

Focus Bible Church

Statement of Faith - Expanded Edition

What we teach

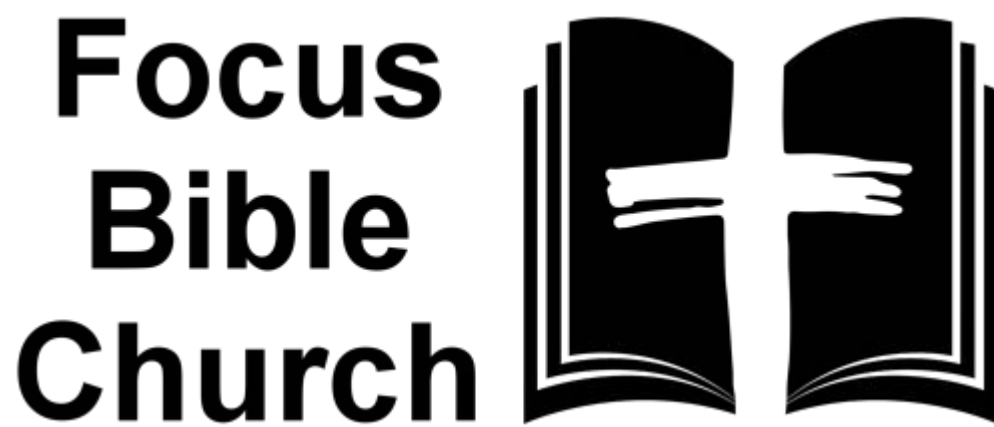


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God

We teach that there is only one truly supreme, sovereign, creator God over all that exists in both the seen and unseen realms. He is the only infinite, eternal, perfect God in all His attributes (Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6). Being holy in all that He is and does (Isaiah 6:2-4), He is an all-knowing, omni-present Spirit who (John 4:24), while being one in essence (Deuteronomy 6:4), exists and expresses Himself in three persons; Father, Son (Jesus Christ) and Holy Spirit, all equally worthy of worship (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

God the Father

We teach that God the Father is the first person of the triune Godhead and dispenses all things as an expression of His will and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He alone is sovereign as creator and sustainer of all that exists as He governs by providence and redemption (Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36; Ephesians 3:9).

We teach that God the Father is not the designer or author of sin by direct act or by implication and never approves of sin (Habakkuk 1:12-13; Isaiah 6:1-3; John 8:38-47; 1 Peter 1:16).

We teach that God becomes the Father of all who turn to Him through faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin and express faith through repentance (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

We teach that God works out His sovereign will for the salvation of sinners by granting the faith (Ephesians 2:4-9) required as a grace gift, enabling man the responsibility to believe in His Son Jesus Christ for forgiveness and eternal life.

God the Son

We teach that God the Son (Jesus Christ) is the second person of the triune Godhead and seeks to glorify His Father in all that He is and does (John 17:21-24; Hebrews 1:3) as the exact representation of His Father. The Son is fully divine yet fully human (Philippians 2:6-11), who has eternal life within Himself just as the Father has life within Himself (John 5:26), through whom the Father created all that exists (Hebrews 1:2). Jesus was born of his earthly virgin mother Mary but fathered by His Heavenly Father (Luke 1:30-35).

We teach that Jesus Christ lived and ministered for the purpose of fulfilling His Father's will (John 4:34) for Him to be crucified as a sacrifice of propitiation (Romans 3:25-26) carrying the entire sin of all mankind for all time. Having completed His appointed work of bearing the judgment for man's sin, He declared His victory to the demonic powers locked in prison (1 Peter 3:18-20), then He was physically resurrected from the dead (Matthew 28:5-6), later to be physically ascended to the right side of His Father in Heaven (Acts 1:9; Hebrews 1:3).

We teach that Jesus Christ alone is the mediator between mankind and God (1 Timothy 2:5) and no other human or spiritual agency is instrumental in bridging unregenerate man to God. The Lord Jesus Christ alone is man's access to a personal relationship with the Heavenly Father (John 14:6). Only Jesus Christ is the essence of spiritual truth leading to eternal life and peace with God (Romans 3:21-24) and as such He alone is able to set mankind free from the bondage of sin and religion (John 4:23-25; Luke 4:18-21).

God the Holy Spirit

We teach that God the Holy Spirit is the third person of the triune Godhead and as such He is fully God yet seeks never to promote Himself independently or to glorify Himself. We teach that the Holy Spirit never seeks to elevate Himself, rather, He always seeks to glorify Jesus Christ (John 16:14). Jesus promised that He would send

the Holy Spirit from the Father (John 14:16-17; 15:26), which was fulfilled at Pentecost, forming the Church (Acts 2:1- 41) which is the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13, 27).

