

Laurelglen Bible Church

Statement of Faith

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Preamble

We understand and recognize that any statement of faith is a fallible attempt to summarize and systematize an infallible divine revelation. We recognize that the Bible is the Christian's only authoritative document; however, the Bible is often distorted and misinterpreted. We believe that it is necessary not to add to what the Bible teaches but instead to delineate what we believe the Bible means by what it teaches in several important areas. Thus, this statement of faith is essential because it provides an explanation of our understanding of what scripture teaches, and thereby provides the framework in which our teaching occurs. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that there are contained within this statement doctrines which are essential (e.g. the deity of Christ, bodily resurrection, etc.) and doctrines which are distinctive (e.g. spiritual gifts, end times, etc.).

This statement of faith is part of the Bylaws of Laurelglen Bible Church and thus can only be changed according to the amendment procedures outlined therein.

The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (the sixty-six canonical books) to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible, sufficient, and God-breathed. God has divinely preserved the Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek texts so as to make His will explicitly known and obeyed. This conviction requires a literal, historical, and grammatical interpretation to the totality of scripture. (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12-13).

The Godhead

We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, each having the same attributes, perfections, and each with distinctive roles and functions (Deuteronomy 6:4; II Corinthians 13:14).

We affirm an orthodox view of the living God who possess an exhaustive foreknowledge of all things potential, as well as all things actual, and that there is nothing God does not know, past, present, or future (Job 37:16; Psalm 139:4, 16; Isaiah 40:12-14, 42:9, 46:10; Matthew 11:21-23; Luke 10:12-13).

The Father

We believe that God the Father is the eternally self-existent One. He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1; Ephesians 3:9; Revelation 4:11) and the absolute sovereign and omnipotent ruler of all creation (Psalm 103:19).

The Son

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, who exists eternally, became man without ceasing to be God in an indivisible oneness, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God, redeem sinful man, and rule over God's kingdom (John 1:1-2; Luke 1:35; Isaiah 9:6-7).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for all mankind as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and that the sufficiency of this atoning sacrifice to accomplish the redemption and justification of all who trust in Him, is assured by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Romans 3:24-25, 4:25; Ephesians 1:7; I Timothy 4:10; Hebrews 2:9; I Peter 1:3-5, 2:24; II Peter 2:1).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 9:24, 7:25; Romans 8:34; I John 2:1-2).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man (I Timothy 2:5) and that He alone is the Head of His body, the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:15, 5:23; Colossians 1:18).

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person who convicts the world of sin, a lack of righteousness, and the requirement for judgment; and that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ at the moment of conversion, and indwelling and sealing them unto the Day of Redemption (John 16:8-11; II Corinthians 3:6; I Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they wrote God's revelation, the Bible (2 Peter 1:19-21), and that He continues to guide believers in all truth as they read and understand His written revelation. Further, we believe that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (John 16:13; I John 2:20, 27; Ephesians 5:18).

We believe that the Holy Spirit does not glorify Himself by ostentatious displays but instead glorifies Jesus Christ by affecting His purpose of redeeming and transforming people into His image. We believe that the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all spiritual gifts, and that they are sufficient for the perfecting of the believers today (John 16:14; Acts 1:8; I Corinthians 12:4-11).

Man

We believe that man was directly and immediately created in the image and likeness of God, but that the transgression of Adam resulted in the condemnation of all mankind. All mankind are thus born spiritually dead and under the penalty of physical death. As a result of transgression, everyone is born with an inherited sinful nature and is alienated from God. We believe that man is totally depraved and utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12).

Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (Ephesians 2:8-10, 1:7; John 1:12; I Peter 1:18-19).

We believe that before the foundation of the world, God freely and graciously chose those individuals whom He would save. He did this based upon His own sovereign choice and not based upon any foresight or anticipation of an individual's decision. The grace of God encompasses the gift of salvation and the means of receiving the gift. All and only those whom the Father draws will come in faith, and all and only those who come in faith will be received by the Father (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4, 11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:1-2; John 6:37,40, 44; Acts 13:48).

