



**We Believe**

# Gospel-Centered

## What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the good news of God's grace renewing the earth. It is the grand narrative of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration ordained by God and orchestrated through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. By the grace of God, and faith in Christ as the one mediator between God and man, we are free from sin's penalty, are being freed from sin's power, and will one day be freed from sin's presence. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the gospel. His resurrection is the power of the gospel. His ascension is the glory of the gospel. His return is the hope of the gospel.

## What is Gospel-Centered?

At the heart of all sound doctrine is the cross of Jesus Christ and the privilege that redeemed sinners have in glorifying God because of what He has accomplished. Therefore, we want all that takes place in our hearts, church, and ministries to proceed from and be related to the gospel.

## Scripture References:

Romans 1:16-17, Romans 5:8, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Luke 4:18, Mark 10:45, 1 Timothy 1:15, 1 John 4:10, Revelation 5:9.

# God

We believe in one God eternally existing as one essence in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is the creator of all things, holy, and His perfection is without end. Having limitless knowledge, dominion, and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity past to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory. Salvation is fundamentally the work of God. Faith is a gift of grace that is given by the mercy and pleasure of God, so that no one may boast. Without God's redemptive work in salvation, humanity would be without hope. God the Father initiates the plan of salvation for his people, God the Son accomplishes that salvation for his people and God the Holy Spirit applies that same salvation to his people. In all works of God, each member of the Trinity is active even if they are not the primary agent. God, in his sovereignty, is not the author of sin, nor do His decrees negate the will of his creatures, who act with the power of willing choice according to their nature. His sovereignty over all things is compatible with his creatures' moral accountability and responsibility such that God never condemns a person unjustly. Therefore, all persons are responsible for their actions, which have real and eternal consequences.

## Scripture References:

Matthew 28:18-20, John 1:1-18, Genesis 1-2, Hebrews 1:1-3, Colossians 1:14-23, Ephesians 1:3-14, Psalm 24:1-2, Psalm 115:3, Romans 8, Romans 11:33, Isaiah 25:8-9, Daniel 4:34-37, Jeremiah 32:17, Proverbs 19:21, Acts 5:39, Revelation 4:11, James 1:13, 1 John 1:5, Acts 2:23, Romans 9:14-24, Philippians 2:12-13, Romans 3:19.

# Divine Revelation

We believe that God has made Himself known to the world in Jesus Christ, the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, and creation. Jesus Christ, the Son of God is the Word of God made flesh. He is the perfect revelation of who God is, the “image of the invisible God”, the “exact expression of God’s nature”. As the inspired Word of God, the 66 books of the Bible are without error in their original writings. Scripture is the story of God’s promises to redeem a people through His Son, for His own glory and the good of the world, and is sufficient for all that is required for us to believe and do. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all it promises. We believe that God created the world out of nothing and that it is a clear revelation of His eternal power and divine nature.

## Scripture References:

Psalm 19:1-2, Psalm 139, Matthew 6:25-33, John 5:39, Acts 14:17, Romans 1:19-20, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Revelation 22:18-19.

# Humanity

We believe that God made man and woman, body and soul in His image and that humans are called to act as his direct representatives on earth. Male and female are equally God's image-bearers, and equal in dignity, value, and worth. God created two unique in design, yet united in mission genders. We believe that the only God-ordained pattern of sexual relations for humanity is a one-flesh union between a man and a woman, in the covenant of marriage. Mankind sinned and has fallen from its original state of created goodness. As a result, sin has fractured all things. We believe that sin infects everyone and everything. It has diminished God's image in humanity and functionally the image has been tainted. Sin enslaves and causes an inability to mirror God's holiness in humanity. It is only through God's work in Jesus Christ that we can be saved, reconciled, and renewed.

## Distinctive: Men & Women

We believe that both male and female are equally God's image-bearers; because of this, both are equally deserving of dignity, value, and worth. We believe it is God's design to create two genders that are distinct and united in purpose. As this relates to the church, men and women are both called and expected to lead, however, we believe the office of elder is reserved for called and qualified men. We believe that aside from this office, women are able to serve and should serve in any other capacity.

## Scripture References:

Genesis 1-3, Jeremiah 32:29, Ezekiel 26:22-37:28, Romans 1-3, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Colossians 1:15-20, Revelation 21-22.

# The Redemptive Work of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified, was resurrected from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate. We believe that Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross on our behalf as the perfect, all-sufficient substitutionary sacrifice for our sins. God calls all of humanity to repent and believe in Jesus. Faith in the miracle of the incarnation, His perfect life, atoning death, victorious resurrection, glorious ascension, and his visible return, is the only way to be reconciled to God and experience everlasting joy in His presence.

