

Statement of Faith for Tri-City Bible Church

Section 1: The Bible

We believe that God has given His complete written revelation (the Bible), which consists of 66 books. These books were given to mankind by means of the ministry of the Holy Spirit who superintended the transmission and the reception of God's message by the human authors (2 Peter 1:21). We teach the verbal (each word), plenary (as a whole) inspiration of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:1; Acts 3:21). God's Word is thus completely infallible and is inerrant in the autographs (Matthew 5:18; John 10:35). This revelation is the only such communication from God and is the sole authority for the believer's faith and conduct (Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:22-25). The process of inspiration ended with the writing of the book of Revelation (Revelation 22:18-19).

We believe that the books of Scripture should be interpreted as literally accurate, taking into account figurative language when demanded by Scripture's literary context. All proper interpretation is dependent upon the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-12) who enlightens the believer in harmony with the total teaching of Scripture (1 Corinthians 2:13; Ephesians 1:18; 2 Timothy 2:15).

We believe that God's revelation has been progressive (Hebrews 1:1-2), that individual salvation has always been by grace, through faith in God's provision (Romans 4:3; Hebrews 11), that God's stewardship requirements are expressed differently in different ages (Exodus 6:3; Ephesians 1:10, 2:1-9; Colossians 1:25-26; Hebrews 7:12), and that Scripture maintains a distinction between Israel and the Church (Jeremiah 32:37-39; Zechariah 12:10-12; Romans 11:11-31).

Section 2: The Doctrine of God

We believe that the triune God (Genesis 1:1, 26; Matthew 3:13-17) created all things that exist (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Hebrews 1:10). He created the universe out of nothing (ex nihilo) in six literal days (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11; Hebrews 11:3). Presently He sustains the created universe (Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:3). We further teach that the earth is not a product of evolution, but of divine fiat, being on the order of thousands and not millions of years old.

Section 3: The Doctrine of The Father

We believe that God is the Author of His eternal plan, which includes the creation of the universe and the election of the saints (Psalms 2:7-9; Acts 17:29; Ephesians 1:3-6). As the Creator, God is the Father of all human beings.

We believe that God chose the nation Israel as His elected nation whom He guides and protects. As the One who established this elected nation, God is the Father of Israel (Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 7:6-8).

We believe God is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, Whom He sent into the world to seek and to save the lost (Matthew 3:17; John 5:37; Luke 19:10).

We believe that God lovingly rewards and disciplines those who believe in Christ for their good (2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 12:7-11; James 1:17). In this most intimate sense, God is the Father of all His children in Christ (Matthew 6:32).

Section 4: The Doctrine of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity existing eternally (John 1:1-2, 8:58, 17:5; Titus 2:13), equal in essence with the Father (John 10:30, 14:9-11; Colossians 2:9), and having neither beginning nor ending (Hebrews 1:8, 13:8).

We believe that in the incarnation Jesus Christ became the God-Man (John 1:14, 18; Philippians 2:5-7; Hebrews 1:3), possessing in one Person a complete and perfect human nature as well as a fully divine nature (1 Timothy 2:5). The incarnation was accomplished through supernatural conception by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:28-35). As a result of this unique conception, Jesus Christ was preserved from a sin nature and lived a perfect, sinless life of full obedience to the Father (John 8:29, 46; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15, 7:26).

We believe that Christ, following His earthly ministry, voluntarily died as a substitutionary sacrifice, providing a perfect atonement for sin (Isaiah 53:5-6; Matthew 20:28; Luke 23:46; John 10:17-18; Romans 5:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:26). His body and blood were the propitiation, which satisfied the demands of God's holiness so that those who turn from sin trusting in His sacrifice alone may be saved from the penalty of sin (Mark 1:15; Romans 3:25-26; 1 John 2:2).

We believe Christ's death was followed by His physical resurrection (Matthew 28:5-6; John 20:24-29; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, 17-20), His bodily ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9-11; 7:55-56), and His present work of mediation on behalf of believers (Romans, 8:34; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1).

Section 5: The Doctrine of The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit—the third person of the Trinity—is God (Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16). He has the same essence as the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14) and possesses the same perfections (Psalms 139:7; Luke 1:35). The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the world is to convict the lost of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11), and to restrain the spread of evil (John 16:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:7).

We believe that the Holy Spirit performs vital ministries to the believer at the time of conversion, which include regeneration (Titus 3:5), baptism into Christ's body (1 Corinthians 12:13), permanent indwelling (1 Corinthians 6:19), and sealing for the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30). He also performs post-conversion ministries, which include control of one's life (Ephesians 5:18), illumination (1 Corinthians 2:12-14), guidance (Acts 16:6-10), assurance (Romans 8:16), comfort (Acts 9:31), and intercession (Romans 8:26-27).

We believe that the Holy Spirit gave two kinds of gifts to the Church - these being miraculous gifts and ministering gifts (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28). The miraculous gifts (miracles, healing, languages and interpretation of languages) were temporary in nature (1 Corinthians 13:8-13) and given to the Church in the apostolic age. Their two-fold purpose was to authenticate the apostolic messenger (2 Corinthians 12:12; Romans 15:19) and to confirm the apostolic message (Hebrews 2:4). The ministering gifts, designated "speaking gifts" and "serving gifts" (1 Peter 4:10-11), remain operative throughout the Church age.

