



# BETHEL

More and Better Disciples

## Doctrinal Statement

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### Scriptures

We believe the Bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God, consisting of the Old and New Testaments. It is inerrant in the original manuscripts and the sufficient and final authority for all matters of faith, practice and life. We believe the Bible to be God's complete written revelation of His will, and is upheld as the supreme and final authority in faith and life.

II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21, Mark 13:31; John 8:31,32; John 20:31; Acts 20:32

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### The Trinity

We believe the one true and living God is one in essence, possessing three personal distinctions: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of creation, providence, and redemption. We believe in one God, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. He is perfect in holiness, justice, truth, grace, wisdom, power, mercy, and love.

Genesis 1:1,26; Exodus 34:6; Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Samuel 24:14; 1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 9:16; Psalm 31:5; Psalm 139:7-10; Isaiah 46:9; Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 33:11; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1,3, 3:16, 4:24; Romans 1:19,20, 11:33; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 5:7; Revelation 19:6

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### God (the Father)

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He infallibly foreknows all that shall come to pass, that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Luke 10:21,22; Matthew 23:9; John 3:16; 6:27; Romans 1:7; I Timothy 1:1,2; 2:5,6; I Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6

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## **Jesus (God the Son)**

We believe Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary that He paid the penalty for our sins on the cross and He rose from the dead three days later. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. He was without sin. He died, was raised from the dead, ascended to heaven, and now intercedes for believers at the Father's right hand.

Matthew 1:23; Matthew 28:5, 7; Luke 1:35; Luke 23:33; John 1:1, 2; Acts 1:9, 10; Romans 8:34,45, 14:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 2 Timothy 4:1; Hebrews 7:25, 9:24; 1 Peter 4:5

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## **Holy Spirit (God the Spirit)**

We believe in the deity of the Holy Spirit and that He indwells and enables the Christian to live a godly life. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person equal with the Father and Son and of the same substance and nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relationship to the unbelieving world, He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment, bears witness to the truth, is the agent of the New Birth; and that He seals, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies and helps the believer, indwelling every true child of God in the Church age.

John 14:15-17, 16:7-11,13,14; Romans 8:14, 27; 2 Thessalonians 2:7

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## **Man**

We believe man, in the person of the first Adam, was created in God's image. We believe that God created the heavens and the earth, including all life, "each after its own kind," by direct act, according to the Genesis account; and not by the process of evolution, and that man was created in the image and likeness of God. We believe man was created in innocence but by voluntary transgression fell into sin, thus plunging the whole race into condemnation and total depravity. In consequence of which all men are born sinners and are directed by their sin natures to willful acts of sin. Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God as revealed in the entirety of Scripture, in action, attitude or character.

Genesis 1:2, 3; John 1:3, 3:16,18,36, 5:24; Acts 16:31; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1,8-9; Colossians 1:16,17

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## Salvation

We believe the Triune God saves sinners by grace alone through faith in Christ's substitutionary atonement alone.

### GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION:

We believe in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, thus securing our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

John 3:3,6-7,18; Acts 16:30-33; 2 Corinthians 5:17,19; Ephesians 2:1,8-9; Colossians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 5:1

### ATONEMENT FOR SIN:

We believe the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who, by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our sin, yet was without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience and by His death made a full and vicarious substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust—Christ the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. Having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in Heaven, divinely perfect yet still able to be touched by our infirmities. He is in every way a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior.

Isaiah 53:4-7; Matthew 8:11; John 3:16; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24, 25; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 4:10

### JUSTIFICATION:

We believe Christ secures the justification of all those who believe in Him: that justification includes the pardon of sin, (imputed to Christ on the cross) and the declaration of righteousness (imputed from Christ through faith). The righteousness of believers is solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, and not bestowed due to any works of righteousness which we have done.

Isaiah 53:11; Acts 13:39; Romans 4:25, 5:1-9

### REPENTANCE AND FAITH:

We believe repentance and faith are solemn obligations and inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God. Repentance is a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ. It is being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness,

at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior. We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition for salvation. Saving faith is trust in Jesus Christ as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God. It is not just a belief in facts, but a personal trust in Jesus to save from sin.

