

Hilltop Bible Church – Statement of Faith

What we believe concerning:

THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible is God's divinely inspired, written revelation to man. Every word is inspired (Mt 5:18-19), not just the thoughts and concepts. As such, the Bible is absolutely inerrant in its original manuscripts. We affirm the unqualified sufficiency, authority, infallibility, perspicuity, and centrality of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pt 1:21-22; Jn 17:17).

GOD

We believe that there is only one true and living God, perfect in all His attributes, immutable in His nature, and eternally existing in Three Persons – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – which are equal in essence, and each equally deserving of worship. (Deut. 6:4; Jn 1:1-4; 2 Cor 13:14)

JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the full deity of Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity. We believe in His eternal preexistence with the Father and the Holy Spirit prior to His conception by the Holy Spirit and incarnation through His virgin birth (Jn 1:1-2, 14). We believe that Jesus is fully God and fully man. We believe that Jesus led a sinless life, performed miracles, was crucified, died, buried and physically rose again on the third day, after which He was seen by over five hundred witnesses, including his disciples, and ascended bodily into heaven (1 Cor 15:3-8; Acts 1:9) where He now acts as the believers High Priest, interceding for the saints (Heb 4:14-16; 7:25-28).

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the personal nature of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity. He is a divine Person and not merely a force or influence. He is the believer's source of all power for godly living and growth in sanctification. We believe that His work is to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; to convict and regenerate sinners; to dwell in the hearts of believers; to guide, comfort, seal, gift, protect, and sanctify believers in this world so they may glorify God and edify the church. He will never depart from the church nor from the weakest believers. (Jn 14:16-17, 26; 16:8, 13-15; Acts 1:8; 5:3-4; Rm 8:2, 16; 1 Cor 6:19; 12:11; Gal 5:22-23; Eph 1:13-14; 2:22)

MANKIND

We believe that man, in distinction from the rest of creation, was made in the image of God (Gen 1:27). As such he possesses an eternal soul, a conscience, and is endowed with God's communicable attributes. When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, the

entire human race came under the curse of sin (Gen 3: 15-17; Rm 5:12) and inherited a sin nature. Adam's sin was a deliberate rejection of God's authority and an attempt to live autonomously. As a result, the image of God in man has been marred but not eradicated. Man is still able to know certain truths about God, but in his fallen condition he suppresses this truth in unrighteousness (Rm 1:18-20), and fails to recognize his complete dependence upon God and assumes his ability to live independently of God. As a result of his sin nature, man from his birth is morally and spiritually corrupt in disposition and character. Every aspect of man's being is affected by sin. He naturally gravitates toward what is evil, is only able to accomplish relative good, and is completely unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen 6:5-6; 8:21; Eccl 7:20; Jer 17:9; Jn 2:24-25; Rm 3:10-18; Eph 2:1-3)

SALVATION

We believe that salvation and reconciliation with God is a gift of God bestowed exclusively by grace through faith in the Person and completed work of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; Eph 2:4-9). This salvation is accomplished instantaneously and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (Rm 1:16) when the Holy Spirit regenerates the sinner (Jn 3:3), and grants him the gift of repentance and saving faith (Eph 2:8, 9; 2 Tm 2:25). Then the repentant sinner – enabled by the Holy Spirit – responds in faith. At salvation God justifies the sinner, declares him righteous, adopts him as His Own, and keeps him secure in Christ forever (Jn 1:12; Rm 8:1, 38-39; 1 Cor 1:14-15; 10:10; 2 Cor 5:17; Eph 1:3-6).

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY

We believe that every Christian should live a life that is consistent with their profession of faith (1 Jn 2:3-6; 3:18), bearing a good testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ by living lives separated unto God (Rm 12:1-2), abstaining from worldly practices (1 Jn 2:15-16; 3:7-10), and growing in sanctification (Rm 6:19-22; 1 Thes 4:7).

