

# HOPE CITY CHURCH

All are welcome to attend and volunteer at Hope City, even if you are still working to understand and agree with the Bible's teaching on the elements of this Statement of Belief. We expect members will be unified by and live their lives in a manner consistent with this Statement of Belief.

We believe the Bible is the only adequate guide for living a Christian life. We hope the following statement of belief will help you become better acquainted with the preaching and teaching emphasis you are likely to encounter at Hope City.

## The Trinity

God eternally exists as three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The three distinct persons of the Trinity are all fully God; all of God's attributes are true of each person and together they are one God. While the word "trinity" never appears in Scripture, it is an accepted doctrine based on the Bible's teachings as a whole. We see throughout Scripture, evidence of the Trinity (Genesis 1:26, Psalm 45:6-7, Psalm 110:1, Isaiah 6:8, Matthew 3:16-17, Matthew 28:19, John 1:1-5, John 13:20, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Ephesians 2:18, 1 Peter 1:2).

## God the Father

The first member of the Trinity is God the Father. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things (Genesis 1:1, Colossians 1:16, Acts 4:24, Hebrews 1:3, Revelation 4:11). God is sovereign and infinite, meaning He has no limitations. God the Father can be intimately known but because of His infiniteness, He can never be fully known (Psalm 145:3, Jeremiah 9:23-24, Romans 11:33). God the Father can only be known through Jesus (Matthew 11:27, John 14:6).

## Jesus Christ

Jesus is the second member of the Trinity and the Son of God. He is God incarnate as man, and He was both fully God and fully human (Luke 24:39, John 1:1, John 1:18, Romans 9:5, Colossians 1:19, Colossians 2:9). He was born of a virgin, Mary, and conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18-20, Luke 1:34-35). He lived a perfect and sinless life in order to be a holy and worthy sacrifice (John 15:10, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 4:15, Hebrews 9:26, 1 Peter 3:18, 1 John 3:5). He was tempted as we are tempted, He suffered as we have suffered, yet He did not fall into sin (Hebrews 2:18, Hebrews 4:15, Hebrews 7:26). He came to serve and not to be served (Philippians 2:5-11). Jesus was betrayed, beaten, mocked, and crucified on the cross where He died (Matthew 27:27-30, Mark 15:24, Luke 23:26-49, John 19:16-37). Jesus' life was not taken from Him by anyone; He gave it as a willing sacrifice for everyone (John 10:18). Three days later Jesus rose from the dead, conquering sin and death and showing His power over both (Matthew 28:1-20, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-53, John 20:1-23, 1 Corinthians 15:20, Ephesians 1:19-20, 1 Peter 1:3). After He rose from the dead, He was on earth for 40 days before He ascended into Heaven (Luke 24:50-51, Acts 1:9-11). Jesus will return one day to rule and reign forever, judge the world, and take those who follow Him to live in the presence of God for eternity (Matthew 25:31-46, John 14:2-3).

## The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is promised to those who profess faith in Jesus (Acts 2:38); the Holy Spirit is the presence of God living inside each follower of Christ (Romans 8:9-11). The Holy Spirit teaches and bears witness about Jesus (John 14:26, John 15:26, John 16:7-15). He empowers those who follow Jesus in different forms of ministry (Acts 1:8, 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 1 Peter 1:12); He gives different spiritual gifts to followers of Jesus for the purpose of ministry (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). He empowers prayer (Romans 8:26, Ephesians 2:18). He gives strength and empowers followers of Jesus to overcome spiritual opposition

(Matthew 12:28, Ephesians 6:10-18). He sanctifies followers of Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:11, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Titus 3:4-7). He convicts the world of sin (John 16:8-11). He guides (Romans 8:14, Galatians 5:16-18). He gives assurance of salvation to followers of Jesus (Romans 8:16, Ephesians 1:13-14).

## The Bible

The Bible is the authoritative and inerrant Word of God; it is God's revelation about Himself to man (Numbers 23:19, Psalm 12:6, Proverbs 30:5, John 17:17, 2 Timothy 3:16). It is historically accurate and internally consistent, telling one story of redemption pointing to Jesus Christ. God used over 40 different authors to write the 66 books of the Bible, all being divinely directed by the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:20-21). The Bible is the living Word of God, applicable to all time, and is not only the measure and standard of truth, but truth itself (2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 4:12).

## Man

We are the pinnacle of God's creation, created in the likeness of God (Genesis 1:27, Genesis 5:1-2). We have rebelled against God through sin and separated ourselves from the glory of God (Romans 3:23, Romans 5:12); we are in need of redemption and restoration to the intended likeness we were created in that has been distorted by sin (1 Corinthians 15:49, Colossians 3:10).

## Salvation

Salvation is a gift from God that can never be earned through good works or self-improvement. Salvation is only given by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, the redemption of our sin (John 1:12, John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9, Ephesians 1:7). Salvation is based on the work of Jesus on the cross where He sacrificially died, bearing the sin and punishment of all mankind, and paying the price required of sin for all those who believe in Him (Romans 3:23-25, Romans 5:6-9, Romans 6:23).

## The Church

The church is the community of all true followers of Jesus Christ. The church is the body of Christ of which Jesus is the head (Ephesians 5:23), set on the mission given by Jesus to make disciples and spread the love of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Ephesians 1:22-23). All true followers of Jesus should take an active part in the body of a local church (Hebrews 10:25) to worship God (Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 1:12, Ephesians 5:16-20), to know God more intimately (Psalm 9:10 Jeremiah 9:24, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Philippians 3:10, Colossians 1:9-10), pray (1 Thessalonians 5:17), to make disciples of Jesus (Matthew 28:19), serve (Matthew 20:26-28, Luke 6:35-36), for encouragement (Acts 14:21-22, 1 Thessalonians 5:11), and to be nurtured in order to grow to maturity in faith (Ephesians 4:12-13, Colossians 1:28, Hebrews 13:17).

## Baptism

The Bible teaches that we are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). Baptism is a public confession of that faith in Jesus to God, the church, and the world (Matthew 10:32). Following our understanding of Scripture, we practice baptism by immersion; the Greek word used exclusively throughout the New Testament for baptism is “baptiso,” which means to plunge, dip, or immerse. Jesus modeled this form of baptism and commanded it (Matthew 3:13-17, Matthew 28:19), making baptism a symbolic act of obedience and faith. Baptism by immersion represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, symbolizing our old self dying, being buried in the water, and raised as a new creation in Christ Jesus (Romans 6:3-4, 2 Corinthians 5:17). Anyone who has professed faith in Jesus Christ should be baptized at his or her conversion or soon after (Acts 2:38, Acts 8:12, Acts 8:36-38, Acts 10:44-48).

## Eternity

Man was created for eternal existence. Jesus will return one day (Matthew 24:44, John 14:3, Acts 1:11, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Hebrews 9:28, Revelation

22:20) and on that day all will be judged (Romans 14:10-12, Revelation 20:11-15). There will be just punishment and reward (Romans 2:5-8, 2 Corinthians 5:10). For those who are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation, and they will spend eternity in the presence of God in real places, the new Heaven and the New Earth (Matthew 25:34, Romans 8:1, 2 Peter 3:13). Those who reject Jesus will be separated from Him by their sin in a real place of eternal conscious punishment called Hell (Matthew 25:41, Matthew 25:46, Revelation 14:9-11).

## Sanctity of Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 139).

## Marriage and Gender

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive covenant, as described in Genesis 2:18-25. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person. As male or female, these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27).

## Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct

The statement of belief does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible

itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Hope City's belief, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our elder team is our final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

If you have any questions about what we believe, we encourage you to contact us.