

## ESSENTIALS OF A SOUND FAITH

The vision of the Church is to involve worshippers of all ages in the adventure of becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ through the spiritual nourishment of God's Word and the empowering work of the Holy Spirit. We believe we are commissioned and commanded by Christ to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth and to teach, motivate and assist believers individually and corporately to love the Lord our God wholeheartedly and to serve Him faithfully.

Our identity as Christians and our effectiveness as witnesses is rooted in the fact that our Lord and Savior is alive and His kingdom is eternal. This unshakable Kingdom is the reign of God over all creation which is now expressed visibly in the worship and witness of all those who are in Christ Jesus through faith in his precious blood.

Since all the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are "God-breathed" and "profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness" it is impossible for a "statement of faith" to adequately cover all the aspects of the Gospel that nourish us in our relationship with God. While we do not presume that the phraseology employed in these sections is inspired or that it is a comprehensive doctrinal treatise, we nevertheless affirm these doctrines as essential for a sound faith and for the integrity of Christian worship. Believing that these basic truths are essential for our spiritual growth as well as our common witness to the world, membership in Liberty Church shall include a commitment to read and affirm this statement of faith. Selected Scriptures for further study are provided with each of these essential statements.

## **INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES**

We believe in the verbal inspiration of the canonical Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, to be the sole authority for all Christian faith and practice. "The authority of the Holy Scripture ... depends not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God ... the Author thereof, and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God."\*

II Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12; I Peter 1:23-25; II Peter 1:19-21; John 8:31-32  
\*excerpt from The Westminster Confession

## **GOD**

We believe and acknowledge "one God alone, to whom alone we must cleave, whom alone we must serve, whom only we must worship and in whom alone we must put our trust." God, the Almighty Creator is "eternal, infinite, immeasurable, incomprehensible, omnipotent, invisible, one in substance and yet distinct in three persons - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."\*\*

Genesis 1:1-26; Deuteronomy 7:7-9; Psalm 93:1-2; Proverbs 3:5-6; Zechariah 12:1;  
I Timothy 1:17; Matthew 3:16-17; John 17:1-5; 11 Corinthians 13:14  
\*\*excerpt from the Helvetica Confession

## **JESUS CHRIST**

We believe that Jesus Christ is God come in flesh and that He is "the image of the invisible God" and "the express image of His person." In confessing that "Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" we affirm Jesus Christ to be the eternal, only begotten Son of the living God, the only mediator between God and men, the author of eternal salvation, the shepherd and overseer of our souls, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world and our great high priest who ever lives to make intercession for us at the right hand of God.

Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:18-20; John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-3 and 5:1-9; Acts 4:12;  
Romans 10:9-10

## **DIVINE HEALING**

We believe that God, in His sovereign mercy, has provided for spiritual, emotional, and physical healing through various means, natural and miraculous. We believe God uses the prayer of faith, the practice of anointing with oil in the name of the Lord, expectant intercessory prayer, supernaturally endowed gifts of healing, individual prayer, and medical professionals and practitioners who, consciously or unconsciously, are instruments in the hands of the Great Physician. Believers are to call for the laying on of hands and anointing with oil as they look to the Lord for their healing, and giving thanks for all the instruments He chooses to use for wellness and for the relieving of human pain and suffering.

Psalms 103:1-5; Mark 1:29-31; Acts 10:37-38; Romans 8: 18-28; I Corinthians 12:9;  
Hebrews 2: 1-4; Philippians 2:25-27; James 5:13-16

## **PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS**

We believe that each believer is a priest of the Lord and has direct access to the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ. All the redeemed of the Lord must believe for themselves, be baptized for themselves, obey for themselves and answer to God for themselves.

Romans 14:7-14; I Corinthians 4:5; Hebrews 4:14-16; Hebrews 11:6; Revelation 1:6-7

## **SPIRITUAL CARE AND DISCIPLINE**

We believe that each individual follower of Jesus Christ should seek, as the early disciples did, to live a lifestyle that reflects reverence for God, submission to Christ and consideration for other believers by adhering to standards of conduct which honor the Lord and His church. When it is deemed best for the life and integrity of the congregation and the testimony of the Lord, the church authorities may discipline, in the spirit of meekness, any member who departs from the doctrines set forth in these articles or whose conduct is contrary to the spirit and practice of this body.

