

Firm Foundation Christian Church

Statement of Christian Faith

Established August 1, 2009

A. Revelation and Inspiration

1. God reveals Himself to all humankind in a general sense through His creation (Gen 1:1; Psalm 19:1; Rom 1:20).
2. God reveals Himself in a special sense to those whom He chose and appointed to eternal life “before the foundations of the world” (Eph 1:4; 2 Thes 2:13).
3. The way in which God reveals Himself is in His Son Jesus Christ through the convicting and illuminating work of the Holy Spirit (John 1; 16:13).
4. Those who believe on the Son receive the gift of eternal life with their Creator (John 3:16).
5. There is no other way by which one may receive eternal life except through belief upon the Lord Jesus Christ (John 10:1; 14:6; 1 Tim 2:5).
6. In times past, God inspired certain men to write down certain truths to communicate to men and women His character and divine plan for mankind (2 Pet 1:21). These truths have been compiled in a book and are known as Scripture, God’s Word, or The Holy Bible.
7. The Holy Bible consists of the 39 books of the Hebrew Old Testament and the 27 books of the Greek New Testament. It does not include the Apocrypha. The canon of Scripture is closed. That is, nothing may be added or removed from it (Rev 22:18-19).
8. God’s Word is a reflection of God’s unchanging character and is therefore without error (Num 23:19; James 1:17).
9. Scripture is the Christian’s greatest authority and constitutes the norm for Christian faith and practice (Psalm 19:7-8; 2 Tim 3:16-17). It carries infinitely greater weight than any human tradition or experience.

B. The Nature and Doctrine of God

1. The Holy Bible reveals one God existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deut 6:4; John 1:3; 1 Cor 2:10-11). Each Member of the Trinity possesses all of the divine attributes.
2. God exists eternally apart from His creation and is self sustaining and self sufficient (Gen 1:1; Deut 33:27; John 5:26; Acts 17:24-28). He created all things out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) and sustains all things according to His perfect will (Col 1:16; Acts 14:17). He is intimately involved with all facets of His creation (Dan 2:21; Matt 6:26; 10:29-31).
3. God is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient (Psalm 139:7-10; Mark 10:27; Isa 40:28).
4. God’s moral attributes are holiness, love, wisdom, grace, mercy, goodness, patience, righteousness, justice, truthfulness, and faithfulness (1 Pet 1:15; John 3:16; Rom 11:33; 9:16; Matt 7:11; 2 Pet 3:9; Psalm 72:2; John 17:17; 1 Cor 10:13).

C. Doctrine of Humanity

1. God created men and women in His own image and likeness with both a body and a spirit (Gen 1:26-27; 2:7).
2. Adam and Eve were originally created without sin and enjoyed perfect fellowship with their Creator (Gen 1-2). Sin was introduced into the human race by their disobedience with the results that all men and women would henceforth inherently possess a sin nature and death entered the world (Gen 3; Psalm 51:5; Rom 5:12-19).
3. Because all men and women have a sin nature, we are totally depraved and hostile to God (Rom 1:18-32; 3:22-23; 8:7-8).
4. We are therefore completely dependent upon God's grace and mercy for our eternal salvation (Job 14:1-4; Eph 2:8-9).

D. The Doctrine and Work of Christ

1. Jesus Christ was supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit without a human father and born of the virgin Mary (Isa 7:14; Matt 1:18-25).
2. Jesus Christ was born without a sin nature and committed no sin (Heb 4:15).
3. Jesus Christ in His incarnation was both fully God and fully man (John 1:1-14; Heb 2:14-18).
4. His substitutionary death on the cross satisfied the wrath of God towards sinners once and for all (Isa 53:4-5; Rom 3:25). Through His atoning sacrifice, it made it possible for human sinners to be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:18-19; 1 John 2:2).
5. The blood of Christ is infinitely precious because it is the price demanded of God for the redemption of the human race (Rom 3:25; Heb 9:22; 1 Pet 1:19).
6. Christ died for all men and women and His sacrifice is sufficient for all (John 3:16; 1 John 2:2; Acts 13:46-48). However, some will not choose Him and be left to continue in their sins (Rom 1; 3:3).
7. Jesus Christ rose bodily from the dead, confirming the effectiveness of His work on earth for all time and the future glorification of believers (Rom 1:2-4; 1 Cor 15:3-6; 17-20).
8. Jesus Christ now sits in heaven at the right hand of the Father representing, interceding for, and advocating for His people (Acts 2:32-33; Rom 8:34; 1 Tim 2:5).

