

Maranatha Bible Church

Statement of Faith

- A.) The Scriptures. We believe the Old and New Testament scriptures are the verbally and plenarily inspired Word of God. The scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God breathed and are, therefore, the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are God's complete and divine revelation of God to man. We believe that the scriptures are to be interpreted according to their normal, grammatical, and historical meaning, and that they should be interpreted from a dispensational, literal understanding of the Scriptures. We believe that God chose to preserve his word for English speaking people in the King James Version of the Bible, therefore it is that version that shall be the official and only translation used by this church. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 12:6).
- B.) Dispensationalism. We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life that define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to his purpose. We believe that there are seven dispensations found in the scripture. Three of these dispensations, the law, the church age or age of grace, and the Kingdom, are subjects of detailed revelation in the scripture. (Genesis 1:28; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 2 Corinthians 3:9-18; Galatians 3:13-25; Ephesians 1:10; 3:2-10; Colossians 1:24-25; Revelation 20:2-6)
- C.) The Godhead. We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
- D.) The Person and Work of Christ.
- 1.) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8)
 - 2.) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Romans 3:24-25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 1:3-5)
 - 3.) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2).

E.) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

- 1.) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that he is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14)
- 2.) We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 1:17-18, 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)
- 3.) We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip believers in the church to do the work of the ministry. (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 28; Ephesians 4:7-12)
- 4.) We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or the filling of the Holy Spirit. Ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, although God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Corinthians 1:22, 13:8, 14:21-22)

F.) The Total Depravity of Man. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin humanity fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-19),

G.) Salvation. We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by repentance and personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that all sins are forgivable (Matthew 12:31-32; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:9)

H.) The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.

- 1.) We believe that once a person is saved, he or she is kept by God's power and remains secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40, 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 35-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 1 Peter 1:4-5)
- 2.) We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which however, clearly forbids the use of Christian Liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)

I.) The Church.

- 1.) We believe that the local church, which is the body and bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, is solely made up of born-again believers. (1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:25-27)
- 2.) We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament. (Acts 14:27, 20:17, 28-32; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)
- 3.) We believe in the autonomy of the local church, free of any external authority or controls, and any affiliations, societies, organizations, associations, or agencies this church affiliates with to further the preaching of the gospel, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the educating of the believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Holy Scripture, are not authoritative in matters of church practice or belief. (Acts 13:1-4, 15:19-31, 20:28; Romans 16:1-4; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16, 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
- 4.) We recognize water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper (communion) as the scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42, 8:36-38, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

J.) Separation. We believe that believers should maintain a godly testimony and live in such a way that their lives do not bring reproach upon their Savior. God commands his people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances, piercings, and bodily markings. We stand against any and all world philosophy that seeks to destroy or undermine the truth of biblical Christianity. We take seriously the command to have "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." (Leviticus 19:28; Romans 12:1-2, 14:13; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 5:8-12; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)

K.) The Second Coming of Christ. We believe in that "blessed hope", the personal, imminent return of Christ, who will rapture His church prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom, which was promised to the nation of Israel. (Psalm 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10)

L.) The Eternal State.

- 1.) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgement and everlasting punishment. (Matthew 26:46; John 5:28-29, 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13)

2.) We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit and soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23, 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6).

3.) We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgement and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15)

M.) The Personality of Satan. We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin, and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man, and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11, 25:41; Revelation 20:10)

N.) Creation. We believe that the Genesis account of creation is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of God's creation of the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11)

O.) Civil Government. We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions. 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective, biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey the state unless it requires to act contrary to our faith at which time, we must obey God rather than the state. (Matthew 22:15-22; Acts 5:29; Ephesians 5:22-24; Titus 3:1-2; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13-14)

P.) Human Sexuality. We believe that God commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between one naturally born man and one naturally born woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, transgenderism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Genesis 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

Q.) Family Relationships.

- 1.) We believe that men and woman are spiritually equal in position before God, but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be those who fill leadership (pastors, elders, deacons) roles in the local church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church (Galatians. 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8-15, 3:4-5, 12)
- 2.) We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle examples and appropriate discipline, including scriptural corporal correction. (Genesis. 1:26-28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 19:18, 22:15, 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians. 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

R.) Divorce and Remarriage. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce. We believe that God intends marriage to last until one of the spouses die. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery. We do not believe that God grants the New Testament Christian an “exception clause” to divorce one’s mate. Although divorced and remarried people or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church, and such issues will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, and such people can be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for offices of pastor, elder or deacon. (Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7; 1 Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

S.) Abortion. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused, taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth, or population control, or the physical or mental welling being of the mother is acceptable. (Job 3:16, Psalm 51:5, 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5, 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

T.) Euthanasia. We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus, we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of overzealous treatment. (Exodus 20:13, 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28)

- U.) Love. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10, 17-21; 13:8-10; Philippians 2:2-4; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 2:17-18).
- V.) Lawsuits Between Believers. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as pursued without malice or slander. (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32; Matthew 18:15-17)
- W.) Missions. We believe that God has given the church a Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20).
- X.) Giving. We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obliged to financially support his local church. We believe that every Christian should give cheerfully to support the local church, and to give to the relief of those in need, and to support the spread of the gospel. We believe that a Christian should give as God has prospered him and that he or she relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his offering once the gift has been made. We do not preach that a tithe is required, however, we do believe that the tithe as given by Abraham was given before the law of Moses was even in existence and therefore constitutes a good "starting point" for the Christian today to give to the Lord as an act of worship and praise. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)