THE CHURCH

We believe that the church, which is the body and betrothed bride of Christ, is the primary means through which God is presently carrying out His plan of redemption, and is distinct from the nation of Israel. It is a living, spiritual organism composed of all people who have been called by God, incorporated into Christ, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. (Eph 1:22-23; 5:25-27)

THE ORDINANCES

Baptism

We believe that baptism is to be the first act of obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ by a new Christian (Mt 28:18-20). We believe the biblical model for baptism is believers baptism performed by immersion. There is nothing meritorious or efficacious for

salvation in baptism, but it is the God ordained means of identifying with Christ's death and resurrection, and with the body of Christ, His church (Rm 6:3-7).

The Lord's Supper

We believe all Christians are to regularly partake of the Lord's Supper after a period of self-examination and confession of sins (1 Cor 11:23-29). The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Jesus' suffering and death, and not a means of imparting grace to the participants.

SATAN AND HELL

We believe in a literal spiritual being known as Satan, the Devil, the Serpent, and the Adversary who, as a fallen angel, led a cosmic rebellion against God, taking one third of the angels with him, and who is an active enemy of God, the nation of Israel, and of believers (Rev 12:1-17). We believe in a literal place of eternal retribution known as "hell," where Satan, his angels, and all who have not placed their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation will be under the eternal wrath of God (Mt. 8:12; Mk 9:43-48; Rev 14:11; 20:10-15).

ORIGINS

We affirm the historical accuracy of the biblical account of creation, the global Noachic flood, and the dispersion of man as recorded in Genesis 1-11. We believe that God created the heavens and earth and all they contain, including mankind in six literal twenty-four hour days. We also reject any attempt to harmonize the millions of years required by an evolutionary understanding of origins with the biblical account of creation since every attempt at harmonization undermines the authority of Scripture.

THE END TIMES

We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, and pre-tribulational return of Jesus Christ for His bride, the church (1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thes 4:13-17). The rapture of the church will be followed by a seven year period known as the Tribulation, during which God will pour out His wrath on the earth (Dan 9:24-27; 2 Thes 2:3-12; Rev 4-19). After this period, Jesus will return with His church to judge the Beast and the False Prophet (Rev 19:20), bind Satan (Rev 20:2), and establish His millennial reign over a purged and restored nation of Israel and the world (Rev 20:4-6). After Jesus' thousand year reign, Satan and all unbelievers will be judged and cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10-15), following which God will purge the existing earth with fire (2 Pt 3:10) and establish a new heaven and new earth inhabited by both Old and New Testament saints (Rev 21-22:5).

CONCERNING THE CONTINUATION OF THE SIGNS AND WONDERS GIFTS

We believe that the signs and wonders gifts, such as the gift of tongues and the gift of healing, ceased either during the life of the Apostle Paul, or with the death of the last apostle John. We deny that physical healing is promised in Christ's atonement. There is compelling evidence to suggest that miracles performed at the hands of the apostles had ceased by the time of Paul's first Roman imprisonment. Why did Paul not heal Timothy of his stomach problems (1 Tm 5:23), or Epaphroditus of his nearly terminal illness (Phil 2:25-27) if he still had the gift of healing? Finally, the claim that miraculous sign gifts are for today fails to distinguish between the *fact* of miracles and the *gift* of miracles. Very few Christians would deny that God still works miracles today in response to prayer; however, this is far different than saying that God still empowers individuals with the special gift of performing miracles. The purpose of miraculous gifts was to confirm the divine origin of the apostle's message (Heb. 2:3-4). Once the divine authority of the apostles and their message was established, the need for the sign gifts ceased to exist.

We also believe that the revelatory gifts (i.e. gifts meant to impart new revelation) ceased with the completion of the canon of Scripture. No further revelation is being given by God.

MARRIAGE

We believe that marriage is defined as the physical, spiritual, and legal union of one man with one woman (Gen 2:18, 24; Mt. 19:4-6). We also believe that all homosexual relations and fornication is sin (Lev 18), but there is hope for all who repent and turn to Jesus Christ for salvation (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

SANCTITY OF LIFE

As creatures created in the image of God, we believe that all human life is sacred (Genesis 9:6). We also believe that human life clearly begins at conception (Psalm 139:13-16; Luke 1:41). The taking of innocent human life, no matter at what stage of development, is clearly forbidden by Scripture, but there is hope and forgiveness for all who repent and turn to Jesus Christ for salvation (1 Cor 6:9-11).