

**Sovereign Grace Fellowship**  
*Statement of Faith*

**I. The Scriptures**

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, all scripture is authoritative, infallible, and free from error. The Scriptures are the only sufficient rule for faith and practice. The 66 books of the Bible were given to us by the Holy Spirit and constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) word of God (I Cor. 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21) We believe in a literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture. The true interpretation is discerned through careful study of the Scripture under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. No personal experience, extra biblical revelation, or individual understanding will ever replace, add to, take away, or change Scriptures interpretation. It is the responsibility of every believer to diligently and carefully examine the text of Scripture to ascertain its true intent, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations.

We believe that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended (that is exercised controlling oversight) the human authors that through their individual personalities and different styles of writing they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16)

We believe that, where Scripture is available, there is no need for additional revelations, visions, words of prophecy, or insights from modern psychology. In contrast to the theories of men, God's Word is true and absolutely comprehensive. Rather than seeking something more than God's glorious revelation, we teach that Christians need only to study and obey what they already have. Scripture is sufficient.

*Psalm 19:7; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 3:16; 1 Timothy 5:18; Luke 24:25-27; Deut. 18:19; 1 Sam. 10:8; 13:13-14; 15:3; 19, 23; 1 Kings 20:35, 36.*

**II. God and the Trinity**

There is one true and living God who exists in three eternally distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one in being, united in purpose, and equally worthy of glory and adoration. God is invisible, eternal, omni-present, almighty, all-knowing—his perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of his free creatures. God is unchanging, dependent upon none, sovereign, righteous, holy, just, gracious, loving, merciful, patient, and good.

*Deut. 6:4; Ps. 145:3; John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 1 Tim. 1:17; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14*

**A. The Father:** We believe that God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth, and He is the source of all that is good. He literally created all that now exists in

six days, from nothing, by His word and for His glory. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit acted together in the work of creation. Through the same word with which He created, He daily sustains all creation. He rules over all and, together with the Son and the Spirit, is the only supreme power and authority. His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. Indeed, He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). In His sovereignty, He is neither the author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He is faithful to every promise, works all things together for good to those who love Him and, in His unfathomable grace, gave His Son, Jesus Christ, for mankind's redemption. We believe that before the foundation of the world, God elected a great multitude of men and women to eternal life as an act of His free grace alone. This election was in no way dependent upon human activity or goodness found in man's works, or merit. In the unsearchable realm of God's sovereign will, all men remain responsible beings, subject to God's commands to repent and believe, and accountable to God for their rebellion, unwillingness to repent, and rejection of Christ. He made all things for the praise of His glory and intends for man, in particular, to live in fellowship with Himself.

*John 1:2, 3; Heb. 1:2; Job 26:13; Rom. 1:20; Col. 1:16; Gen 1:26-27, 31; Gen 2:7; Gen.3:6; Ecc. 7:29. On Election: Matt. 11:25-28; John 6:44; Acts 13:48; 18:9-10; Rom. 8:28-30; 9:11-13; 11:7; 1 Cor. 1:27-29; Eph. 1:4-6,11; 1 Thess. 1:4-5; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1; Rev. 13:7-8*

**B. Jesus:** We believe the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. We believe He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice. By His death the believer is freed from the punishment, penalty, power, and one day presence of sin. By His death believers are declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Phil. 2:8; Acts 2:23; John 15:3; 20:25; Mark 16:19; Rom. 5:19; 8:34; 14:9; Hebrews 9:24; 12:2; Gen. 3:15) We believe our redemption, salvation, and our own future resurrection are guaranteed by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. By His resurrection our justification is made sure. (Matt.28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 1:35; Luke 24:1-53; John 1:1, 14, 18; John 20:1-21:25; Acts 1:8-11; 1Cor.15:4-9; Heb.4:14-16; John 21:12-13; Acts 2:24; 10:41; Romans 3:24-26; 4:25; Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:14). Further we believe that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the Cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection guarantees a future resurrection of all believers. (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20,23) We believe the Lord Jesus Christ Jesus ascended into heaven to appear in the presence of God as our perpetual High Priest, presenting Himself as the only acceptable sacrifice for sin. He is the one and only Mediator between God and men, and He is Head of His church. He intercedes forever on behalf of His people and rules over all things for their sake. (Matt.28:1-7; Acts

1:8-11; 1 Cor.15:4-9; Heb.4:14-16; Hebrews 1:3; 3:1; 7:23-25; Acts 7:55-56; Psalm 110:1; 1 Thess. 4:17; I John 2:1-2). We believe in a literal bodily return of Christ to receive His church, which is His body. (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20)