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and growing believers into the image of Jesus Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22). The Holy Spirit enters all believers, baptising them into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13) equally and fully the instant they believe in Christ for salvation (Ephesians 1:13-14), thus permanently sealing the child of God as eternally secure in Christ. Just as the Holy Spirit guided the Prophets and Apostles into truth for the revelation of Scripture, so the Holy Spirit also guides Believers into all truth (John 16:13) as He takes what belongs to Christ and makes it known to the believer (John 16:15).

We teach that the Holy Spirit sovereignly dispenses His gifts into Believers for the perfecting of the Saints today and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the early 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 all believers of all times (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12; Hebrews 2:1-4).

Scripture

We teach that the Bible is God's only true written revelation to humankind. Comprising of 66 books equally inspired in all parts by the Holy Spirit, the Bible is absolutely without error or fault and is totally inerrant in its original manuscripts (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that God gave mankind the Scriptures by means of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit superimposed His will upon the minds of the human authors so that their characters and personal writing styles accurately expressed and recorded precisely God's Word (2 Peter 1:20-21). As such, the Bible is man's only clear guide of spiritual truth, faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; John 16:12-14; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that while there is only one true interpretation of Scripture, there may be more than one application of any given passage. Correct understanding of Scripture comes by the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20) as the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation is consistently applied. As the Holy Spirit enables, and the reader submits to the authority of Scripture, the Bible is able to meet every spiritual need of mankind. Therefore, the absolute truth of Scripture always stands in judgment of mankind, never does man stand in judgment of Scripture.

We teach that the Bible is God's primary means of communicating the way of salvation (2 Timothy 3:15) to unregenerate people which the Holy Spirit uses to bring about conviction leading to rebirth (1 Thessalonians 1:5). For the Believer, the Bible is their Heavenly Father's provision of spiritual truth and food (1 Peter 2:2) which brings growth leading to Christ like maturity (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and effective service.

Creation

We teach the biblical truth of God's intelligent design throughout creation (Proverbs 8:22-31) and that all three persons of the triune God were involved in creation (Genesis 1:1-2; John 1:1-3). Creation cannot be separated from the gospel of Jesus Christ as He is the creator and those whom He made must come to Him alone for salvation (Hebrews 1:1-4).

We teach that God, of His own volition (Revelation 4:11) and perpetual power (John 5:26), created and sustains all that exists (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3) through His Son Jesus Christ (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

We teach that God created all that is seen from nothing (Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3), in 6 literal, 24-hour days (Genesis 1: 1-31), and that on the 7th day He rested having accomplished His plan and purpose to His own complete satisfaction (Genesis 1:31- 2:3), therefore we teach from a young earth position.

We teach that God did not employ in the least degree any form of evolutionary process, but, by His own supernatural will (Revelation 4:11), intellect (Jeremiah 51:15) and power, created everything (Colossians 1:16) in its final form. God made from the dust of the earth all the beasts of the field and birds of the air along with Adam (Genesis 2:7, 19). God made Eve from a rib taken from Adam (Genesis 2:22). While God has designed the animal kingdom to allow for progressive variation within individual species it is not possible for cross species mutational development (Genesis 1:21-25), one species cannot evolve into another species. Of all that God created, only mankind was created in the image of God. Thus, as the highest of all created beings, mankind alone has been charged with the responsibility of ruling and subduing the earth (Genesis 1:26, 28).

We teach that no interpretation of evidence in any field relating to creation, including history and chronology, can be accepted as valid if it opposes the biblical record.

Heaven

We teach that Heaven is the dwelling place of God (1 Kings 8:30; Matthew 6:9) and the Holy Angels (Matthew 18:10; 24:36). From His heavenly throne He rules all of creation (Acts 7:48-49; Matthew 6:9-10) and administers judgment on all people (Psalm 9:7-8; 11:4-7). Heaven cannot contain God as He is Spirit and transcends all of creation (1 Kings 8:27). Heaven is a high and holy place, beyond our human comprehension (Ezekiel 1; Revelation 4-5). There is no sin, nor effects of sin there (Revelation 21:4), neither are there wicked people (Galatians 5:19-21) in Heaven, but only righteousness dwells there (Isaiah 57:15).

We teach that after His death and burial, Christ ascended to His Father's throne in Heaven and sat at His right hand where He intercedes on the Saints behalf (Acts 1:11; Hebrews 6:20; 9:11-12, 24). While in Heaven, Jesus Christ is preparing dwelling places (John 14:2-3) for His Saints ready for His return to gather them to Himself so they can be together with the Heavenly Father (John 14:3).

