

CALVARY BIBLE CHURCH EAST STATEMENT OF FAITH

Adopted by Congregational Affirmation on February 21, 2010

This Statement of Faith contains a summary of the doctrinal beliefs of Calvary Bible Church East. We believe that it reflects the teaching of the Bible. When the Scriptures are silent, or on matters nonessential to salvation, we permit freedom of interpretation.

1. THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that "all Scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim. 3:16). We accept the Old and New Testaments (66 books) in their original form as the Word of God and we believe that they are without error or contradiction. The Holy Spirit so guided the writers that what they wrote are the very words of God (2 Pet. 1:19-21; 1 Cor. 2:13). This divine inspiration is true only of the Bible and extends to every part of the Bible and to every word and letter of the original manuscripts (Matt. 5:18; John 17:17). The Bible, not human reason or experience, is the final authority for Christian belief and practice. All the Scriptures center on the Lord Jesus Christ and lead us to Him (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2-3). Furthermore, even though the Church is not bound by the Old Testament Law, all the Scriptures were written for our instruction, encouragement and edification (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).

The Scriptures constitute our rule of faith and practice. They hold the place of authority in our church and in our lives. It is the duty and privilege of every Christian to seek to understand and practice God's Word by the enablement of the Holy Spirit and to faithfully attend a Bible believing and Bible teaching church to be instructed in the truth of the Word so that he/she may be fully equipped for the work of the ministry (2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 10:24-25).

2. GOD

We believe that there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite, eternal Spirit, the Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth. God is absolutely pure, holy, and good and is worthy of all our love, confidence, honor, and obedience (Deut. 6:4; Ps. 83:18, 90:12, 147:5; Jer. 10:10; John 4:24; Eph. 4:6). We believe that in this one God there are three separate Persons who have been revealed as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). These three are equal in their deity and perfection, but they carry out distinct and harmonious functions in the sovereign plan of God (John 5:17-19, 10:30, 15:26; Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Cor. 6:11).

3. THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God who became man without ceasing to be God (John 1:1,14; Phil. 2:5-8). He freely took upon Himself a human nature but without personal sin (Heb. 2:9-18, 4:15). He was conceived miraculously by the Holy Spirit in a virgin woman, Mary (Matt. 1:18-23; Luke 1:26-35). We unreservedly and unquestionably affirm the full deity and full humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ (Micah 5:2; Isa. 7:14, 9:6; Matt. 16:16; John 1:1, 14, 10:30-31, 20:28; Gal. 4:4; Titus 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 John 5:20).

We believe that the Lord Jesus paid the full penalty of our sin when He died on the cross as our Substitute (1 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 5:8; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21). He bore our sins in His own body (1 Pet. 2:24; Luke 22:19) and shed His precious blood for the forgiveness of all our sins (1 Pet. 1:18-19; Matt. 26:27-28; Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:13). Christ's death was the perfect, final, and eternal sacrifice, and

we can add nothing to it by our own efforts (Heb.1:3, 10:10-14; 1 Pet. 3:18). The death of Christ is sufficient to save all men (1 Tim. 2:6, 4:10; 1 John 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:19) but is effective and is applied only to those who believe in Christ as their personal Savior (1 Tim. 4:10; John 1:12, 3:16).

We believe that Jesus died and was buried and then arose from the dead in the same body though glorified. The bodily resurrection of Christ was a real event (Matt. 28:1-10; 1 Cor. 15:4-20). We believe that Christ ascended into heaven and that He is now exalted at the Father's right hand (Acts 1:9-11; Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:20-23; Heb. 1:3, 9:24). There He is continually representing His people as our High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16, 10:21-22), Intercessor (Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34), and Advocate (1 John 2:1-2). In the future Christ will return from heaven, first in the air to catch away the Church, and then, after the Tribulation, to the earth to establish His Kingdom.

4. THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person, not an impersonal force. He is God, equal in nature with God the Father and God the Son (Matt. 28:19; John 14:16, 17, 15:26-27; Acts 5:3-4). He was active in creation; He restrains sin and Satan in the world; He convicts unsaved men of sin, of the righteousness of Christ, and of the future judgment of sin as the Gospel is proclaimed; He draws men to Christ in salvation; He indwells, seals, guides, teaches, assures, and helps the believer (Gen. 1:1-3; John 3:5-6, 14:26, 16:8-15; Rom. 8:9, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 1:13-14; 2 Thess. 2:7; Heb. 9:14).

We believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the act of God which places all true believers in this age into the body of Christ, the Church (Acts 11:15-17; 1 Cor. 12:13). It occurs at the instant a person believes in Christ and is not normally evidenced by external sign miracles or by speaking in tongues. It is the believer's responsibility then to live under the control of the Holy Spirit and to give evidence in his life of the Spirit's presence through obedience and praise to God (Gal. 5:16, 22-23; Eph. 4:30, 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:19; Phil. 1:1). The Holy Spirit's ministry in this age is to glorify Christ in and through the believer (John 16:14) by reproducing the character of Jesus Christ in the believer's life (Gal. 2:20, 4:19).

We believe that the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to each believer and that He gives special men to the Church (evangelists and teaching pastors) and that these together with the Word of God are sufficient to bring believers to maturity (1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:8-13). We believe that the miraculous sign miracles and gifts, such as speaking in tongues and instantaneous healing, were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were not intended to be an ongoing characteristic of the lives of believers (1 Cor. 13:8-12; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:1-4). We believe that God does hear and answer prayer regarding those who are sick, in accordance with His will (Phil. 2:26-27; James 5:13-18; 1 John 5:14-15).

5. MAN AND SIN

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God from the dust of the ground on the sixth day of the creation week (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:7). Man was not in any way the product of an evolutionary development from lower forms of life but was created directly by God and for God (Isa. 43:7; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11). Man was created in unconfirmed holiness but, through sin, fell from that state (Gen. 3:1-19). In Adam, the human race fell (Rom. 5:12-21), inherited a sinful nature (Ps. 51:1; Gen. 5:3), and became alienated from God (Col. 1:21; Eph. 4:17-19). Therefore, all men apart

from Christ are totally sinful (Ps. 14:1-3; Rom. 3:10-23; 1 Kings 8:46), wicked, lost, blind, and dead in sin (Luke 19:10; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:5-8). As a result, man is, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. Man's heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9) and his only hope is salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. SALVATION

The salvation of sinful men and women is the work of God and is totally of grace (Eph. 2:8-9; Acts 15:11). Salvation is the gift of God (Rom. 6:23) which is received through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His work on our behalf (John 1:12, 5:24, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31). The moment a person believes in Christ as Savior, that person passes from death to eternal life and stands before God in the righteousness of Christ. The true believer is assured of God's acceptance and love forever because of Christ's work and not because of the believer's efforts (1 John 3:14; Eph. 2:9-10; Rom. 5:1). Salvation is based on the finished work of Christ in bearing the penalty and guilt of our sin. Jesus Christ is the only Savior, and apart from Him there is no salvation (Acts 4:12). Those who do not receive God's free gift of eternal life will perish under the wrath of a holy God (John 3:16-18, 36; 8:24).

7. ASSURANCE (ETERNAL SECURITY)

The Bible clearly teaches that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are safe and secure in Christ forever (John 5:24, 6:37-40, 47, 10:27-30; Rom. 8:28-39; Eph. 1:13-14, 4:30; 1 Pet. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Heb. 13:5). Therefore, it is impossible for a born again child of God to lose his salvation (John 10:28). On the other hand, the person whose life is devoid of Christian character ought to make certain of his calling and election (2 Pet. 1:3-10) and should examine himself to see whether he is in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5). The question, therefore, is not whether a saved person can be lost (which is impossible) but whether one who professes belief is truly saved (1 John 2:4, 6, 9).

8. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

We believe that the Christian life should be a life of joy and peace and obedience to the Lord who saved us. The believer is free to be guided by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and is not bound by the Old Testament Law or the rules of legalists (Gal. 5:1, 25). This liberty in Christ, however, is not to be used as an excuse for sin (Rom. 13:13-14; 6:1-13; Gal. 5:13). The grace of God teaches us that we should deny ungodliness and worldly desires and should live sensible, righteous, and godly lives (Titus 2:11-13). Saved people should live in such a way that they do not bring reproach to the name of Christ. Separation from religious apostasy and compromise, from sinful and worldly practices, and from unscriptural associations is clearly commanded in God's Word (2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). If a person is truly saved, he should manifest a life of constant obedience to the Word of God (1 John 2:3-5), a fervent love for other believers (1 John 3:14-19; 4:7, 20) and a daily walk that is characterized by righteousness and Christ-likeness (Gal. 5:22-23; 1 John 2:29; 3:10).

9. THE CHURCH

The Church, which is the body and the bride of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23, 5:22-23; 2 Cor. 11:2), is a spiritual organism made up of all born again persons of this present age. The Church Age began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2, 11:15-17) and will be concluded at the rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4:13-18) at which time the spiritual building will be complete (Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-7; Rom. 11:25). Jesus Christ is the Head of the universal Church and of our local church (Col. 1:18). We are

members of Christ and members of each other (Rom. 12:5). Therefore, we seek to exalt Christ in every ministry and activity of our church, and we are to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-3; Col. 3:12-17). False teaching and division are to be handled by church discipline (Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:10). As believers we are to love each other fervently (Eph. 5:1-4; Rom. 14:13-23; 1 John 3:14). Our mission is to proclaim the message of repentance for forgiveness of sins to people of all nations so that they may be reconciled to God and become disciples of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:47; 2 Cor. 5:20).

10. ANGELS AND SATAN

The Bible clearly teaches the existence and personality of angels, both holy, elect angels (Luke 2:13, 9:26, 15:10) and fallen angels or demons (Mark 5:1-20; 2 Pet. 2:4). Satan is a personal angel, the author of sin (1 John 3:8; John 8:44; 1 Tim. 3:6), and the open and declared enemy of God and men (2 Cor. 4:3-4; 1 Pet. 5:8). His defeat was accomplished through the cross of Christ and he and his angels will be eternally punished in the lake of fire (John 12:31; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

11. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe that the second coming of Jesus Christ will take place in two phases. The first phase will be the personal (1 Thess. 4:13-18), imminent (1 Cor. 15:51-52; Titus 2:13; Rev. 22:20), and pre-tribulational (Rev. 3:10; 1 Thess. 1:10, 5:9-11) coming of the Lord Jesus for His Church. This rapture of the Church is the believer's confident hope. The rapture will be followed by the tribulation period, a period of seven years, during which God pours out His wrath on sinful men (Rev. 4-19). The second phase of Christ's coming will take place at the end of the tribulation period when Christ will return to the earth with His saints to establish His Kingdom in which the promises that God made to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament will be literally fulfilled (Zech. 14:4-11; Rev. 19:11-16, 20:1-6; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Matt. 24:29-31, 36-51).

12. THE ETERNAL STATE

At death, the believer goes immediately to be with Christ (Phil. 1:21-23). He is absent from the body but face to face with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6-8). There, in conscious joy, the believer awaits the first resurrection (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:4-6) when he will be reunited with his resurrected body, to be glorified forever with the Lord. At death, unbelievers go to be in conscious misery (Luke 16:19-26) until the second resurrection when they shall be reunited with their resurrected bodies to appear before Christ at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:15). They will not be annihilated but will suffer everlasting conscious punishment under the wrath of God (Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Mark 9:43-48).

13. ORDINANCES

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ commanded His Church to observe two ordinances. These ordinances do not bring salvation to those who participate in them. We are saved by the grace of God through faith alone. We do believe, however, that these ordinances are an important part of the Christian life.

The first ordinance is water baptism "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). Baptism is the outward expression and testimony of faith in Christ and symbolizes the believer's baptism by the Holy Spirit into one body of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13). Baptism is to be administered by immersion to believers in Jesus Christ.

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The second ordinance is the Lord's Supper or communion. The bread and juice used in the communion service are symbols of the body and blood of Christ and serve as reminders to us of His death for our sins (Matt. 26:26- 29; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once a month.