**C. The Holy Spirit:** We believe that God the Holy Spirit brings glory to the Father and the Son. He applies the work of Christ to believers and distributes spiritual gifts to every believer according to His sovereign good pleasure for the purpose of building up the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by vulgar or pretentious display designed to impress or attract notice, but glorifies Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith. (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18) He is the Comforter, the Spirit of Adoption, the Seal of our Salvation and the Guarantor of our inheritance in Christ. We believe God the Holy Spirit is the one who convicts men of sin, righteousness and judgment. He dwells in all who believe in Jesus. The Holy Spirit regenerates those who are dead in trespasses and sins, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the world of God, renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness.

*John 14:16-17; 16:14; Acts 5:3; Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1:13-14; Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2; John 14:26; Acts 16:6-7. On regeneration: Ezek. 36:26-27; John 1:13; 3:3-8; Acts 16:14; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 2:13; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3;23-25; Eph. 2:1-6; Tit. 3:5; 1 John 5:1*

### **III. Man**

God originally created Man in His own image and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, Adam transgressed the command of God and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity inherit a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law. Every dimension of man's being is distorted by sin. As a result they are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors. Apart from the grace of God, fallen man treats sin as his master, God as an enemy, and the message of the cross as foolishness. Until he is born again, he will not love God, keep His laws, seek to understand the gospel, repent of sin, or trust in Christ.

*Gen. 1:26-27; 3:1-7; Rom. 5:12-19; Eph. 2:1-3; Eccl. 7:29; 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:14; Psalm 51:5. Gen. 6:5; Ps. 7:11; 10:4;51:5; Rom. 3:10-18; 5:10, 12; 6:23; 8:5-8; 14:23; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3, 5; Col.1:21-22*

### **IV. Salvation**

We believe salvation is a sovereign gift of God and is received by man through personal faith in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for sin. We believe man is justified by grace through faith apart from works (Acts 13:38-39; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 1:4-5 & 2:8-10). In response to the conviction of the Holy Spirit a person repents of sin and humbles

himself for it with godly sorrow. We believe that saving faith is trusting God's authority regarding what is revealed in His word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification and eternal life. Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation and that no one is saved apart from trusting in Christ as his or her one and only Savior (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 10:9-10). Believers are declared righteous in the sight of God based on Christ's perfect life, substitutionary death, and imputation of His righteousness. No one is justified by their own merit or works, it is granted through faith alone. We believe all true believers are predestined (or "elected") by God and, once saved, are kept secure in Christ forever (Romans 8:1, 29-30, 38-39; John 10:27-30).

*Acts 2:37-38; 11:18; 2 Cor. 7:10-11; Rom. 3:27-28; 4:1-5; 4:17-25; 10:14, 17; Phil. 1:29; Eph. 2:8; Jas. 2:14-26; Rom. 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18, 29-39; 10:9-10, 13; 13:11-14; 1 Cor. 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Cor. 5:17-20; Gal. 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Phil. 2:12-13*

### **A. Election**

Before the foundation of the world, God elected a great multitude of men and women to eternal life as an act of His free grace alone. This election was in no way dependent upon His foresight of human faith, decision, works, or merit. In the unsearchable realm of God's sovereign will, all men remain responsible beings, subject to God's commands to repent and believe, and accountable to God for their rebellion, impenitence, and rejection of Christ. (repeated from Article II.A.)

*Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Cor. 1:27-29; Eph. 1:4, 11*

### **B. Regeneration and Repentance**

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24) when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works in keeping with repentance are the proper evidence and fruit of regeneration (1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 2:10), and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Eph. 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Col. 3:16; 2 Pt. 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3:18). Such a conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Rom. 8:17; 2 Pt 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

### **C. Sanctification**

All believers have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are also progressively sanctified by God's word and Spirit dwelling in them. All true believers will press on to lay hold of that for which Christ laid hold of them. Positionally, all Christians are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and holy before him now, are in process of continually being made holy, and will be completely holy when taken to be with Christ.

*Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:27-27; Rom. 6:11,14; 8:1-17; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thess. 5:23; Gal. 5:13-24; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 10:24-25; 12:5-11,14; 2 Pet. 1:3-11; 1 John 3:3. John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14*

#### **D. Perseverance of the Saints**

All whom God has saved will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end; and though they may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the church, and temporal judgments on themselves, they shall be renewed again to repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith to salvation.