We teach that the saved in Christ will enter the eternal state of glory with God at death (Luke 16:22; 23:42-43; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Philippians 1:23). Believer's citizenship is in Heaven (Philippians 3:20) where God watches over and acts on behalf of the righteous (1 Chronicles 21:26; Psalm 18) and where the Saints shall receive their future reward (1 Peter 1:4).

We teach that once Christ's millennial reign has finished and Satan and unbelievers have been judged (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15), the elements of this earth will be dissolved (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth that God will create and only the righteous will dwell upon it (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15; 21:1-27; 22:1-21). God will then send the heavenly city out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) down to the new earth to become the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy never ending fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Revelation 21-22).

Hell

We teach that God created a literal place called Hell (Hades), prepared for Satan and his angels who rebelled against God (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10, 15). It is a place of eternal, irreversible, punishment, destruction and separation from God for all mankind who do not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, Matthew 25:45-46). Hell is a place of never-ending burning torment without any possibility of relief (Matthew 3:12; Luke 16:23, 26), a lake of fire and brimstone (Revelation 14:10), everlasting devouring fire (Isaiah 33:14; Matthew 25:41) and darkness (Matthew 8:12; Jude: 13).

We teach that Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10) and Christ, who is the Judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect the unsaved dead and judge them at the Great White Throne Judgment. This resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection. Upon receiving their judgment (John 5:28-29), they will be condemned to an eternal conscious punishment, being cast, both body and soul (Matthew 10:28) into the lake of fire for their rejection of Jesus Christ (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

Angels

Holy Angels

We teach that angels were created by God as holy, volitional, heavenly beings to worship and serve God while also serving His children. Therefore, angels are not to be worshiped but recognized in the created order that the Lord made them (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9).

Fallen Angels

We teach that Satan, as a rebellious created being, was the originator of sin and incurred God's judgment as the result of his rebellion against his creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14). Satan took a large number of angels with him in his rebellion against God and proceeded to introduce sin into the human race (Genesis 3:1-15).

We teach that God is in no way responsible for Satan initiating sin. Satan and the angels that followed him, acted solely of their own initiative and volition. God in no way either directly or indirectly coerced or provided the opportunity for sin.

We teach that Satan is the defeated enemy of God and mankind. As the prince of this world, he was made a public spectacle of through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20; Colossians 2:15) and is eternally defeated. Satan and his demons shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire along with all who follow him (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

Mankind

We teach that man was created in a single act by God as a perfect being, free from sin, made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; James 3:9).

We teach that man exercised his God given volition to choose disobedience against the Lord his God, in spite of God's gracious warning that disobedience would bring death (Genesis 2:16-17). Through this single act of disobedience, sin and death both spiritually and physically entered the world and human race (Genesis 3:1-7), with Jesus Christ being the only sinless exception (Hebrews 4:15). This state of sin is passed on to every new

generation of human as the seed of Adam (Romans 3:9-18; 5:12). Therefore, all people are born sinners by birth and choice, separated from God, and are enemies of God (Ephesians 2:1-3).

We teach that of his own initiative; mankind possesses absolutely no desire or ability to be restored back to a right relationship with God. Therefore, mankind is utterly lost in his state of sin and is totally dependent upon the grace of God to initiate the redemptive work of Jesus Christ which has been accomplished through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

Marriage

We teach that the distinction of marriage is that God set the template of one man united with one woman for life when He created Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:18-24). God's design of marriage being a life-long, exclusive, heterosexual union of two people is consistent throughout Scripture wherever marriage is spoken of.

We teach that, just as all of creation was negatively impacted by Adam and Eve's sin (Genesis 3:14-19), so the marriage relationship has also suffered damage and ongoing struggle caused by sin and its consequential curse (Genesis 3:16). However, neither sin nor the curse of sin has changed God's definition of marriage. Likewise, changing cultures and societal norms do not change God's unique definition of marriage, one man united with one woman for life.

Marriage is entered into through a public, legally recognised, exchange of covenant vows (Proverbs 2:17; Malachi 2:14). This being the case, without a recognisable covenant, conjugal cohabitation does not establish marriage nor is it equivalent to marriage (John 4:18; 1 Corinthians 6:9).

In God's grace, He has provided resources for Spirit filled believers in Jesus Christ to overcome the natural struggles in marriage. Through obedience to God's Word, two believing spouses (2 Corinthians 6:14) can experience fulfilment, satisfaction, and longevity of a peaceful relationship (Matthew 19:1-9; 1 Peter 3:7; Ephesians 5:18-33). Through implementation of God's spiritual and practical resources, couples can avoid the severity of a failed marriage relationship (Malachi 2:10-16). Instead, enabled by God's Spirit, both spouses increasingly mirror the loving relationship of Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:18-33). This is where husbands love and lead as Christ does the Church, and wives respond as the church responds to Christ (Ephesians 5:21-28).

