

# THE OAKBRIDGE

## OAKRIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH

### SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE GOSPEL

From Pastor Jim



**O**n September 4, a group of 14 pastors and leaders released what they called *The Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel*. This group had formulated the Statement in Dallas, Texas, on June 19, when they met for that purpose.

On September 11, I added my name as a signatory to the Statement and included the name of Oakridge Community Church, after your Elders approved doing so. Why? Because this Statement is a much-needed stance and warning against the trend in evangelicalism to adjust the gospel and teaching to worldly philosophies and theories. The Statement is a call to stand firm on the faith as it was once-for-all delivered to the saints, no matter how much the world despises that faith. The Statement is a summons to view the issues of life through the lens of the Word of God, rather than viewing God's Word through the lens of the issues of life.

One of the framers of the Statement explains its purpose well. Tom Ascol, pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Cape Coral, Florida, said of the Statement: "It has been produced to encourage a closer examination of things that should be most surely believed among evangelical Christians as well as things that should be most surely rejected. Our hope is that thoughtful Christians will consider the statement and be compelled to go back to the Word of God for careful study as the issues raised are evaluated."

To that end, here is the Statement itself, including the introduction to it published by the original signers. Note carefully that the Statement does not oppose justice in society. Rather, it opposes man's theories about justice and approaches to justice that are not solidly grounded in and completely faithful to the Word of God.

## THE STATEMENT ON SOCIAL JUSTICE & THE GOSPEL

### Introduction

In view of questionable sociological, psychological, and political theories presently permeating our culture and making inroads into Christ's church, we wish to clarify certain key Christian doctrines and ethical principles prescribed in God's Word. Clarity on these issues will fortify believers and churches to withstand an onslaught of dangerous and false teachings that threaten the gospel, misrepresent Scripture, and lead people away from the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Specifically, we are deeply concerned that values borrowed from secular culture are currently undermining Scripture in the areas of race and ethnicity, manhood and womanhood, and human sexuality. The Bible's teaching on each of these subjects is being challenged under the broad and somewhat nebulous rubric of concern for "social justice." If the doctrines of God's Word are not uncompromisingly reasserted and defended at these points, there is every reason to anticipate that these dangerous ideas and corrupted moral values will spread their influence into other realms of biblical doctrines and principles.

(Continued on page 5)

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor Jim's Article	1, 5-9	October Bible Reading	3
Song of the Month	2	October Calendar	4
October Birthdays	2		

# Song of the Month - *By Faith*

## **Verse 1**

By faith we see the hand of God  
In the light of creation's grand design,  
In the lives of those who prove His faithfulness,  
Who walk by faith and not by sight.

## **Verse 2**

By faith our fathers roamed the earth  
With the pow'r of His promise in their hearts  
Of a holy city built by God's own hand—  
A place where peace and justice reign.

## **Chorus 1**

We will stand as children of the promise;  
We will fix our eyes on Him, our soul's reward,  
Till the race is finished and the work is done  
We'll walk by faith and not by sight.

## **Verse 3**

By faith the prophets saw a day  
When the longed-for Messiah would appear  
With the pow'r to break the chains of sin and death  
And rise triumphant from the grave.

## **Verse 4**

By faith the church was called to go  
In the pow'r of the Spirit to the lost,  
To deliver captives and to preach good news  
In ev'ry corner of the earth.

## **Verse 5**

By faith the mountain shall be moved  
And the pow'r of the gospel shall prevail,  
For we know in Christ all things are possible  
For all who call upon His name.

*Words and Music: Keith Getty; Kristyn Getty; Stuart Townend*  
©2009 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing); Getty Music Publishing (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.)  
CCLI #5469291

## **October Birthdays**

*October 11 – Carol Hubin*

*October 14 – Jaime Beyersdorf*

*October 17 – Kara Duncel*

*October 17 – Noemi Duncel*

*October 21 – Joshua Duncel*

*October 22 – Lilli Leslie*

# October Bible Reading

1	Nehemiah 10	Psalm 88
2	Nehemiah 11-12	Psalm 89
3	Nehemiah 13	Psalm 90
4	Catch-up day	Psalm 91
5	Catch-up day	Psalm 92
6	Esther 1:1-2:18	Psalm 93
7	Esther 2:19-3:15	Psalm 94
8	Esther 4-5	Psalm 95
9	Esther 6-7	Psalm 96
10	Esther 8	Psalm 97
11	Esther 9-10	Psalm 98
12	Catch-up day	Psalm 99
13	Catch-up day	Psalm 100
14	Job 1-2	Psalm 101
15	Job 3	Psalm 102