Romans 12:1-3; II Corinthians 6:17; Galatians 6:1-2; Ephesians 5:1-11; Colossians 3: 17;  
Matthew 18: 15-20; I Corinthians 5: 1-7; Romans 16: 17 -19; Hebrews 13: 17

## **ETERNAL DESTINIES**

We believe the Scriptures clearly set forth the immortality of the soul, the immediacy of the heavenly inheritance for all who die in Christ and of eternal damnation in the outer darkness of hell for all who die in their sins, and we thus deny any intermediate state between physical death and the eternal destiny of the soul "for man is destined to die once and after that to face judgment."

Hebrews 9:27; Matthew 24:34,41,46; Luke 16:19-31; John 14: 1-6; II Corinthians 5: 1-11;  
Revelation 20: 11-15

## **HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third Person of the Triune God, whose purpose in redemption is to convict each human heart of sin, regenerate the believer through repentance and faith, sealing the redeemed person in God's family, and further, to guide, strengthen, anoint and endow the church with ministry gifts that the church and individual believers may glorify the Lord Jesus Christ as witnesses and servants in the world.

We believe that all who receive Jesus Christ in the new birth are recipients of the personal presence of the Holy Spirit. We distinguish, however, between the Holy Spirit's abiding presence and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, a vital act of God's power available to any redeemed person either simultaneous with or subsequent to the new birth. We believe the distinctive promise of God's power in the baptism with the Holy Spirit is to be accepted by faith as God's gracious provision, leading to an ongoing thirst for the fullness of the Holy Spirit in daily life.

Consistent with this empowering promise, we affirm that all the gifts of the Holy Spirit listed in Scripture are distributed to the Body of Christ in the wise sovereignty of God and that these gifts, in the context of a fully biblical ministry under godly authority, are a vital part of the church's experience in worship, evangelism and congregational maturity.

Luke 11: 11-13; Acts 2:39-40; Acts 10:44-47; Acts 19:1-8; I Corinthians 1:7; Ephesians 5:18;  
Jude 20-25

## **REDEMPTION IN CHRIST ALONE**

We believe in the saving power of the blood of Jesus Christ and of the righteousness and peace that can only come to the soul of the child of God through faith in the finished work of redemption that Jesus Christ accomplished for us through His death on the cross.

Romans 4:23-25; Ephesians 1:6-7; II Corinthians 5:17-21; Colossians 1:22; I John 2:1- 2

## RESURRECTION

We believe in the historical, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and in the truth demonstrated by His resurrection that "those who are Christ's at His coming" shall also be raised to immortality to experience the consummation of His redemption in that realm where "there shall be no more death."

Philippians 3:20-21; I Corinthians 15:17-26 and 47-52; I Thessalonians 4: 13-18; Revelation 21: 1-4

## ASCENSION

We believe that Christ Jesus ascended to be seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty where He is preparing a place for His people and is presently engaged in interceding for them.

John 14:1-6; Acts 2:33; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:21-24

## SECOND COMING

We believe in the visible, bodily return of Christ Jesus to this earth to receive the Church, His bride and to be the judge of all the living and the dead.

Acts 1: 10-11; II Thessalonians 1: 7 -10; John 5:24-30; James 5:8; Revelation 1:7

## SALVATION

We believe that a personal experience of salvation comes through repentance toward God and a personal, heartfelt faith in the Lord Jesus Christ which gives evidence of the regeneration (the new birth) of the person. This salvation is entirely by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, not of works or by any human effort. Deeds of righteousness which proceed from the new birth are evidence of the grace of God and the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the child of God.

Ephesians 2: 7 -10; Titus 2: 11-14; Romans 4:1-5; I John 1:5-9

## THE CHURCH

We believe the church universal consists of all regenerated followers of the Lord Jesus Christ whose trust is in Christ alone for salvation and that the local church is an organized, visible expression of the Body of Christ in a particular place and time, committed to assembling together in love and reverence for God and His Word. The faithful church seeks God's glory and the advance of His Kingdom by calling believers to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord through worship, preaching, teaching, fellowship, nurture, discipleship, gifted expressions and care for the people of God and by faithful involvement in the fulfilling of the Great Commission.

Matthew 16:16-18; 28:18-20; Acts 2:40-47; Acts 20:20-28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 3:10-21; 4:11-16; Colossians 1:18; 2:1-7; Hebrews 10:23-25; I Peter 2:4-5; Revelation 1 :4, 11, 20

## SACRAMENTS

We believe that the two sacraments that should be observed by all Christians in their local congregations are water baptism and the Lord's Supper.

**Water baptism:** Immersion in water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is a symbol of the believer's identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. This act of obedience to the Great Commission typifies the death of the old man and the resurrection of the new man in Christ.

**Lord's Supper:** A ceremonial remembrance of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and a time of self-examination and renewal for the believer and the congregation.