We teach that while God hates divorce, and it is never His preference, He graciously provides for cases where hardened hearts produce unrepentant sexual sin or abandonment by an unbelieving spouse (Malachi 2:16; Matthew 5:32, 19:8-9; 1 Corinthians 7:12-16). In such cases, we believe the faithful believer is set free to remarry without guilt.

Sexuality

We teach that God sovereignly creates each human in their mother's womb (Job 10:11-12; Psalm 139:13), distinct, with dignity, and according to His will. Gender assignment is at God's discretion and takes place at conception. Therefore, each person should embrace their God given design as being made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Consequently, to disagree with God's assignment of being biologically male or female is sin.

We teach that gender identity is God given and not to be challenged, nor should gender reassignment be attempted. However, we recognise that there are those born hermaphrodite or intersex, and in such cases compassionate wisdom is needed as the various issues and options are worked through.

We teach that sexual immorality includes adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgenderism, paedophilia, bestiality, incest, and pornography, in either desire or behaviour is sinful, with God calling such people to repentance of sin (Leviticus 18:6-23; Deuteronomy 22:5; Matthew 5:28; Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 1 Timothy 1:9-10; Revelation 21:8).

We teach that believers are to be loving, respectful, and kind towards all humanity including those with sexual, marital, and religious differences. While expressing love shows compassion and friendship, it does not attempt amalgamation of those differing beliefs into the Church (2 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Timothy 1:5).

We teach that the proclamation of God's Word on these matters and calling sexually sinful people to repentance is not hateful or harassing speech. Rather, the gospel of Jesus Christ should clearly and lovingly define sin as explained in the law of God (Romans 3:20) which enables understanding of God's truth leading to repentance and forgiveness (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

Abortion

We teach that God sovereignly oversees conception and creates biological life in each embryo which grows in their mother's womb as a living person (Job 10:11-12; Psalm 139:13; Jeremiah 1:5). Accordingly, the preborn human life is in the image of Creator God by design and has dignity, value, purpose, and developing personhood.

Therefore, we teach that abortion is not a matter of parental right or choice. Abortion is in fact a matter of life or death of a human being made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27; 9:6). With abortion being the deliberate termination of a human life while still in the womb, including before or during birth, we believe abortion is murder. This being the case, abortion is likened to other forms of child murder and is equally sinful and reprehensible to God (Exodus 20:13; 21:22-25; 2 Chronicles 28:3; Jeremiah 19:5; Ezekiel 20:31).

We teach that Christians are to show loving compassion to all, including those who are considering, or have experienced an abortion. We believe that believers in Jesus Christ should offer support and resources to assist mothers to implement options other than abortion.

Salvation

We teach that Jesus Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, willingly offered Himself to the Father as a sacrifice of propitiation on the cross of Calvary (1 John 3:16; 4:10). Christ alone qualified as the perfect sacrifice to take upon Himself the sin of all mankind for all time (Hebrews 10:10-14).

We teach that God, motivated by His holiness and mercy, initiates and accomplishes salvation for sinful mankind. The Lord calls men and woman of all ages and cultures to respond to the gospel message found in the Word of God (John 5:24; Romans 10:17) which brings conviction by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 7:10; 1 Thessalonians 1:5). This response confesses Christ as Lord (Romans 10:9-10) and places faith in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of sins which brings spiritual cleansing, rebirth and eternal life (John 3:5-8, 16-18; Titus 3:5-7). As people exercise their God given faith (Eph. 2:8-9) to believe in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ for their forgiveness of sin, they repent (Luke 13:1-5; 2 Corinthians 4:5; 1 John 1:9) from the old selfish life to one of obedient submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; 1 John 5:3).

We teach that immediately upon believing repentance, the sinner is born again by the Holy Spirit and adopted into the family of God (John 3:3-8; Acts 11:18; 20:21; Romans 8:15; Ephesians 1:5; Titus 3:5-7). In that moment of

time all sin for the entire life is forgiven with all guilt and stain of past sin being forgotten and removed permanently (Psalm 103:11-12; Acts 10:43; Romans 6:10; Hebrews 10:12, 14, 17-18; 1 John 1:7; 2:12). In that same act of God, the Holy Spirit enters the new Believer, sealing them, never to leave (Ephesians 1:13).

We teach that upon salvation, every Believer enters positional sanctification, set apart to God as blameless, holy in His sight (Act 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; Hebrews 10:10). As a result of this sanctified standing before God, the Holy Spirit works within every true Saint to express practical, progressive sanctification through ever increasing obedience to the Word of God (John 17:17). It is in growing to be more like Jesus Christ that the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ by developing increasing practical holiness (2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 5:23).