E. The Work of the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit is active today in convicting the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11). He brings sinners into a saving relationship with God by pointing them to Jesus Christ (John 14:16-18; 14:26; 16:13-14).
2. The Holy Spirit indwells believers and guarantees their eternal salvation (Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13).
3. All believers are commanded to walk according to His leading (Gal 5:16-18). Those believers who obey this command will be lights in the fallen world and their lives will be fruitful (Matt 25:29; Gal 5:22-25). Those Christians who do not do so grieve Him and God will not effectively work through them as a result (Eph 4:30; 1 Thes 5:19).
4. The Holy Spirit illuminates the truths in the Holy Bible and teaches Christians how to personally apply them to their lives (John 16:13).

5. The Holy Spirit gives at least one spiritual gift to each believer (1 Cor 12:7).
6. The gifts given to Christ's church reflect the unity and diversity that is God's design for His church (1 Cor 12:4-5). There are no less than nineteen specific gifts mentioned in Scripture (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:8-10; 1 Cor 12:28-30; Eph 4:11).
7. Spiritual gifts are properly used in a spirit of love---which is a reflection of God's character--in order that the church will be built up by the use of them (1 Cor 13; Eph 4:12).
8. While the majority of the gifts are still being given today, some are no longer given because they were temporary in nature in that their purpose was to authenticate the Christian message prior to the completion of Scripture. The temporary gifts, also known as 'sign gifts', are those of apostleship, prophecy, miracles, healings, tongues, and interpretation of tongues (1 Cor 13:8-10; 14:21-22; Heb 2:3-4; Rev 22:18-19). Further evidence for the cessation argument specifically relating to the gift of tongues is found in the analysis of other biblical texts and the relative absence of this gift throughout church history (Luke 8:24; Heb 10:1-2).

F. Salvation and the Christian Life

1. God invites all men and women to repent of their sins, believe in Jesus Christ, and accept the free gift of salvation offered in the gospel (Luke 24:46-47; John 1:12-13; Rom 5:15-17).
2. God's sovereign election is unconditional and is not based on any 'foreseen faith' on the part of an individual. Those men and women whom He has chosen before the foundations of the world will accept His offer of salvation (John 15:16; Eph 1:4; 2 Thes 2:13). No man or woman will seek God on his or her own initiative (Rom 3:10-11). Those who reject His offer of salvation will be left to continue in their sin (John 15:22; Rom 1).
3. Salvation is entirely apart from works. It is of God's grace alone (Eph 2:8-9).
4. Justification is the process whereby Jesus Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer and God finds the believer not guilty of sin on account of the Savior's righteousness and intercession (Rom 3:23-24; 4:22-25).
5. Sanctification is the process by which the old sin nature is progressively subdued as a result of the ministry of the Word and of the Spirit (Luke 9:23; Phil 3:12).
6. Because the salvation of believers rests upon the character and promises of God, believers are eternally secure in that salvation (John 10:28-29; Rom 8:38-39; 2 Tim 2:13).

