believer a dynamic capability to live victoriously over the world, the flesh, and the devil on a day-by-day basis (**2 Corinthians 5:17**).

Although all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural, it is imperative that each believer be aware that righteous living and godly works are proper evidences of the fruit of the Spirit. Therefore as believers, we should obey the Word of God, seek those things which are above, remembering that a victorious and fruitful Christian life is possible only for those who, in gratitude for the infinite and undeserved mercies of God, have presented themselves wholly to Christ (**John 14:23; Romans 6:13; 8:12-13; Galatians 5:16-25; Titus 2:14; 3:8; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 2:6; 3:5-9; 5:4**).

The Church:

We believe that the Church, which is the body and espoused bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons in this present age. We reject those teachings which place the beginning of the New Testament Church subsequent or prior to the Day of Pentecost (**Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 12:13-14; 2 Corinthians 11:2**).

We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (***Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11***).

Ordinances:

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ established two ordinances: believer's water baptism, practiced by immersion, and the Lord's Supper, observed as a memorial of His death. We reject the teaching which denies these ordinances for practice in the Church today (***1 Corinthians 11:23-24; Acts 8:35-37; 10:47-48; 1 Corinthians 1:14; Acts 8:12***).

Biblical Unity and Separation:

We believe that all the saved should recognize that they belong to Christ. Believers should be separated unto Him in order to live in such a manner as to glorify and honor Him in thought, word, and deed and should exercise their liberty in such a way as to not confuse or cause a brother, weaker in the faith, to stumble or to violate his own conscience. Believers should be separated from worldly and sinful practices and any such ecclesiastical associations and relationships which would not reflect obedience to the Word of God (***1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9; Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4-5***).

We seek to cooperate wherever practicable with other churches and missions whose doctrine and policy are in harmony with those of this Church. We believe that it is the duty of the people of God to seek to maintain the unity of the faith. However, we recognize that the Lord has commanded believers to separate from religious apostasy and from believers who have seriously deviated from Christian doctrine or proper Christian behavior and persist in willful disobedience. We will not endorse or promote the program of any apostate church, assembly, or individual. This Church will not cooperate with the World Council of Churches, affiliated groups, or neo-evangelical groups (***Ephesians 4:1-6; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 John 9-11; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:7-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-14; Titus 3:10; Matthew 18:15-17***).

Every proposed alliance must be considered in light of the Church's commitment to biblical separation. As we seek to be as consistent as possible in this difficult area of separation, our purpose is to emphasize the necessity of purity in ministry and testimony. It is to, furthermore, seek to bring to bear upon the issues of our day the principles set forth in the Word of God while not becoming embroiled in controversy and personalities. It is our stated desire to maintain an attitude characterized by righteousness, love and humility.

Please refer to the special section at the end of this doctrinal statement entitled: "Movements Contrary to God's Word."

Missions:

We believe that the Great Commission is incumbent upon the Church today. We accept as binding upon ourselves the commandment to make disciples from all nations, to baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and to teach those disciples to observe all the things which Christ has commanded us (**Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20**).

The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts:

We believe that the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts upon each individual believer for Christian service and the edification of the Church (**Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 1 Peter 4:10-11**).

We believe that the Church Age was initiated with miracles and other sign gifts to confirm the message of Christianity and that with the completion of the New Testament prophecy, tongues, and other sign gifts ceased, thus making the Scriptures the only and final test of truth (**2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3, 4; 1 Corinthians 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:28-31; 14:1-28**).

We believe that God hears and answers the prayer of faith for the sick and afflicted, in accordance with His own will (**John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15**).

Dispensationalism:

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural and literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or periods during which God dealt with man according to a specific set of principles. These dispensations are not means of salvation, but rather, divinely ordered stewardships through which God directs man according to His plan and purpose in each age. Three of these - the dispensation of Law, of the Church Age, and of the Millennial Kingdom - are the subjects of detailed revelation in God's Word (**John 1:17; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 2 Corinthians 3:9-18; Galatians 3:13-25; Ephesians 1:10; 3:2-10; Colossians 1:24-25; Hebrews 7:19; Revelation 20:2-6**).

We believe that salvation is always by grace through faith (the Old Testament saints looking forward to the cross, the New Testament saints looking back to the cross) regardless of the dispensation in which the believer may have lived. God's purpose of salvation by grace through faith alone has always been based upon the substitutionary work of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross as evidenced by the shedding of His precious blood, His subsequent death, burial and resurrection (**Hebrews 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4**).

The Personality of Satan:

We believe that Satan is a created being, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man, the god of this age; and that he shall

be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (*Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10*).

The Second Advent of Christ:

We believe that the literal interpretation of the Holy Scripture will ultimately lead one to believe in the "Blessed Hope"; the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; the Rapture of the Church; and in His subsequent return to the earth with His saints after the seven-year Tribulation to establish His Millennial Kingdom (*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9; Revelation 3:10*).

The Eternal State:

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (*Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13*).

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; Revelation 20:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17*).