We teach that Salvation inherently accomplishes atonement, redemption, rebirth, adoption, justification, regeneration, sanctification, security and glorification of the repentant sinner. All initiated and worked out to completion by all three persons of the Godhead (Romans 8:30; Jude :24-25) for God's glory.

Lordship

We teach that the lordship of Jesus Christ is central to and inseparable from the true gospel message of faith in Christ alone for the forgiveness of sin, receiving eternal life and living out the new life in Christ (Romans 10:9-10). Conscious belief in and submission to the Lord Jesus Christ is an intrinsic component of any genuine understanding of salvation and living a life of loving obedience to the Lord (John 14:23-24; 1John 5:3). These are not only inseparable truths but are misrepresented if taught as independent of, or isolated from each other.

The idea that a Believer can continue thinking, speaking and behaving as they did before repentance and the working of regeneration is incompatible with Scripture (2 Corinthians 4:5, 10). There is no such thing as a general belief in Jesus Christ that produces a carnal saint.

We teach that some conscious expression of submission to Christ's Lordship will be expressed in a sinner turning to Him in submissive repentance (Luke 3:7-8; John 3:36; 6:29; Romans 1:5; 16:26; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; James 2:14-19). The simple fact that an unbeliever chooses to believe and follow Christ is an acknowledgment of Christ's lordship (Matthew 19:21; Luke 14:26-33). Realising that being set free from the bondage of sin (2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:1, 13) is placement under the mastery of Jesus Christ as a slave to Him (John 15:14-15; 1 Peter 2:16). As a sinner comes by faith to accept spiritual rest in Christ, they take upon themselves Christ's yoke and Christ's burden which is Christ's Lordship (Matthew 11:28-30).

We recognise that not everyone who claims faith in Jesus Christ are genuinely born again. There are those who falsely profess to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not have eternal life (Matthew 7:21). Likewise, some claim to love the Lord yet seem to only follow Him for a brief period before abandoning Christ and even denying Him. Their claims of faith proved illegitimate by their leaving and abandonment of faith (1 John 2:19).

We teach that while at the time of salvation the new Believer may only have a simple grasp of the far-reaching implications of the claims of Jesus as Lord, as maturing occurs the Believer will grow in their understanding and implementation of Christ's Lordship as God's Word is learned and put into practice.

Election

We teach that election is the working out of the sovereign will and pleasure of God. Before the creation of the world, He chose those whom He would bring to faith in Christ. Those He predestines, He graciously saves, gives rebirth, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2). This work of mercy is in no way initiated by man's will, or academic only, nor is it simply anticipated by God's foreknowledge. It is the sovereign harmonious coordination of God's will being worked out through man's belief. This is only in response to the gracious gift of faith planted in the heart of man by the Lord (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 9:11-16; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that God's election does not nullify man's responsibility to believe in Christ and turn to Him in repentance as Lord and Saviour (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17). The Lord works out salvation according to His divine attributes and accomplishes His eternal purposes for all those who believe in the Son (Matthew 11:25-28; John 3:16; Romans 9:11-16; 2 Timothy 1:9). Each will receive eternal life as they exercise their volition to believe in Christ (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8). As man chooses to believe in Christ for salvation, they prove the reality of the Lord's sovereign providence in election.

We teach that it is not for man to explain away, nor separate the two indisputable biblical truths of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility in regard to election. It is the Believers pleasure to acknowledge, trust in, and teach both divinely inspired components of election to the praise of God's grace.

Security

We teach that the Child of God should rest in full assurance of being kept secure by God in eternal salvation based upon the grace of God being effective to maintain the righteous position of the Believer in Christ. The atoning work of Jesus Christ on Calvary is absolutely sufficient to save and keep the genuinely repentant sinner. It is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit to seal (Ephesians 1:13-14) and keep the Believer in Christ just as Jesus is in the Father (John 17:6-12; 20-24).

We teach that the possibility of a redeemed Saint being able to lose their salvation would violate every attribute of our triune, sovereign Lord and render Him powerless and deficient to save in the first instance. This so-called losing salvation view would transgress everything that is taught throughout Scripture as being true of God and the sufficiency of His holy nature. It would also contravene the sufficiency of the work of propitiation on Calvary, the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit to seal and secure, and the sufficiency of God's Word to feed and sustain the soul of the born again child of God.