We believe that God's sovereign choice does not contradict or negate man's responsibility for his actions in any way. Man is completely responsible for his decisions and should be honestly called upon to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (John 3:18-19, 36, 5:40; Acts 2:38-39; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Psalm 62:12; Romans 2:5-6; Revelation 20:13).

We believe that justification is an act of God, whereby He declares righteous those who have faith in Christ alone. This righteousness is completely independent of any virtue, merit, or good work of man, but is based upon faith alone. Justification involves both an imputation of the believer's sin to Christ and the imputation of God's righteousness to the believer. In this way, Paul can say that God is both "just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:20; 4:6; 8:33, 10:9-10; Acts 2:38; Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:26).

The Preservation and Assurance of Believers

We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40, 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 1 Peter 1:5). We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, and that it is the responsibility of believers not to use their Christian liberty as a license to sin. Taking such "liberty" is clearly forbidden in Scripture (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

Sanctification

We believe that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle, nevertheless, stays with the believer all through this earthly life. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. This conflict terminates only when the believer leaves this mortal life and enters the presence of Christ (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

Separation

We believe that out of a deep gratitude for the completely undeserved grace of God and because God is worthy of total dedication, all the saved should live in such a manner as to bring glory and not reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded by God (II Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 12:1-2, 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John vv. 9-11; II Corinthians 6:14-7:11).

The Standard for Sexuality

We believe that God has instituted the marriage union, made up of one man and one woman, and that **any** intimate sexual activity outside of the union of marriage is sin. We believe that any form of sexual immorality, including pornography, is a sinful perversion of God's holy standard which is given for our own good (Genesis 2:24, 19:5-13; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

Missions

We believe that it is the joyful obligation and privilege of all believers to witness, by life and by word, the truths of Holy Scripture, seeking to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind and to baptize and to teach all converts through the local church. If sound local churches are not present, then every effort should be taken to establish a church for the purposes of propagating the Gospel, baptizing converts and, discipling believers (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20; II Corinthians 5:19-20).

The Church

We believe that the Church, which is the Body and the espoused Bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all believers of this present age (Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:25-27; I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 11:2).

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

We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control (Acts 13:1-4, 15:19-31, 20:28; Romans 16:1-4; I Corinthians 3:9, 16, 5:4-7, 13; I Peter 5:1-4).

We believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the church and He mediates His rule through the Word of God by the plurality of elders who govern the church. The elders within a local church are assisted by the deacons (Ephesians 1:22-23; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; Act 6:1-6).

As the three persons of the Trinity are co-equal, we believe that men and women are created equal in the sight of God, equal image bearers, equally sinful, equally redeemable, equal in Christ, and equally morally responsible to God. Additionally, just as there are role distinctions within the Trinity, there are role distinctions in the church between men and women, which are to be celebrated and which in no way hinder or contradict this equality (Genesis 1:26; Galatians 3:28; I Cor. 11:2-17; I Timothy 2:9-12; Titus 2:3-5).

We believe in the ordinances of believer's water Baptism and the Lord's Supper as scriptural means of testimony for the Church Age (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42, 18:8; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a created being, the author of sin and the cause of the original fall, that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man, and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11, 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

The Second Advent of Christ

We believe in the personal, imminent, and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones and in His subsequent return to earth with His saints to establish His Millennial Kingdom (I Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1:10, 5:9; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19:11-16, 20:1-6, 3:10).

Death, Resurrection, and the Eternal State

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

We believe that at death, the souls of the redeemed are absent from the body and consciously present with the Lord as they await the resurrection of the Church to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23, 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

We believe that after death, the souls of unbelievers remain in conscious misery until the Second Resurrection when they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting, conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26; Matthew 25:41-46; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude vv.6-7; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 20:11-15).

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Jude 1:24-25