We believe that direct revelation ceased with the close of the Canon when the Book of Revelation was written (Revelation 22:18-19). Therefore the gifts that operate today are non-revelatory in nature. We believe that no person possesses the gift of healing today. Yet God does hear and answer the prayer of faith. He can and indeed does heal the sick, suffering, and afflicted in accordance with His own perfect will (Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

Section 6: The Doctrine of Angels

We believe that God created spirit beings called angels (Psalms 148:1-5; Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:14).

We believe that one of these angels, Satan, rebelled against God and fell from his original state leading one third of the angels into sin (Matthew 25:41; Jude 6; Isaiah 14:12-17; Revelation 12:4). This was the origin of sin (John 8:44). As the chief adversary of God's people and the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4), Satan must be continually resisted by believers (Ephesians 6:13-18; James 4:7). The final destiny of Satan and his angels will be the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Jude 6; Revelation 20:10).

Section 7: The Doctrine of Man

We believe that Adam was the first literal man and Eve the first literal woman (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7). They were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) by direct acts of God on the sixth day of creation. At the time of their sin they constituted the entire human race (Romans 5:12; 1 Timothy 2:13, 14).

We believe that Adam and Eve were subjected to a moral test, which they failed (Genesis 2:16-17, 3:1-7). Adam's transgression brought sin into the human race. All men suffer the consequences of Adam's sin because Adam was the father of the human race (Romans 5:12). Thus a sin nature is passed to every person at the very point of conception (Psalm 51:5).

We believe that all men are sinners both by nature and by choice (Romans 3:10-13), are totally depraved and are incapable of saving themselves (Psalm 49:7-9; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8, 9). Sin results in separation from God (Isaiah 59:12) and the sentence of eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire (John 3:18; Revelation 20:12-15).

Section 8: The Doctrine of Salvation

We believe that God has not abandoned mankind to sin (Romans 5:8; 2 Peter 3:9) but in love has provided a way of salvation through Christ's shed blood (John 14:6; Hebrews 9:22, 26). Christ died as a substitute for mankind (Isaiah 53:4-6), providing salvation as a free gift available to all humanity (Roman 6:23, 10, 13; 1 John 2:2). Salvation may be appropriated only after hearing the gospel and yielding to the

convicting work of the Holy Spirit (Romans 10:9-10, 17; John 6:44).

We believe that those who believe the gospel message, personally repent of their sins and receive Christ as Lord and Savior are eternally secure forever (John 5:24, 10:27-29; Romans 8:31-39).

We believe that each believer is set apart to God from the power of sin positionally, progressively, and ultimately. This setting apart is called sanctification (Hebrews 10:10-14; Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 3:21). Positionally believers are, at the moment of conversion, eternally set apart as belonging to God by redemption, placed in the family of God as children, and endowed as joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:14-17; Hebrews 10:10-14). Progressively believers are to be yielded to the Holy Spirit's control through the Word of God, self-examination, confession of sin and repentance, watchfulness and prayer (1 Thessalonians 4:3, 5:23; 1 John 1:9, 2:29; Ephesians 5:18, 6:18; John 17:17).

We believe that complete sanctification in this life is not possible (Ecclesiastes 7:20; 1 John 1:8-9). Yet, every believer will ultimately be completely sanctified when finally in the presence of the Lord - entirely free from every trace or effect of sin and rebellion (1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 15:52-54; Ephesians 4:30; Philippians 3:20-21).

Section 9: The Doctrine of The Church

We believe that all true believers from Pentecost to the rapture constitute the universal Church which is the body of Christ (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13; Ephesians 5:25-27). Local churches are visible manifestations of the universal Church but do not constitute it in totality.

We believe that the Church is uniquely established as the household of God (Ephesians 2:19) and responsible for upholding and disseminating the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). Each local church is considered a spiritual organism (1 Corinthians 12:25-27) and should have a definite organization (Matthew 18:17; Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Timothy 5:9). Members of the local church may only consist of those who are spiritually regenerate and are thus committed to obeying the Scriptures (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13). Each local church is a separate organization and thus preserves its own autonomy (Acts 15:4, 22, 36).

We believe that the Scriptures establish only two offices in the local church - that of elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and that of deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13). The qualifications established for these offices make it clear that they are to be held only by men (1 Corinthians 14:34, 35; 1 Timothy 2:8-15).

We believe that Christ instituted only two symbolic ordinances for the local church: Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Table. Baptism is to be administered by immersion under normal circumstances. This mode of baptism most effectively symbolizes the believer's spiritual union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:2-9; Colossians 2:11-13).

We believe the Lord's Table commemorates the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross (Matthew 26:26-29). It also serves as a reminder of the unity of all believers before God (Ephesians 4:3-6), the certain return of the Lord (Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20), and the ultimate fulfillment of the promised blessings of the New Covenant (1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 11:24-26).

Section 10: The Doctrine of Last Things

We believe that the next event in the fulfillment of end times prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive believers of this age (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). We believe that Christ will come before the Tribulation, and before He establishes His Millennial Kingdom (Titus 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10; Acts 1:11; Revelation 20:1-6).