## Two-Year Bible Reading Plan

*This Bible reading plan is designed to take you through the Old and New Testaments in two years, and through the Psalms and Proverbs four times during that period.*

16	Job 4-5	Psalm 103
17	Job 6-7	Psalm 104
18	Job 8	Psalm 105
19	Job 9-10	Psalm 106
20	Job 11	Psalm 107
21	Job 12-14	Psalm 108
22	Job 15	Psalm 109
23	Job 16	Psalm 110
24	Job 17-18	Psalm 111
25	Job 19	Psalm 112
26	Job 20-21	Psalm 113
27	Job 22	Psalm 114
28	Job 23-24	Psalm 115
29	Job 25-26	Psalm 116
30	Job 27	Psalm 117
31	Job 28	Psalm 118

# October 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 6:30 p.m. - Missions Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m. - Deacons Meeting	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer	<b>4</b> 6:30 p.m. - Psalm 19 Life/Care Group	<b>5</b> 6:30 a.m. - Emmaus Men's Group	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship 12:30 p.m. - Emmaus L/C Group 6:30 p.m. - CTC L/C Group	<b>8</b> 6:30 p.m. - Elders/Deacons Meeting	<b>9</b> 7:00 p.m. - Worship Team Practice	<b>10</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer	<b>11</b> 4:00 p.m. - Visual Arts Comm. Mtg. 6:30 p.m. - Psalm 19 Life/Care Group	<b>12</b> 6:30 a.m. - Emmaus Men's Group 1:00 p.m. - Options for Women Ministry	<b>13</b> 8:30 a.m. - OCC Fall Work Day
<b>14</b> 8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship 2:00 p.m. - Good Samaritan Svc. 4:30 p.m. - Taste & See L/C Grp. 6:30 p.m. - CTC L/C Group	<b>15</b> 3:00 p.m. - Elders Meeting	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer	<b>18</b> 6:30 p.m. - Psalm 19 Life/Care Group	<b>19</b> 6:30 a.m. - Emmaus Men's Group	<b>20</b> 9:30 a.m. - Worship Team Practice
<b>21</b> 8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship 12:30 p.m. - Emmaus L/C Group 6:30p.m. - CTC L/C Group	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer	<b>25</b> 6:30 p.m. - Psalm 19 Life/Care Group	<b>26</b> 6:30 a.m. - Emmaus Men's Group 6:30 p.m. - Membership Matters Class	<b>27</b> 9:00 a.m. - Membership Matters Class
<b>28</b> OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD KICK-OFF SUNDAY 8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship 4:30 p.m. - Taste & See L/C Grp. 6:30 p.m. - CTC L/C Group	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer	<p><b>A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing; Our helper He amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing. For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe— His craft and pow'r are great, and armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal.</b> Martin Luther</p>		

# Social Justice and the Gospel *(continued from page 1)*

We submit these affirmations and denials for public consideration, not with any pretense of ecclesiastical authority, but with an urgency that is mixed with deep joy and sincere sorrow. The rapidity with which these deadly ideas have spread from the culture at large into churches and Christian organizations—including some that are evangelical and Reformed—necessitates the issuing of this statement now.

In the process of considering these matters we have been reminded of the essentials of the faith once for all handed down to the saints, and we are re-committed to contend for it. We have a great Lord and Savior, and it is a privilege to defend his gospel, regardless of cost or consequences. Nevertheless, while we rejoice in that privilege, we grieve that in doing so we know we are taking a stand against the positions of some teachers whom we have long regarded as faithful and trustworthy spiritual guides. It is our earnest prayer that our brothers and sisters will stand firm on the gospel and avoid being blown to and fro by every cultural trend that seeks to move the Church of Christ off course. We must remain steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

The Apostle Paul's warning to the Colossians is greatly needed today: "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8). The document that follows is an attempt to heed that apostolic command. We invite others who share our concerns and convictions to unite with us in reasserting our unwavering commitment to the teachings of God's Word articulated in this statement. Therefore, for the glory of God among his Church and throughout society, we offer the following affirmations and denials.

## AFFIRMATIONS & DENIALS

### Scripture

**WE AFFIRM** that the Bible is God's Word, breathed out by him. It is inerrant, infallible, and the final authority for determining what is true (what we must believe) and what is right (how we must live). All truth claims and ethical standards must be tested by God's final Word, which is Scripture alone.

**WE DENY** that Christian belief, character, or conduct can be dictated by any other authority, and we deny that the post-modern ideologies derived from intersectionality, radical feminism, and critical race theory are consistent with biblical teaching. We further deny that competency to teach on any biblical issue comes from any qualification for spiritual people other than clear understanding and simple communication of what is revealed in Scripture.

**SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 2:18-25; PSALM 19:7-10; 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14-15; EPHESIANS 5:22-33; 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-4:5; HEBREWS 4:12; 13:4; 1 PETER 1:25; 2 PETER 1:19-21**

### Imago Dei

**WE AFFIRM** that God created every person equally in his own image. As divine image-bearers, all people have inestimable value and dignity before God and deserve honor, respect and protection. Everyone has been created by God and for God.

**WE DENY** that God-given roles, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion, sex or physical condition or any other property of a person either negates or contributes to that individual's worth as an image-bearer of God.

**SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 1:26-30; 2:18-22; 9:6; 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17; COLOSSIANS 1:21-22**

### Justice

**WE AFFIRM** that since he is holy, righteous, and just, God requires those who bear his image to live justly in the world. This includes showing appropriate respect to every person and giving to each one what he or she is due. We affirm that societies must establish laws to correct injustices that have been imposed through cultural prejudice.

*(Continued on page 6)*



# Social Justice and the Gospel *(continued from page 5)*

**WE DENY** that true justice can be culturally defined or that standards of justice that are merely socially constructed can be imposed with the same authority as those that are derived from Scripture. We further deny that Christians can live justly in the world under any principles other than the biblical standard of righteousness. Relativism, socially-constructed standards of truth or morality, and notions of virtue and vice that are constantly in flux cannot result in authentic justice.

**SCRIPTURE:** *GENESIS 18:19; ISAIAH 61:8; MICAH 6:8; MATTHEW 5:17-19; ROMANS 3:31*

## God's Law

**WE AFFIRM** that God's law, as summarized in the ten commandments, more succinctly summarized in the two great commandments, and manifested in Jesus Christ, is the only standard of unchanging righteousness. Violation of that law is what constitutes sin.

**WE DENY** that any obligation that does not arise from God's commandments can be legitimately imposed on Christians as a prescription for righteous living. We further deny the legitimacy of any charge of sin or call to repentance that does not arise from a violation of God's commandments.

**SCRIPTURE:** *DEUTERONOMY 10:4; ROMANS 6:14, 10:5; GALATIANS 2:16, 3:10, 12; COLOSSIANS 2:14-17; HEBREWS 10:1*

## Sin

**WE AFFIRM** that all people are connected to Adam both naturally and federally. Therefore, because of original sin everyone is born under the curse of God's law and all break his commandments through sin. There is no difference in the condition of sinners due to age, ethnicity, or sex. All are depraved in all their faculties and all stand condemned before God's law. All human relationships, systems, and institutions have been affected by sin.

**WE DENY** that, other than the previously stated connection to Adam, any person is morally culpable for another person's sin. Although families, groups, and nations can sin collectively, and cultures can be predisposed to particular sins, subsequent generations share the collective guilt of their ancestors only if they approve and embrace (or attempt to justify) those sins. Before God each person must repent and confess his or her own sins in order to receive forgiveness. We further deny that one's ethnicity establishes any necessary connection to any particular sin.

**SCRIPTURE:** *GENESIS 2:16, 17, 3:12,13-15; PROVERBS 29:18; ISAIAH 25:7, 60:2-3; JEREMIAH 31:27-34; EZEKIEL 18:1-9, 14-18; MATTHEW 23:29-36; ROMANS 1:16-17, 3:23, 5:12, 10:14-17; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3-11; 2 CORINTHIANS 11:3; GALATIANS 1:6-9; TITUS 1:12, 13; REVELATION 13:8*

## Gospel

**WE AFFIRM** that the gospel is the divinely-revealed message concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ—especially his virgin birth, righteous life, substitutionary sacrifice, atoning death, and bodily resurrection—revealing who he is and what he has done with the promise that he will save anyone and everyone who turns from sin by trusting him as Lord.

**WE DENY** that anything else, whether works to be performed or opinions to be held, can be added to the gospel without perverting it into another gospel. This also means that implications and applications of the gospel, such as the obligation to live justly in the world, though legitimate and important in their own right, are not definitional components of the gospel.

**SCRIPTURE:** *GENESIS 3:15; PROVERBS 29:18; ISAIAH 25:7, 60:2, 3; ROMANS 1:16-17, 10:14, 15, 17; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-11; GALATIANS 1:6-9; REVELATION 13:8*

*(Continued on page 7)*

# Social Justice and the Gospel *(continued from page 6)*

## Salvation

**WE AFFIRM** that salvation is granted by God's grace alone received through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. Every believer is united to Christ, justified before God, and adopted into his family. Thus, in God's eyes there is no difference in spiritual value or worth among those who are in Christ. Further, all who are united to Christ are also united to one another regardless of age, ethnicity, or sex. All believers are being conformed to the image of Christ. By God's regenerating and sanctifying grace all believers will be brought to a final glorified, sinless state of perfection in the day of Jesus Christ.

