

Graceway Church

Articles of Faith

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the following Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

A. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

1. By "The Holy Bible" we mean the collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which as originally written does not only contain and convey the Word of God, but IS the very Word of God.
2. By "inspiration" we mean the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua. 8:34; Psalm 19:7-11; 119:11, 89, 105, 130, 140, 160; Proverbs 30:5-6; Isaiah 8:20; 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah. 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 16:31; 21:33; 24:25-27, 44-47; John 5:39, 45-47; 12:48; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 1:16; 17:11; 28:25; Romans 3:4; 15:4; 16:25- 26; Ephesians 6:17; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23-25; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Revelation 22:19.

B. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all-powerful and all-knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

1. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, and all-wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men. This attitude includes corrective and disciplinary measures.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; 17:1; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1-3; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; 83:18; 90:2; 147:5; Isaiah 6:3; 43:3; 15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 3:17; 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:8-12; 12:30; John 4:24;

5:26; 10:30; 14:6-13, 16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:8-11; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; 5:3-4, 30-32; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 2:18; 4:4-6; Philippians 2:5-6; Col. 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:2, 17; 1 John 5:7; Revelation 4:11.

2. God the Son

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner and born of the virgin Mary, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of a woman, and He is both the Son of God, and God, the Son. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its physical demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin or compromise to His nature. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of all people from their sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the Person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 3:15; 18:1ff.; Psalm 2:7ff; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-25; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16, 27; 17:5, 27; 28:1-6, 19; Mark 1:1, 8-12; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 3:16; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18, 29; 10:30, 38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11, 26; 15:26-27; 16:8-11, 15-16, 28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20, 28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 5:30-32; 7:55-56; 9:4-5, 20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6- 21; 8:1-3, 34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8, 24-28, 47; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 2:18; 3:11; 4:4-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15, 24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7- 9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:7-9, 20; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

3. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination, He enables men to understand Word of truth. He exalts the Son, Jesus Christ. He convicts people of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service. Since He possesses personal characteristics, He can be grieved or offended.

We believe that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church for the edification of the body. The Holy Spirit does not glorify Himself nor His gifts by pretentious displays. He glorifies Christ in the work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the faith. In this respect, we believe that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. We firmly believe that God still performs miracles and He frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing in accordance with His will.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalm 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:8-12; Luke 1:35; 3:16; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 1:33; 3:5-6; 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3-4, 30-32; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39; 10:44; 11:16; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 1:22; 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11, 13; 13:8; 14:21-24; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 12:12; 13:14; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2:18; 4:4-12, 30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 2 Thessalonians 2:7, 13; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 2:1-4; 9:8, 14; James 5:15-16; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7, 14-15; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

C. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness and purpose of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice, man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man disobeyed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence, whereby his posterity inherited a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalm 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-19, 23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; Ezekiel 18:19-20; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

D. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole person and is offered freely by grace through faith to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior who, by His own blood, obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

1. Regeneration

Regeneration or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby, believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart, mind and purpose wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

In order to be saved, sinners must be born again. The new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus and it is instantaneous and not a process. In the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God. The new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel. The proper evidence of salvation appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

All the redeemed are kept by God's power, sealed by the Holy Spirit and are thus secure in Christ forever. It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh

2. Justification

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness from the conviction and penalty for sin, of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God. Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness. It is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, as His righteousness is imputed unto us.

3. Sanctification

Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

4. Glorification

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Psalm 51:1-4,7; Isaiah 53:4-7, 11-12; 55:1; Habakkuk 2:4; Zechariah 13:1; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 11:28; 16:21-26; 18:11; 27:22-28:6; Mark 1:15; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; 12:8; 18:13; John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21, 36; 5:24, 40; 6:37-40; 10:9, 18, 27-30; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21, 37-38, 41; 4:12; 13:39; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:21, 32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:1-4; 5:1-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18, 29-39; 10:9-13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8, 18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 1:4; 2:20; 3:11-13; 5:13, 22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:1-5 8-22; 4:11-16; 5:9; Philippians 2:7-8, 12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 5:23-24; 1 Timothy 1:15; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 1:1; 2:11-15; 3:5-7; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 7:25; 9:12-15, 24-28; 10:38; 11:1-12:8, 14; James 2:14- 26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; 5:1, 13; Revelation 3:20; 21:1 - 22:5, 17.

E. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

The blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel. It is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith. Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel, which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and

comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7, 19-22; Psalm 121:3; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 6:20; 13:19-21; 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22, 31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45, 65; 8:31-32; 10:27-29; 15:16; 16:8; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Philippians 1:6; Colossians 1:12-14, 21-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10, 19; Hebrews 1:14; 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5, 13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

F. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, baptism and communion; governed by His word; exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His word; and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation, each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. God alone is Lord of the conscience of the believer, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained therein.

Its two Scriptural officers are pastors/elders and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the scriptures. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church and spiritually equal in position before God, the offices of pastors and deacons are limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ, which includes all the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation. The church is not the recipient of God's covenantal promises to Israel, nor the replacement of the nation of Israel in these latter days.

The true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission: first, to make individual disciples; second, to build up the church; third, to teach and instruct as He has commanded. The local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations. The one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit. It is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel. Every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. On all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; 28:19-20; Acts 2:40-47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23, 27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:17-28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, 12; 3:16; 5:4-5, 11-13; 6:1-3; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; 16:1-2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 4:11; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:1-5.

G. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, with the authority of the local church. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior; the believer's death to sin; the burial of the old life; and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to the believer's faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of

church membership.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. It is to be preceded by solemn self-examination. The Lord's Supper is not limited to members of Graceway Church, but is restricted to those who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

Matthew 3:5-6, 13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; Acts 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

H. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3, 33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1, 19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 16:1-2; Col. 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

I. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the present Kingdom is the spiritual realm into which redeemed men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. There is also a millennial kingdom during which Jesus Christ returns and will physically reign on earth for one thousand years. The full consummation of the Kingdom will be realized in the eternal, heavenly state.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10, 23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6, 9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

J. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. The Scriptures proclaim the personal, imminent and pre-millennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The time of His coming is nowhere revealed; therefore, it is the duty of all believers to live in readiness since His coming will be sudden. When He comes, He will claim His Body, the one true Church.

According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth. The dead in Christ will rise first, then we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. After the judgments of God upon this sinful world in the Great Tribulation, Jesus our Lord will come with His saints to establish His millennial kingdom. At the conclusion of the thousand years the remaining dead will be raised, and Christ will judge them all with regard to their judicial standing with God. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:4-5, 9; Daniel 12:2; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27-31, 36, 42-44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 1:32; 12:40, 48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 5:28-29; 6:40; 14:1-3; Acts 1:9,11; 17:31; 24:15; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:12-28, 35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1ff., 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 2:5; 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 2:17; 5:9; 8:1; 9:27-28; 12:2; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 5:4; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

K. Creation

The description of a miraculous creation as given in Genesis chapters 1 and 2 is to be accepted as literal, historical truth. Man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness. Man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms. We disavow any and all attempts to insert any form of naturalistic processes into the text. The chronological data given through the descendants of Adam indicate a date of approximately 4000 B.C. for the creation event. We, therefore, also disavow all naturalistic references to ages far in excess of this time frame.

During creation, the form and function of all living things (kinds) was determined. All animal and vegetable life was made directly and God's established law was they should bring forth only "after their kind". We therefore deny any evolutionary development schemes that suppose the gradual change of one form of living creature into another different kind.

We believe there is no contention between revealed Biblical truth and the process of the scientific method of data interpretation. They are exclusionary one to the other.

Since God created the mankind into genders distinctly male and female, we believe that the only legitimate marriage is that between a man and a woman. He has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God rejects any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance.