G. The Church

1. The church is a divinely ordained institution with Jesus Christ as its Head and His Person, Work, and Teaching as its Foundation (Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:10-11).
2. The universal church is made up of all born again believers of this present age regardless of denominational affiliation or belief (1 Cor 12:12-14; ; Eph 4:11-16).
3. Each local church is autonomous and governed by its own leadership (1 Cor 1:1-2; Phil 1:1).
4. Each local church is commanded to assemble together for the purposes of worship, prayer, hearing the Word, Bible study, communion, serving one another, fellowship, evangelism, and discipline (Heb 10:24-25; Matt 18:16-20; 28:18-20; John 13:15; 13:34-35; Luke 22:19).

5. There are two offices in the church: elders and deacons (1 Tim 3; Titus 1).
6. An elder must have a life characterized by manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit and have the gift of teaching (1 Tim 3:1-7; Gal 5:22-25).
7. The Scriptures teach a plurality of elders in the local church whose primary responsibilities are immersion in prayer and ministry of God's Word for the purpose of equipping the saints for ministry (Acts 6:1-4; 20:17; Eph 4:11-12; 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Pet 5:1, 5).
8. The Scriptures teach that the day to day practical needs of the church are to be handled by deacons whose lives are characterized by manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit (Acts 6:1-5; 1 Tim 3:8-13; Gal 5:22-25).
9. Elders and deacons must be male. God's design in creation, headship within the marriage relationship, and other such explicit statements contained in His Word must be honored in His Church (1 Tim 2:12-15, 3:1-2, 11-12; 1 Cor 11:3-17, 14:33-40). Therefore, women are prohibited from exercising authority in the church. Women may and should serve in all other areas of the church (Prov 31; Rom 16:1-2; Titus 2:3-5).

H. The Ordinances of the Faith

1. There are two divinely instituted ordinances: Baptism and Communion.
2. Baptism with water is an outward sign of an inward change that has already taken place and represents an identification with the Lord's death and resurrection (Matt 3:16; 28:19; Acts 16:14-15; Rom 6:3-5).
3. Only those individuals who have personal faith in Jesus should be baptized. In order to attain to such a conscious faith, one must be able to fully understand what it entails (Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38; 18:8). The teaching that infant baptism confers any 'special grace' or has any merit with regard to salvation is therefore not a scriptural concept.
4. Communion, also known as the Lord's Supper, is commanded to be observed so that we might remember Christ's sacrifice on our behalf and look forward to His return (Matt 26:26-28; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-29). Communion is for believers only (1 Cor 10:16, 21-22).

I. Eschatology

1. Eschatology is best understood within the framework of dispensations. Dispensations are specific periods of history during which God deals with specific groups of people in specific ways. Humanity first began in the Dispensation of Innocence until the fall (Gen 1-2). That was followed by the Dispensation of the Gentiles from the fall to the call of Abraham (Gen 3-11). Next came the Dispensation of the Jews (Gen 12 to the coming of Christ). The Dispensation of Hypostatic Union encompasses the time frame from the Coming of Christ until Pentecost. With the inauguration of His Church began the Dispensation of Grace, the one in which we live. Still to come are the Dispensation of the Tribulation and the Dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom (Matt 24; Rev 20:1-7).
2. It is necessary to make a distinction between the nation of Israel and the church when interpreting Scripture. For example, specific promises made to Israel such as boundaries of the land must be fulfilled to the specific people to whom they were given (Gen 12:1-4; Deut