## Scripture References:

John 1:1-18, John 10:24-39, John 17:5, Matthew 1:1-25, Mark 2:1-12, Luke 6:1-11, Romans 5, Colossians 1:13-21, Colossians 2:8-15, Hebrews 1:1-3

# The Church

We believe that the true church consists of all who have put their faith in the redemptive work of Christ and believe that by the grace of God we are reconciled to God. The church is to be a contagious culture of joyous other-worldly hope. Believers are distinct in design but united in mission by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is revealed in local churches, where membership should be composed only of believers. We believe that Jesus instituted two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are expressions of divine grace as they visibly and physically communicate the Gospel. Though they are not necessary for salvation, when celebrated by the church, these ordinances strengthen, affirm, and uplift the believer.

## Distinctive: Credo-Baptism by Immersion

We believe that credo-baptism by immersion is the precedent laid out in the New Testament. Following conversion, believers are called to partake in the divine grace of baptism, not as an act that saves, but as a step of professed belief and obedience that symbolizes outwardly the internal reality of their union with Christ in his death and resurrection.

## Distinctive: Church Leadership

We believe that the church leadership structure laid out in scripture is that of a plurality of elders and deacons. Elders are Biblically called and qualified men who shepherd the church through teaching, prayer, doctrinal oversight, and spiritual care. We believe that eldership is synonymous with responsibility and not hierarchy and it is therefore upon the elders of a church to ensure congregational involvement in the direction of the church. Deacons are Biblically called and qualified men or women who provide for various needs of the church through acts of service, meeting tangible needs, aiding the elder's devotion to prayer and the ministry of the word and in doing so deacons promote church unity.

# Distinctive: Continuationist

When Christ ascended, he poured out the Holy Spirit on the church, leading to a greater understanding and experience of God's presence, power, and pleasure among his people. The Spirit convicts our hearts of the desperate need for salvation and He also desires to fill God's people continually with increased power to live the Christian Life. It is only by the power of the Spirit that we can be effective witnesses to all people everywhere. Therefore we must continually seek to be filled with the Spirit by living and praying in such a way that longs for God to accomplish his purposes in and through us. We believe that the signifier of being filled with the Holy Spirit is professed and lived-out submission to Christ as Lord, an increased desire for holiness, and a deeper understanding of our adopted identity in Christ. We believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit seen in the New Testament are still active and present in today's church. These gifts did not end with the close of the New Testament or the death of the last apostle. We encourage the use of spiritual gifts in the life of the Christian and in the life of the church. We do not believe that any one particular gift is evidence of salvation or that every believer will obtain all the gifts of the Spirit. They are given to the church by the Spirit according to God's gracious will.

## Scripture References:

Acts 2:42-47, Acts 3:25-26, 1 Corinthians 3:16, Ephesians, 1 Peter 2:4-5, 1 Peter 3:8, Hebrews 10:25, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-16, 1 Peter 5:1-10, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Romans 12:1-21, Mark 1:5, Matthew 3:6, Acts 2:38, Acts 2:41, Acts 8:12-13, Galatians 3:26-27, Colossians 2:11-12, Romans 6:3-4.



# The Christian Life

We believe that the comfort of the Gospel (Justification) must not be separated from the call of the Gospel (Sanctification). God commands us to love Him above all and from His life-giving love, grow in our knowledge of God, grow in holiness, grow in sacrificial love for others, and live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor, and justice for the oppressed. Through the power of the Spirit, the word of God, and prayer, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil by walking in obedience to the Great Commission. All Christians everywhere are called to make disciples of all nations, proclaiming the Gospel in word and in deed.

## Scripture References:

Romans 12:1-3, Matthew 5-7, James 1:19-20, Galatians 5:22-25, Romans 8, John 14, Colossians 1:24-29, Colossians 2:6-7, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

# Christ's Return & God's Kingdom

We believe that Jesus Christ will return to the earth in glory. At this time, only known to God, he will establish fully and finally his eternal kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. The dead in Christ will rise to glorification, God will judge all mankind, the wicked will be banished from the presence of God to eternal punishment, and the righteous, those redeemed by the blood of Christ, will rule and reign with him forever. Creation will be made new and all things, for all eternity, will proclaim the glory of God in perfection.

## Scripture References:

Revelation 19-22, Colossians 1:13-23, Isaiah 43:6, Isaiah 60-66, 1 Thessalonians 4-5, Hebrews 9:28, Mark 13:32, Matthew 24, John 14:3, 2 Peter 3:10, 1 Corinthians 15:52, Daniel 7.