Genesis 1; 2; 11, 24, 26-27; 2:21-23; Exodus 20:11; Nehemiah 9:6; Jeremiah 10:12; John 1:3; Acts 4:24; 17:23-26; Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrew 11:3; Revelation 10:6

L. The Devil, or Satan

Satan was once holy, and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and His Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy; the lord of the antichrist, and the author of all the powers of darkness – destined however to final defeat at the hands of God's own Son, and to the judgment of an eternal justice in the Lake of Fire, a place prepared for him and his angels.

Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:14-17; Matthew 4:1-11; 13:25; 25:41; 27:39; Mark 13:21-22; Luke 22:3-4; John 14:30; Ephesians 2:2; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; 2 Thessalonians 2: 8-11; 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 2:22; 3:8; 4:3; 2 John 7; Jude 6; Revelation 12:7-10; 13:13-14; 19:11, 16, 20; 20:1-3, 10

M. Heaven and Hell

Heaven and hell are actual places. There is a radical difference between the righteous and the wicked regarding their relationship with God, which in turn determines their eternal destination in the bodily resurrection of all mankind - the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. God's heaven is perfect; therefore, God cannot permit sin into heaven.

Those who accept Jesus as their personal Savior are forgiven of their sin, have Christ's righteousness imputed to them which allows them to have eternal life with God in heaven when they die, or when Christ returns. 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

After death, the souls of unbelievers remain in conscious punishment and torment 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 and torment.

Genesis 18:23; Proverbs 11:31; 14:32; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 7:13-14; 25:34, 41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 9:26; 16:19-26; 23:43; John 5:28-29; 8:21; 11:25-26; 12:25; Acts 10:34-35; Romans 1:17; 6:16-18,23; 7:6; 1 Corinthians 15:22; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Galatians 3:10; Philippians 1:23; 3:13-14; 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Peter 4:18; 1 John 2:7,29; 5:19; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15; 20:12-13

N. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit should result in the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to constantly seek to win the lost to Christ by declaring God's Word and a personal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8, 16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

O. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth should create a thirst for knowledge. An adequate system of Christian education helps propel the church to fulfill the Great Commission to go into all the world, preach the Gospel and make disciples.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5, 9, 14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalm 19:7ff.; 119:11;

Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7, 11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3, 8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:14-15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

P. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians are to be good stewards of their time, material, and financial possessions. They should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others.

According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and generously for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth. This generosity is for the Glory of God not for praise to the contributor.

God had established the tithe as the starting place of Christian stewardship, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We are commanded to bring our gifts into the storehouse (common treasury of the church) upon the first day of the week. Under Grace we give, and do not pay, the tithe – "Abraham GAVE the tenth of the spoils," and this was four hundred years before the law, and is confirmed in the new Testament; Jesus said concerning the tithe, "these ought ye to have done." The Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Proverbs 3:9-10; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21, 42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 4:34-37; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Hebrews 7:2,4; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 3:17

Q. Cooperation

Christ's people may, as occasion requires, identify with other like-minded organizations and cooperate with them for the great objectives of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. Like-minded New Testament churches may cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18; 4:1-3.

R. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians should strive to make the moral will of Christ the standard for their own lives and so be a positive influence in all society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among people can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose and not condone any and all social mores or activities that

violate the moral absolutes of the Holy God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to death. Every Christian should seek to bring their personal sphere of influence under the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all like-minded persons, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth. Therefore, the greatest contribution the Church can make to social betterment is to bring individuals to a heart-changing encounter with Jesus Christ.

1. Love

Christians should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers. Those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions.

Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Philippians 2:2-4; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18

2. Family and Marriage

God ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It was the first institution so engendered, even preceding the Church. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, conception, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in a covenant commitment for their individual lifetime. It is God's unique object lesson that demonstrates the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

Since both are created in God's image, the husband and wife are of equal worth before God. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to sacrificially love his wife as Christ so loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family with all respect. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in all family matters.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord and should be respected as such. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage and the family. Parents should teach their children Christian moral values and lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on Biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalm 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-23; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7

3. Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that God intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. The only scriptural grounds for divorce and remarriage are fornication or desertion. Divorced and/or remarried persons may still hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service.

Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6

4. Human Sexuality

God is the Designer and Definer of Marriage; it is not a man-made institution. Governments, nations, and churches alike can simply recognize it, not define it. Since marriage is a divine institution, we do not recognize any man-made contradictions to this definition. Unlike animals, humans are created in the image and likeness of God to reflect His character and serve as God's representatives in this world. To this end, God declares (and Jesus affirms) that Marriage is a permanent union between one man and one woman. This union is oriented toward procreation, something that only a man and woman can do. In addition, "becoming one flesh" is not a union of the body alone (a sexual act). It is two human beings communing together in every way possible (In body, soul, and spirit). So, Marriage is understood as a sacred, spiritual bond and human sexuality is to be dedicated to and confined within Marriage.

God has uniquely created two and only two varieties of persons. These are male and female. There are no intermediate or amalgamated sexual forms. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image of God and demonstrate His relationship with His created beings. Rejection of this position demeans the image of God and His created purposes. Therefore, any sexual activity outside God's design of Marriage is sin and is contrary to God's will and design. This includes, but is not limited to any form of: fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, and pornography. Because God has created and designed human beings and human relationships in a particular way, we also believe God rejects any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. All of these activities are ultimately self-destructive in physical, moral, relational, spiritual ways and carry with them eternal consequences.

Graceway Church is a place of grace, compassion, healing, and restoration. We affirm a person's search to be happy, joyful, and feel loved is fully realized within the Master's plan, design and purpose as outlined in the Bible. To affirm choices, sexual activities, and lifestyles contrary to the definitions and designs for marriage and sex as stated in the Bible, even in the name of "love" and "equality," would be an act of disobedience to God and a grave disservice to all, providing a false sense of security to sinners before a Holy God. On the contrary, it is the desire of the leadership of Graceway Church to direct everyone into choices and lifestyles designed by God to foster a higher quality of life free from guilt and shame, and bring more people into a right relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Genesis 2:18-25; Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; 18:22-30; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17, 20-23; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16-17; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 19:4-6; 22:36-40; 25:35-40; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 1:18-32; 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 6:1-7, 9-11; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; 6:7-8; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Timothy 1:8-11; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

5. Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion, except to save a mother's life, constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortion of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental wellbeing of the mother is acceptable.

While we believe abortion to be sinful, we are to love and pray for those who have experienced abortion, as well as those who provide abortion services. It is the responsibility of the church to come along side of those individuals to help them understand that God is ready to offer forgiveness, redemption, and healing. Having an abortion is wrong, it is the taking of a life, but it is not unforgivable. There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus, and so when we ask Him for forgiveness, He freely forgives. It not God's design for us to live in perpetual guilt; He wants us to learn from our mistakes and use them for His advantage, as well as our own. In the aftermath, if we trust in the Lord, He is able to use the experience to strengthen our faith, build our character and prepare us for ministering to others.

Genesis 1:26-27; 9:6; Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44; John 3:16; Romans 3:22; 8:1; Colossians 1:14; I John 1:9

6. Euthanasia

The direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift from God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus, we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment.

Exodus 20:13; 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28

7. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ, they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

8. Lawsuits Between Believers

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long the claim is pursued without malice or slander.

1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32

9. Civil Government and Religious Liberty

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home; 2) the church; and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, for the interests and good order of human society, underscores the duty of Christians to pray for leadership and render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Exodus 18:21-22; 2 Samuel 23:3; Psalm 72:11; Daniel 3:17-18; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 10:28; 16:26; 22:21; 23:10; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; 23:5; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1, 13; Ephesians 5:22-24; Philippians 2:1-11; 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Titus 3:1; Hebrews 13:17; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

10. Separation

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations as commanded of God and our church shall not join in alliances with other groups who deny the true Christian faith.

Romans 12: 1-2; 14:13; 2 Corinthians 6: 14-7: 1; 2 Timothy 3: 1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11