- 11:24). It follows that such promises are yet to be fulfilled since God fulfills all His promises in every last detail (Num 23:19; 2 Cor 1:18-20; James 1:17).
3. Throughout all human history and in every Dispensation, eternal salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone (Eph 2:8-9; Heb 11).
 4. The next great fulfillment of prophecy will take place at the Rapture of the Church. The Lord Jesus Christ will receive both the dead in Christ and the believers who are alive on earth to Himself at that time (1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thes 4:13-18).
 5. The Tribulation will begin shortly after the Rapture of the Church and with the signing of a covenant between God's chosen people Israel and the Antichrist. This seven-year period will be a time of unprecedented hardship for those living on the earth, especially the Jews (Dan 9:24-27; Zeph 1:15; Matt 24:15-21; Rev 6:1-17).
 6. The Tribulation will end abruptly with the Second Coming of Christ. Jesus will come back to the earth to judge His enemies and set up His Kingdom on earth (Isa 63:1-6; Zech 14:4-11; Matt 24:27-31; 26:63-64; Rev 19:11-20:10).
 7. Jesus will then establish His Millennial Kingdom, during which he will reign over all of the nations of the earth with righteousness, justice, and peace (Isa 2:4; 9:6-7; Rev 20:1-10).
 8. All of those souls who trusted in God's promises of the coming Christ and His redeeming work prior to His Ascension entered into His presence upon His ascension (Job 19:25-27; Heb 11:1-2, 13-17). Those souls who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ since His Ascension are received immediately into His presence upon their death or rapture. They remain there until the resurrection of the body, at which time "mortality will put on immortality" and body and soul will reunite forever in His Presence (Luke 16:19-31; 1 Cor 15:26; 54-57; 2 Tim 1:9-10; Rev 21:3-4).
 9. All of those souls who have rejected Jesus Christ throughout all dispensations enter into a state of conscious torment at death. They remain there until the Great White Throne Judgment, at which time they will be cast from the presence of God forever into everlasting torment (Matt 10:28; Rom 6:23; Rev 20:12-13).

J. Practical and Ethical Issues

1. Christians are called to live lives of obedience to the Lord. We are called to engage the world but at the same time to disengage ourselves from those things which are sinful and not in accord with God's Word (Lev 11:44; 1 Pet 1:15-16; John 17:14-18).
2. God has instituted human government primarily as a means to restrain sin in the world. Therefore we should obey those who God has placed in authority except when they give a clear command that is contrary to Scripture (Rom 13:1-7; Ex 1:15-21; Dan 3).
3. God has instituted marriage as a covenant made before God between one man and one woman (Gen 2:18-24). Both husbands and wives are responsible to submit to one another with the same kind of sacrificial love, honor, and respect modeled by the Lord Jesus Christ in His Ministry (Eph 5:22-33).
4. God has created sex to be enjoyed within the marriage covenant both for procreation and for intimacy between husband and wife (Gen 1:28; 1 Cor 7:2-5; Eph 5:22-33). Sex outside of marriage, such as adultery and homosexuality, is strictly forbidden by Scripture (Heb 13:4; Prov 5:15-19; Matt 5:31-32; Lev 18:1-30).
5. Divorce was not in God's original design of marriage (Gen 2:18-24; Deut 24:1-4; Mal 2:14-16). However, because of the sinful nature of mankind to corrupt God's perfectly designed

institutions, divorce is permitted in cases of adultery or desertion (Matt 5:31-32; Deut 24:1-4; 1 Cor 7:10-17). There are no other grounds for divorce permitted in Scripture.

6. Remarriage is permissible according to God's Word either upon the death of a spouse or upon a divorce that meets the criteria set forth in Scripture (1 Cor 7:39; 10-17; Matt 5:31-32).
7. Human life begins at the moment of conception. Therefore, taking the life of an unborn human being is murder (Job 3:16; Psalm 139:14-16; Jer 1:5; Luke 1:44).
8. It is the responsibility of every believer to participate in the Great Commission. This includes evangelism, discipleship, and missions (Matt 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8).
9. It is the responsibility of all believers to be good stewards of time, money, and spiritual gifts (Eph 5:16; Col 4:5; 2 Cor 8:12; 9:7; 1 Cor 4:2; 12:7). New Testament giving of money to the church is to be done according to one's ability and desire, with a cheerful heart, without any coercion, and on the first day of the week (Mark 12:42-43, 2 Cor 8:12; 9:7; 1 Cor 16:2). Tithing was an Old Testament system of taxation separate from the free will offering and is not a command to the New Testament believer (Lev 27:28-34; Deut 14:22-29).