**WE DENY** that salvation can be received in any other way. We also deny that salvation renders any Christian free from all remaining sin or immune from even grievous sin in this life. We further deny that ethnicity excludes anyone from understanding the gospel, nor does anyone's ethnic or cultural heritage mitigate or remove the duty to repent and believe.

**SCRIPTURE:** *GENESIS 3:15; ACTS 20:32; ROMANS 3-4; EPHESIANS 2:8-9; GALATIANS 3:28-29; 1 JOHN 2:1-2*

## The Church

**WE AFFIRM** that the primary role of the church is to worship God through the preaching of his word, teaching sound doctrine, observing baptism and the Lord's Supper, refuting those who contradict, equipping the saints, and evangelizing the lost. We affirm that when the primacy of the gospel is maintained that this often has a positive effect on the culture in which various societal ills are mollified. We affirm that, under the lordship of Christ, we are to obey the governing authorities established by God and pray for civil leaders.

**WE DENY** that political or social activism should be viewed as integral components of the gospel or primary to the mission of the church. Though believers can and should utilize all lawful means that God has providentially established to have some effect on the laws of a society, we deny that these activities are either evidence of saving faith or constitute a central part of the church's mission given to her by Jesus Christ, her head. We deny that laws or regulations possess any inherent power to change sinful hearts.

**SCRIPTURE:** *MATTHEW 28:16-20; ROMANS 13:1-7; 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-3; 2 TIMOTHY 4:2; TITUS 1:9; 1 PETER 2:13-17*

## Heresy

**WE AFFIRM** that heresy is a denial of or departure from a doctrine that is essential to the Christian faith. We further affirm that heresy often involves the replacement of key, essential truths with variant concepts, or the elevation of non-essentials to the status of essentials. To embrace heresy is to depart from the faith once delivered to the saints and thus to be on a path toward spiritual destruction. We affirm that the accusation of heresy should be reserved for those departures from Christian truth that destroy the weight-bearing doctrines of the redemptive core of Scripture. We affirm that accusations of heresy should be accompanied with clear evidence of such destructive beliefs.

**WE DENY** that the charge of heresy can be legitimately brought against every failure to achieve perfect conformity to all that is implied in sincere faith in the gospel.

**SCRIPTURE:** *JOHN 14:6; ACTS 4:12; GALATIANS 1:6-9; 1 JOHN 4:1-3, 10, 14, 15; 5:1, 6-12*

*We affirm that salvation is granted by God's grace alone received through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.*

*(Continued on page 8)*

# Social Justice and the Gospel *(continued from page 7)*

## Sexuality and Marriage

**WE AFFIRM** that God created mankind male and female and that this divinely determined distinction is good, proper, and to be celebrated. Maleness and femaleness are biologically determined at conception and are not subject to change. The curse of sin results in sinful, disordered affections that manifest in some people as same-sex attraction. Salvation grants sanctifying power to renounce such dishonorable affections as sinful and to mortify them by the Spirit. We further affirm that God’s design for marriage is that one woman and one man live in a one-flesh, covenantal, sexual relationship until separated by death. Those who lack the desire or opportunity for marriage are called to serve God in singleness and chastity. This is as noble a calling as marriage.

**WE DENY** that human sexuality is a socially constructed concept. We also deny that one’s sex can be fluid. We reject “gay Christian” as a legitimate biblical category. We further deny that any kind of partnership or union can properly be called marriage other than one man and one woman in lifelong covenant together. We further deny that people should be identified as “sexual minorities”—which serves as a cultural classification rather than one that honors the image-bearing character of human sexuality as created by God.

**SCRIPTURE:** *GENESIS 1:26-27, 2:24, 4:1, 19:24-28; MATTHEW 19:3-6; ROMANS 8:13; 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11; 1 TIMOTHY 1:10; JUDE 7*

## Complementarianism

**WE AFFIRM** that God created mankind both male and female with inherent biological and personal distinctions between them and that these created differences are good, proper, and beautiful. Though there is no difference between men and women before God’s law or as recipients of his saving grace, we affirm that God has designed men and women with distinct traits and to fulfill distinct roles. These differences are most clearly defined in marriage and the church, but are not irrelevant in other spheres of life. In marriage the husband is to lead, love, and safeguard his wife and the wife is to respect and be submissive to her husband in all things lawful. In the church, qualified men alone are to lead as pastors/elders/bishops and preach to and teach the whole congregation. We further affirm that the image of God is expressed most fully and beautifully in human society when men and women walk in obedience to their God-ordained roles and serve according to their God-given gifts.