We reject the idea that the Lord is capable of breaking His seal of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:21-22) and in doing so withdraw His promised Holy Spirit as guarantee, or that He would adopt a child out of His family (Ephesians 1:5), or rebirth (John 3:7) a child back as a lost enemy (Ephesians 2:1-3). We reject that God would degenerate a Saint back to an unregenerate (Titus 3:5), recall His remembrance of sins that He had cast as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:11-12), or undo the accomplishment of redemption and atonement worked out on Calvary (Romans 3:24-25) by reversing the new covenant of Christ's blood (Hebrews 9:15). We recognise that if the falling away position was possible, the aforementioned negative actions would have to be carried out by the Lord, this possibility we totally reject.

We teach that the few New Testament passages that some use in an attempt to promote the falling away doctrine (That a believer can become lost again), in reality, clearly teach the eternal security of the Saints when understood in their correct biblical context.

We acknowledge that Believers do sometimes stray from the Lord and are capable of living carnal, worldly lives of sin (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). While this state of wrong living is disobedient and dishonouring to the Lord, it does not relegate the back-slidden Believer to a former lost, unregenerate state. As sin is the central issue, sin must be dealt with through confession (1 John 1:9), submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9; 12:1-2) and filling with the Word of God (Colossians 3:16-17).

We teach that acknowledgment and dependence upon the Lord as the sole source of the Believers security gives assurance which produces peace, joy and hope (John 17:13). This privileged position does not permit the Christian freedom to live a worldly, sinful life presuming upon the grace of God as justification for ungodly behaviour (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:23-24; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-14). Rather, realising the secure position Christ has placed them in, the child of God should be motivated all the more to live holy and godly lives, looking forward to the Lord's return (2 Peter 3:11-12).

The Church

We teach that at the moment the repentant sinner places their faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation they are immediately placed into the universal body of Christ, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the Bride of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), by the Holy Spirit with Jesus Christ as head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18). The Church is the human body (Expression) of Jesus Christ in the absence of the physical body of Christ from the earth.

We teach that the primary purpose for the Church is to glorify God the Father (John 17:1-5; Ephesians 3:21) through Jesus Christ in the energy of the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Peter 5:10). These are accomplished by worship (John 4:21-23; Romans 12:1; Philippians 3:3), by building itself up in the faith with Gods Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship and keeping the ordinances (Communion and Baptism) accompanied by communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world (Acts 1:8).

We teach that mutual accountability between all Believers (Proverbs 27:17; Matthew 18:5-14) is the normal framework for all Believers to live and serve within. This mutually open-hearted living (2 Corinthians 6:11-13) creates a loving, caring environment for biblical growth and discipline (Galatians 6:1-2) should a believer become ensnared in sinful behaviour (Matthew 18:15-17).

We teach that the local Church has the privilege and responsibility to actively express the unconditional love of God by living out the grace and mercy of God (Matthew 5:7; 18:33; Romans 5:5; James 2:12-13; Jude 1:23).

We teach that the church, which is the body and bride of Christ (Romans 12:4-5; Colossians 1:24; 2 Corinthians 11: 2; Ephesians 5:23- 32), did not exist during the Old Testament period, but was birthed at Pentecost (Acts 2). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32; Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32). Consequently, we teach that the New Testament does not reinterpret the Old Testament, ethnic Israel remains ethnic Israel, as God has not finished with Israel (Romans 11:1). The church has not replaced Israel as God intends to fully restore Israel; Romans 11:5, *So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace*. Therefore, Israel and the church are two unique identities with present day Jews being able to come to salvation and enter the church while retaining their ethnic Jewishness (Psalm 131:3; Romans 9:27; Galatians 3:26-29).

Water Baptism

We teach that water baptism by immersion is the Believers public expression of faith in the crucified, buried, and resurrected Lord Jesus Christ and of identifying fellowship with the body of Christ, the Church (Acts 2:41-42). Water baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) testifies the believers union with Jesus Christ in death to sin and resurrection to a new life in Christ (Romans 6:1-11). Therefore, mere sprinkling with water is incapable of accurately picturing the death to self and new life inputted by Christ. As sprinkling is not Bible based we neither teach nor condone it.

Communion

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the remembrance and declaration of Jesus Christ and His death until He returns (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Communion is remembrance of the cost of our redemption and a forward-looking expectation of Christ's physical return. The Lord's Supper is not only a unique communion with the Lord but is also rich fellowship with the Lord's people (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).

We teach that the physical elements of communion are only representative of the body and blood of Christ and are in no way transformed into the actual flesh and blood of Christ.

We teach that preceding communion Believers should examine themselves (1 Corinthians 11:27-29) to ensure they are clean of known sin that would misrepresent the solemn expression of Christ's sacrifice for sin that is being commemorated in the Lord's Super.