*Matt. 10:22; John 6:37-40; 8:31-32; 10:28-29; Rom. 8:1,28-39; 1 Cor. 1:8-9; Phil. 1:6; Col 1:22-23; Heb. 3:14; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 John 2:19.*

#### **V. The Church**

God, by His Word and Spirit, creates the Church, calling sinful men out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ's body. By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves that newly redeemed humanity. The Church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the Church is the Bride of Christ and is made up of all those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ and have personally appropriated the gospel. The Church is God's chosen instrument to spread His Gospel across the world (c.f. 2 Cor. 5:17-20). It is an organic collection of devoted Christ-followers who have been redeemed by a loving and gracious savior.

A local church is a visible representation of the body of Christ and is under the authority of Christ alone. The local church gathers for the purposes of worship, study of the Word, observance of Baptism and Communion, fellowship, and equipping for service. In every local church, qualified elders are appointed to serve Christ as they care for His body. Qualified deacons are to assist the elders as needs arise. Each member of the church is uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit to edify the body. A local church must recognize and fellowship with the universal body of Christ as represented in other true churches.

*John 10:16; Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 5:17-18; Tit. 1:5-9; Heb. 10:25; 1 Corinthians 12-13; 10:32). (Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; Ephesians 4:11-13; Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20).*

### **A. Life and Governance**

The one supreme authority for the church is Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) Church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as defined in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor teachers; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

These leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

The church as a body strives together to work to disciple all believers (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), hold accountable all believers to each other (Matthew 18:5-14), and lovingly discipline sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

### **B. Baptism**

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus that is an obligation placed upon every believer. True baptism is immersion in water, symbolizing both the believer's union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection to new life, and his cleansing from sin. Baptism may only be administered to those who demonstrate repentance from sin and make a credible profession of faith in Christ.

*Matt.3:13-17;; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Rom.6:3-5; Col.2:12*

### **C. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and the fruit of the vine, and to be observed by baptized believers in His churches till the end of the world. It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate His death, to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge and renewal of their communion with Him and of the body of believers. The Lord's Supper should always be preceded by individual solemn self-examination. Whereas the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ who indwells every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people

*Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-34; Rev. 19:9; John 6:53-57.*

#### **D. Evangelism**

It is the calling of every local church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that Christ has commanded. It is a priority in evangelism to unite sinners to Christ Jesus through the repentance of sins.

*Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 8:12;13:48;16:10;17:1-33;Rom. 10:17;2 Tim. 4:2.*

#### **E. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. God has created marriage to be the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime, and it is intended to portray the relationship between Christ and His church. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord, and parents are to raise them in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

*Gen 1:26–28; 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; Deut 6:4–9; 1 Cor 11:7-9; Eph 5:21–6:4; Col 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7.*

### **VI. Last Things**

There will come a day when the earth as we know it will end and face judgement. Christ will return personally to reclaim His Church. There will be a great tribulation on earth and will culminate in the visible and physical bodily return of Jesus Christ to the earth, commonly called the Second Coming, to rule the nations and establish His millennial kingdom

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Philippians 3:20; Matthew 24:15-31; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19:11-21, 20:1-6*

#### **A. The Resurrection**

The bodies of men after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God—the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked, to be reserved under darkness to the judgment. The bodies of all the dead, both just and unjust, will be raised at the judgement.

*John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:12-28; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Phil. 1:23*

#### **B. The Judgment**

God has appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when everyone shall receive according to his deeds; the wicked shall go into everlasting and conscious punishment; the righteous into everlasting life.

*Matt. 25:46; John 5:22, 27-29; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:6-11; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 7:13-17; 14:9-11*

## **VII. The Glory of God**

Christians live for God's glory alone through their awareness and enjoyment of His Person, submission to His authority, and reliance upon His goodness. In truth, all things that have or will transpire serve to glorify God as their highest purpose. For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

*Exodus 14:4; Numbers 14:21; Psalm 19:1; 21:5; 29:2; 57:5; 72:19; 96:7; 104:31; 108:5; 115:1; Isa. 6:3; 42:8; 43:7; 48:11; Jer. 13:16; Ezek. 39:21; Hab. 2:14; Luke 2:14; John 8:50; 11:4; 17:1-5 Acts 12:23; Romans 3:23; 5:2; 9:23; 11:36; 1 Cor.10:31; 2 Cor. 3:18; 4:6; Eph. 1:11-17; Phil. 4:19; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 4:11.*