**WE DENY** that the God-ordained differences in men’s and women’s roles disparage the inherent spiritual worth or value of one over the other, nor do those differences in any way inhibit either men or women from flourishing for the glory of God.

**SCRIPTURE:** *GENESIS 1:26-28, 2:15-25, 3:1-24; EPHESIANS 5:22-33; 1 CORINTHIANS 11:7-9; 1 TIMOTHY 2:12-14; TITUS 2*

## Race/Ethnicity

**WE AFFIRM** God made all people from one man. Though people often can be distinguished by different ethnicities and nationalities, they are ontological equals before God in both creation and redemption. “Race” is not a biblical category, but rather a social construct that often has been used to classify groups of people in terms of inferiority and superiority. All that is good, honest, just, and beautiful in various ethnic backgrounds and experiences can be celebrated as the fruit of God’s grace. All sinful actions and their results (including evils perpetrated between and upon ethnic groups by others) are to be confessed as sinful, repented of, and repudiated.

**WE DENY** that Christians should segregate themselves into racial groups or regard racial identity above, or even equal to, their identity in Christ. We deny that any divisions between people groups (from an unstated attitude of superiority to an overt spirit of resentment) have any legitimate place in the fellowship of the redeemed. We reject any teaching that encourages racial groups to view themselves as privileged oppressors or entitled victims of oppression. While we are to

*(Continued on page 9)*



# Social Justice and the Gospel *(continued from page 8)*

weep with those who weep, we deny that a person's feelings of offense or oppression necessarily prove that someone else is guilty of sinful behaviors, oppression, or prejudice.

**SCRIPTURE:** *GENESIS 1:26–28; ACTS 17:24-26; 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7; 2 CORINTHIANS 12:16-18*

## Culture

**WE AFFIRM** that some cultures operate on assumptions that are inherently better than those of other cultures because of the biblical truths that inform those worldviews that have produced these distinct assumptions. Those elements of a given culture that reflect divine revelation should be celebrated and promoted. But the various cultures out of which we have been called all have features that are worldly and sinful—and therefore those sinful features should be repudiated for the honor of Christ. We affirm that whatever evil influences to which we have been subjected via our culture can be—and must be—overcome through conversion and the training of both mind and heart through biblical truth.

**WE DENY** that individuals and sub-groups in any culture are unable, by God's grace, to rise above whatever moral defects or spiritual deficiencies have been engendered or encouraged by their respective cultures.

**SCRIPTURE:** *ROMANS 1:18-32; EPHESIANS 4:17-24; COLOSSIANS 3:5-11*

## Racism

**WE AFFIRM** that racism is a sin rooted in pride and malice which must be condemned and renounced by all who would honor the image of God in all people. Such racial sin can subtly or overtly manifest itself as racial animosity or racial vainglory. Such sinful prejudice or partiality falls short of God's revealed will and violates the royal law of love. We affirm that virtually all cultures, including our own, at times contain laws and systems that foster racist attitudes and policies.

**WE DENY** that treating people with sinful partiality or prejudice is consistent with biblical Christianity. We deny that only those in positions of power are capable of racism, or that individuals of any particular ethnic groups are incapable of racism. We deny that systemic racism is in any way compatible with the core principles of historic evangelical convictions. We deny that the Bible can be legitimately used to foster or justify partiality, prejudice, or contempt toward other ethnicities. We deny that the contemporary evangelical movement has any deliberate agenda to elevate one ethnic group and subjugate another. And we emphatically deny that lectures on social issues (or activism aimed at reshaping the wider culture) are as vital to the life and health of the church as the preaching of the gospel and the exposition of Scripture. Historically, such things tend to become distractions that inevitably lead to departures from the gospel.

**SCRIPTURE:** *GENESIS 1:26-27; DEUTERONOMY 10:17; ACTS 10:34; ROMANS 2:11; EPHESIANS 6:9; GALATIANS 3:28; JAMES 2:4*

Oakridge  
Community Church

610 County Road 5  
Stillwater, MN 55082  
[www.oakridgecommunity.org](http://www.oakridgecommunity.org)  
Email: [churchoffice@oakridgecommunity.org](mailto:churchoffice@oakridgecommunity.org)



### OCC Vision

The vision of Oakridge Community Church is to spread a joyful passion for the absolute, eternal supremacy of Jesus Christ in all things, to all peoples.

### OCC Mission

The mission of Oakridge Community Church is to glorify God by delighting in, declaring and displaying the gospel of Jesus Christ.