Church Leadership

We teach that while Jesus Christ is the highest authority for the church (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18), He has designed that the Holy Spirit raise godly characterized men to be recognised by the church as under-shepherds of Jesus Christ to serve and direct the Church as elders. Elders are males who may also be identified as Overseers, Bishops, Pastors and Pastor-teachers (Acts 11:30; 14:23; Ephesians 4:11).

We teach that the Church should also recognise and appoint Spirit filled men and women, gifted servant Believers as Deacons in the Church to maintain the physical and spiritual needs of the Body of Christ, particularly those who are unable to care for themselves. Therefore, Deacons set Elders free to be more focused on feeding and nurturing the Body of Christ to maturity and effective Christian ministry with the Word (Acts 6:1-6).

We teach Scripture clearly gives the literal standards of qualification for both the offices of Elders and Deacons (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5). These character values are to be identified without partiality and in their entirety.

Church Outreach

We teach the significance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2) as the chief means of reaching the unbelieving world for Jesus Christ and growing those new Believers to maturity in Christ using gifted Believers and the Bible (Ephesians 4:13) energised by the Holy Spirit. Ministries within the local church should be free to express the gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way as to effectively reach and communicate the gospel truth to the unsaved, thus repeating the discipleship process over again.

We teach that relationship, friendship building should be the primary focus of all ministry discipleship and that through those relationships the lost are evangelised and won while the saved are matured (Luke 16:9).

We teach that it is the responsibility of all members of the Church to be consciously living out the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ so as to be recognisable as ambassadors of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:16-21). All forms of evangelistic effort should have as its goal the salvation of the lost followed by water baptism and placement of the new believer into spiritual growth oriented church life (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38; Ephesians 4:11-5:1) so that they are equipped and encouraged to reproduce Christ in others.

Church Autonomy

We teach autonomy of the local church and that it should function free from any external human authority, hierarchy or control with Jesus Christ alone as its chief authority working through qualified Elders (Acts 5:29; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

Gifts to the Church

We teach that the Lord has gifted and uniquely equipped Believers to the Church for the purpose of equipping the Saints to be able to do the various works of ministry appointed by the Lord. While all Believers are equipped with Holy Spirit energised giftedness (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31), they function best when aligned under the equipping instruction of gifted disciplers and elders (Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 4:11-16).

We teach that God in His sovereignty gives unique spiritual gifts and abilities to each and every born-again member of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11). These serving gifts are given to equip Believers for building one another up in their faith and for spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We teach that in the early church the miraculous gifts of divinely inspired revelation and healing were given as temporary gifts for the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message (Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12). However, in God's sovereign design for furthering communication of the gospel, He has the freedom to initiate special, out of the ordinary workings of His Spirit to accomplish His unique will for a given person or situation. Any unique working does not imply that the Holy Spirit has reactivated a specific foundational gift.

We teach that the New Testament revelation is complete. Scripture has become the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message (1 Corinthians 13:8-12) as miraculous gifts can also be counterfeited by Satan (2 Corinthians 11:14; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:11-14).

We teach that no one person possesses the gift of divine healing today. However, God does answer prayer offered in faith according to His will for the sick (James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

Israel

We teach that Israel are God's chosen people (Deuteronomy 7:6), and their status has not changed.

As God has not permanently rejected Israel for killing Jesus (Romans 11:1-2), there is only a partial and temporary hardening of Israel (Romans 11:25) until the full number of Gentiles have come into salvation (Romans 9:27). We agree with the apostle Paul, who, speaking of ethnic Israel says in Romans 11:29, *the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable*. Romans 11:26-27, *in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer will*

come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”;²⁷ “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

We teach that God’s holy character guarantees to ultimately redeem and restore Israel. This is Paul’s argument in Romans chapters 9-11. We teach that *God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew* (Romans 11:2). Nor has God’s integrity been called into question as He has not altered His covenant relationship with Israel; Psalm 89:34, *I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips* (cf. Galatians 3:17). Therefore, all God’s Old Testament unfulfilled covenant promises to Israel are currently valid and waiting final fulfilment. Israel is Israel, and she has not been reclassified as the church.

Covenants

We teach that a covenant is a strong and formal agreement between two parties, much like a contract. A covenant has regulations, obligations, and promises which both parties must abide by. The Bible records many covenants, particularly throughout the Old Testament. Some are between people, and others are between God and people, but the serious nature of a covenant remains the same.

Most covenants found in the Bible are unconditional, meaning that once the covenant is formally established, the covenant must be fulfilled. These are called everlasting covenants; they are unchanging by nature and unalterable in their commitment to absolute fulfilment. These unconditional covenants are the Noahic covenant (Genesis 8:20-22; 9:1-7), Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3, 6-7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21), Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7:12-16), and the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Scripture also records one conditional, or temporary covenant, which is the Mosaic covenant (Exodus 20:1-17). The blessings of this covenant were conditional upon Israel’s obedience to the Law. Likewise, the judgements of this covenant were also the result of disobedience to the Law. Both the blessings and the curses of the Mosaic covenant were literal.

