



# FELLOWSHIP — CHURCH —

*Regular People • Real God • Radical Purpose*

## **DOCTRINAL STATEMENT**

### **The Bible**

We believe that the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments that comprise the Bible are the inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God. We believe that the Holy Spirit supervised the writers of the Bible in what they wrote so that, using their own unique personalities, the very words recorded in the original manuscripts are the direct revelation of God. We believe the Bible not only contains the Word of God but actually is God's Word and, therefore, is the complete and final authority for belief and behavior. As such, it can be completely trusted. We believe that inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility extend equally and fully to all parts of Scripture: historically, poetically, doctrinally and prophetically (2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:21, 1 Cor. 2:13, John 17:17).

### **Trinity**

We believe there is one God, that the Father and the Son and the Spirit are each God, and that the Father and the Son and the Spirit are each a distinct person (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 13:14; see also 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 2:9; Acts 5:3-4).

### **God**

We believe that there is one and only one true and living God, an infinite Spirit who is the Maker and Supreme Ruler of the universe. We believe the Bible reveals Him to be holy, sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, immutable and full of love, justice, goodness, mercy and truth. This is only a representative list of His eternal and unchanging attributes. Although there is only one God, He exists eternally in three persons as the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe these members of the Trinity are coequal in essence, having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections, but are distinct in subsistence, executing different but harmonious functions (Mark 12:29, John 4:24, Matt. 3:16-17, Matt. 28:19, 2 Cor. 13:14).

### **Jesus Christ**

We believe that Jesus Christ has existed eternally as the Son of God. At a specific point in time, Jesus became a man (the incarnation) in order to reveal God and redeem humanity. We believe He was supernaturally conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, Mary. In His incarnation, He forever possesses both full deity and full humanity in such a way that the properties of each nature are fully retained and undiminished by the union. We believe Jesus died on the cross as a substitute for sinful humanity, was buried, rose bodily from the tomb, ascended into Heaven where He ministers on the behalf of those who have trusted in Him, and someday will come again for His own (John 1:18, 8:58, Matt. 1:23, Col. 1:15-17, 1 Tim. 1:15, 3:16).

## **Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, fully coequal with God the Father and God the Son in terms of divine being, but distinct from the Father and the Son in His personhood. We believe the Holy Spirit actively ministers to the world. This ministry includes restraining evil, convicting the unsaved of sin and bestowing God's goodness on mankind. We also believe He ministers to every believer in Jesus Christ in numerous ways: regenerating, sealing, indwelling, baptizing into the Body of Christ, and the giving of spiritual gifts. Other ministries to believers include filling, assuring, teaching, guiding and comforting (Acts 5:3-4, 2 Thess. 2:3-9, John 16:7-11, Matt. 5:45, Tit. 3:5, Eph. 1:13, 1 Cor. 6:19, 12:13, Eph. 3:20, 1 Cor. 14, James 5:14, Eph. 5:18, Rom. 8:16, 14, John 16:13, 7).

## **Creation**

We believe that God, according to His sovereign will and for His own glory, created the heavens and the earth without the use of pre-existent material. We also believe that all living things came into being by the creative act of God and not by a random process. Creation has an existence distinct from Him and yet is always dependent on Him (Gen. 2:4, Prov. 16:4, Acts 17:24, Col. 1:16-17).

## **Humanity**

We believe that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God and in a state of innocence. Through deliberate disobedience, humanity fell from its sinless state and as a consequence lost its fellowship with God and became subject to spiritual and physical death. We believe that through Adam's transgressions the entire human race has inherited a corrupt nature, which is prone to do evil and unable to please God (Gen. 1:26-27, 3:24, Rom. 5:12, Eph. 2:1-3).

## **Sin**

We believe that sin is anything contrary to the character of God. Every person is alienated from God because of their depraved nature as well as personal acts of sin. Everyone is separated from God and completely incapable of meriting salvation and avoiding the judgment of God. This sinful nature is never eradicated, even for those who have trusted in Christ alone for salvation. It remains until the end of life on earth. However, we believe God has made provision for forgiveness of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ and victory over sin through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 3:10, 23, 6:23, Eph. 4:18, 1 John 1:8-10, Gal. 5:16-17).

## **Salvation**

We believe that salvation from the penalty and power of sin is available through faith in Jesus Christ alone. This salvation was made possible through the blood of Jesus Christ which He shed on the cross. It is through this act that He became sin for us and died in our place. There is nothing a person can do to earn this salvation (including good works, moral achievement or religious status). The one and only condition for salvation is personal faith in Jesus Christ as one's own substitute for sin and savior from sin. At the time of salvation, a person is spiritually regenerated, sins are forgiven, God's righteousness is imputed, and he/she is declared righteous in the sight of God. This salvation is complete and a present possession of all believers which remains his/hers forever. All who have trusted Christ as Savior are kept secure and will never lose their salvation (1 Pet. 1:18-19, 2 Cor. 5:21, 1 Pet. 2:24, Eph 2:8-9, Tit. 3:5, Eph. 4:32, Rom. 5:1, Rom. 8:38-39).

## **Sanctification**

We believe sanctification, which is a setting apart unto God, is positional, progressive, and ultimate. Positionally, it is already complete since the believer is in Christ and is set apart unto God as Christ is set apart unto God. Since the Christian retains his sinful nature, however, there is need for progressive sanctification whereby he grows in grace by the power of the Spirit. Ultimately, the child of God will be set apart from sin in his practice (as he is now in his position in Christ) when he is taken to be with Christ and shall be like Him (John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10; 14).

## **The Church**

We believe that the Church is a unique organism composed of people who have placed their faith in Christ alone as Savior. The Church began on the day of Pentecost and will continue its distinct purpose until Christ's return. We believe that the Church exists in both a universal aspect, as the Body of Christ, and in a local assembly of believers in Jesus Christ. The local church has the twofold purpose of the edification of believers and the evangelization of the unsaved. We practice water baptism by immersion, and the Lord's Supper, which we believe to be a memorial of Christ's death. Both are open to all believers (1 Cor. 12:13, Acts 2:1-4, 1 Thess. 4:13-17, Col. 4:16, Eph. 4:7, Heb. 13:17, Matt. 28:19-20, 1 Cor. 11:23-28).

## **Spiritual Gifts**

We believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we see on display in the New Testament are still active within the life of the church. These gifts did not end with the close of the New Testament or the death of the last apostle (1 Cor. 12:1-11).

## **The Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

We believe Christ instituted the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper, both of which are to be observed by believers until He returns (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). We believe by water baptism a believer publicly identifies with Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. We believe that infants of believing parents may be dedicated to the Lord but should not be baptized until they can personally articulate their faith and the purpose of baptism. We believe the Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death and an expression of our faith in His future coming that is to be continually practiced by all believers. We believe every Christian has a right to partake of the elements of the Lord's Supper but that participation must always be preceded by solemn self-examination.

## **Marriage & Sexuality**

Marriage is a picture of Christ's relationship with His Bride – the Church. It is defined from the beginning of Scripture as a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman. God designed sexual intimacy for a marriage relationship and does not endorse or condone it in any other context (1 Thess 4:3-5, Eph 5:22-23, Gen 2:24, Matt 19:4-5).

## **Last Things**

We believe that Jesus Christ is returning to the world in the future to judge the living and the dead. The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the glorification of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. In the consummation, Satan, with his hosts and all those outside Christ, is finally separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment (Rev. 20:7-15), but the righteous, in glorious bodies, will live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then the eager expectation of creation will be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God, who makes all things new (Rev. 21:1-5).