We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death, 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; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 20:11-15*).

Creation:

We accept the literal, biblical account of creation and reject all other explanations of origins.

Marriage and Sexuality:

Sexual intimacy is a wonderful gift of God that is only to be expressed between a man and a woman, as defined genetically, within the love and bonds of monogamous marriage. Therefore, we believe that any other form of sexual intimacy is both immoral and a perversion of God's gift (*Genesis 2:24-25; Proverbs 5:18; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; Leviticus 18:1-30; Proverbs 6:32; 1 Corinthians 6:18; Romans 1:26-27*).

Movements Contrary to God's Word:

Included below is a representative listing of movements contrary to the Word of God and to the beliefs of this Church.

1. Theological Liberalism (Theological Liberalism, Neo Liberalism)

Theological liberalism is the movement which denies or questions the doctrines of the faith (i.e., inerrancy of Scripture, the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, the creation of man by God, the sinfulness of the human race, the judgment of God upon unredeemed humanity, the substitutionary death of Christ) and affirms that man's highest responsibility is the social welfare of his fellow man.

2. Ecumenism (Ecumenism, Ecumenical Movement)

Ecumenism is that movement which seeks the organizational unity of all Christianity and ultimately of all world religions. Its principal advocates are the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

3. Ecumenical Evangelism (Cooperative Evangelism)

Ecumenical evangelism is that effort to promote the gospel by bringing orthodox believers into an unequal yoke with theological liberals, Roman Catholics, and other such divergent groups.

4. Neo-Orthodoxy

Neo-Orthodoxy is that movement which affirms the transcendence of God, the finiteness and sinfulness of man, and the necessity of supernatural divine revelation of truth. At the same time, it seriously departs from orthodoxy, accepts the views of so-called higher criticism, denies the inerrancy of the Bible as historic revelation, and accepts religious experience as the criterion of truth - so abandoning fundamental Christian doctrine. Neo-Orthodoxy is especially deceptive because its unorthodox tenets are expressed in the jargon of evangelical terminology.

5. New Evangelicalism (Neo-Evangelicalism, Neo-Conservatism)

Evangelicalism is a term which loosely refers to all who are in Christ. More recently, the term has come to designate those individuals and groups who may not place a major emphasis on ecclesiastical or personal separation. Neo-evangelicalism is that movement within evangelical Christianity characterized by a toleration of and dialogue with theological liberals. Its historic emphasis has been placed upon the social application of the gospel. Neo-evangelicals often have weak or unclear doctrines of biblical inspiration, biblical creationism, future events, dispensationalism, and separation. It is known for its attempts to accommodate biblical Christianity to the modern mind.

6. Charismaticism (Charismatic Movement)

The Charismatic Movement is an ecumenical expression of unity which is based more particularly in a misapplication of the doctrine of the body of Christ and spiritual gifts than it is on the solid foundation of the Word of God. The movement places a high priority on religious experience, often incorrectly classified as the "baptism of the Spirit," "speaking in tongues." The emphasis on these (and other misunderstood gifts of the Spirit) forms the basis for unity and fellowship. Often, all other biblical or religious distinctions become inconsequential. By their persistent involvement with false religions, they compromise the integrity of the gospel. While many charismatics are our brethren in Christ, they must be lovingly faulted for the great harm which they do to His testimony.

Because the Charismatic Movement occupies a pervading influence among believers today, it is especially important for faithful believers to understand the following biblical distinctions.

a. The miraculous gifts enumerated in **1 Corinthians 12:8-10** were singularly related to the reception of revelation from God until the New Testament was completed (1 Corinthians 13:8). Upon completion of the New Testament, the gifts relating to the reception of revelation from God ceased because there was no more necessity for them.

b. Paul's teaching concerning the miraculous gifts, as recorded in **1 Corinthians 12-14**, was intended to correct severe problems associated with their use and to control their application.

c. The spiritual gifts which are primarily misunderstood by the charismatics are the "sign gifts" - healing, tongues, and prophecy (special revelation). These gifts, specifically designated by the apostles and our Lord as signs and wonders (**Mark 16:15-18; Acts 2:43; 5:13; 6:8; 8:6, 13; 14:3; 15:2; Romans 15:18-19; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3-4**), and as such, they were primarily signs for the Jewish people. Note **1 Corinthians 1:22; Matthew 11:1-6; 12:38-42; 16:1-5**. As the Jews were set aside in God's purpose for this age, as the apostles turned to the Gentiles, and as the New Testament Scriptures became complete, the necessity for the sign gifts ended.

d. Other spiritual gifts are given to believers for the purpose of building up the body of Christ and carrying on the work of the ministry. They can be found operative in believers who are obedient to the Word of God and submitted to the control of the Holy Spirit.

In summary, because all of the above stated movements have been divisive, have destroyed churches, and have severely compromised the vital and essential doctrines of the Bible, they are contrary to the Word of God. Therefore, proponents of any of these movements cannot be admitted into the membership of this Church.