We teach that the covenants listed above are called “*biblical covenants*” because they are plainly stated in Scripture for all to read. Biblical covenants show us the righteous and faithful nature of God in action over long periods of time and through multiple generations of His people. They show us that, just as God is unchangeable, so his promises are unchanging.

The covenants God made with man give evidence that just as the Lord literally fulfils His promises of judgement upon sin, so He equally and literally fulfils His promises of blessings. Therefore, Israel presently awaits the literal fulfilment of all remaining covenant promises to them. That time will come when King Jesus reigns over the Millennial Kingdom (Jeremiah 31:23-28).

We teach that all of God’s promises are based on His integrity; on who He is, and His plan for the world. Therefore, it is with confidence that we look to the Lord to fulfill all remaining components of His covenant with Israel and with His Church that have not yet reached there literal and ultimate fulfilment. Therefore, Focus Bible Church does not teach covenant theology as they cannot be found in the text of Scripture.

End time events (Eschatology)

The Transportation of the Church

We teach the imminent, personal, physical return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation period to transport (Rapture), the Church from earth to meet Him in the clouds (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11; Titus 2:13) to be with Him forever.

We teach that for the duration between the rapture and Christ's second phase of His return with His Saints, He shall reward believers according to their works while they were alive on earth (Romans 14:10-13; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10). During this time, the marriage ceremony of the Lamb also takes place (Revelation 19:6-9).

The Tribulation Period

We teach that following the Rapture of the church (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) God will initiate His 7 years of judgment on the unbelieving world known as the Tribulation (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16). This tribulation period will conclude with the return of Jesus Christ to earth in glory as conqueror over Satan, Antichrist and the False Prophet, along with their followers who will be removed from the earth (Daniel 7:17-27; Matthew 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 20:1-7). At this time the Old Testament and tribulation Saints will be raised, and the living will be judged (Daniel 12:2-3; Revelation 20:4-6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15-31; 25:31-46).

We teach that during the tribulation period God will draw multitudes of unsaved people to Jesus Christ for salvation (Revelation 6:9-11; 7:9-17), many of whom will be martyred for their faith. To accomplish this great spiritual revival God will utilise 144,000 male Jewish evangelists (Revelation 7:3-8; 14:1-5), 2 male Jewish witnesses (Revelation 11:1-14) and 3 hovering evangelistic Angels (Revelation 14:6-11).

We teach that during the tribulation period Israel's remnant is hidden in the desert by God and protected (Revelation 12:6-16), thus preserving the nation.

Christ's Second Advent and the 1000 year Reign

We teach that following the 7-year tribulation period, Jesus Christ will return to earth with the armies of heaven following Him, to conquer Satan and establish His literal earthly 1000 year Kingdom, occupying the throne of David (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Revelation 20:1-7). During this kingdom period, the Saints will reign with Christ over all nations including Israel (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 5:10; 19:11-16). This kingdom period will be fulfilment of God's promise to Israel (Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-15). Peace and harmony under Christ's rule will characterise the kingdom age (Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38) coming to an end after 1000 years when Satan is released for 1 final rebellion against the Lord (Revelation 20:7-9).

Final Judgement of the Lost

We teach that when Satan is released at the end of his 1000-year imprisonment, he will go out and deceive the nations gathering a large army to make war against Christ, His Saints and the Beloved City (Revelation 20:7-9). Having encircled the Beloved City, and thinking that victory is imminent, fire will come down from heaven and consume them (Revelation 20:9). Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10) where he will join the beast and the false prophet.

We teach that Christ will then physically raise the unbelieving dead from all ages for judgement at the Great White Throne Judgement (John 5:22; Revelation 20:11-15). Having received their judgement, they will be sentenced and committed to an eternal, conscious, irrevocable punishment in the Lake of Fire without possibility of alleviation or deliverance (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

The Eternal State

We teach that following the final judgment of Satan along with all his followers and all unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:11-15), the saved Saints will enter the eternal state with God. Following this the earth and heavenly bodies will be dissolved with burning heat (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new heaven and earth (Revelation 21-22) where only righteousness will dwell.

We teach that following this the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, will come down from Heaven from God (Revelation 21:2). This New Jerusalem will be the home of God and His Saints, enjoying perfect fellowship forever. At this time, the Lord Jesus Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to God the Father, having fulfilled God's entire redemptive plan (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). Thus, the triune God will reign forever and ever with all glory being solely directed to Him.

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