Psalm 51; Mark 1:15; Luke 18:13; John 3:16,18,36, 5:24; Acts 2:37-38, 16:31, 20:20-21; Romans 10:13; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5

#### SANCTIFICATION:

We believe the Scriptures teach that sanctification is a work of grace within the life of the individual believer. We believe sanctification has three aspects: the positional aspect whereby God sets apart those that are His; the progressive aspect whereby man separates himself from the defilement of sin and yields himself unto God; the ultimate aspect when the believer is in perfect likeness to His Redeemer not only in soul but in body.

We believe all who are saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon our Savior and Lord and that separation from unbiblical heresy and all sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded by God.

Romans 12:1,2, 16:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Hebrews 10:9,10,14; James 1:14-17; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11

#### ETERNAL SECURITY:

We believe true believers are eternally secure; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.

Matthew 6:30, 13:19,20; John 8:31-32; Romans 8:28-39; Colossians 1:21, 23; 1 John 5:11-13

#### BELIEVERS' TWO NATURES:

We believe every believer has two natures with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old through the indwelling Holy Spirit, and that all claims of eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural.

Romans 6:11-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:10

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## **The Church**

### UNIVERSAL CHURCH:

We believe the universal Church is the body of Christ, comprised of all true believers from the past, present, and those in the future until the Rapture. Jesus Christ is the sole head of the Church.

We believe the true spiritual Church is God bringing to fullness what He was pointing to in the Old Testament; established by God; led by Jesus Christ as its sole Head; revealed, empowered and perpetuated by the Holy Spirit; His body for service; and His bride for glory. It existed in seed form as true Israel in the Old Testament, and it grew until finally blossoming on the Day of Pentecost.

Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8,24-42, 3:24; Romans 11:11-24; 1 Corinthians 12:12-18; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

### LOCAL CHURCH:

We believe a local church is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word. The local church has leaders, with biblical authority, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity, free from the interferences of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; it is Scriptural for the true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence.

Acts 2:41-42, 20:28; Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:11, 5:23; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 3:15

We believe the Scriptures give great importance to worship. Worship should include personal worship (the individual believer having consistent time alone in listening to God through His Word and in prayer), family worship (families coming together for prayer, instruction in the Word, and in praise and thanksgiving) and corporate worship (the local church body gathering to offer united praise and thanksgiving to God and to receive instruction from the Word of God).

Psalms 95:6, 96:9; John 4:24; Romans 12:1; Hebrews 12:18; Revelation 22:9

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## **Ordinances**

We believe there are two church ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, the crucified, buried, risen Savior, with its effect in our death to

sin and resurrection to a new life; and that it is a prerequisite for church membership. We believe the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination.

Matthew 3:16, 28:19; Luke 22:14-20; John 3:23; Acts 8:26-39; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; Colossians 2:12

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## **Future, Last Things**

We believe there will be a rapture, tribulation period, kingdom, then eternity.

Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20; I Thessalonians 4:15; II Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 4:5; I Corinthians 15; II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:4-6,11-15

### THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST:

We believe in the Blessed Hope, the personal, imminent, pretribulation and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones and in His return to earth after the tribulation with His saints to establish the Millennial Kingdom.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-12; Revelation 20:1-6,12-14

### JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST:

We believe every saved person will appear before the Judgment Seat to be judged by the Lord in regard to faithful service.

Matthew 6:21; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15

### THE ETERNAL STATE:

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. 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, soul and the body are reunited to be forever glorified with the Lord. The souls of the unbelievers after death remain in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with spirit, soul and body reunited they shall appear before the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment.

Matthew 25:46; Luke 16:19-26; John 5:28-29; 2 Corinthians 5:8, 10; Philippians 1:23

### MILLENIAL KINGDOM:

We believe the Millennial Kingdom on earth will be ruled from the throne of David.

Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 1:32; Acts 2:29-30

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## **Family**

We believe God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church. Life begins at conception and children are a blessing and heritage from the Lord.

We believe the home was the first institution God provided for one man (from birth) and one woman (from birth), and that marriage is a sacred relationship and honorable for all. The marriage between a man and a woman is designed by God to be a lifelong relationship. "What therefore God has joined together let not man separate." Marriage is used as a symbol of the union of Christ and His Church. Sexual relationships outside the bonds of marriage of a man and woman are sin.

Genesis 2:18-24; Mark 10:7-9; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, 7:2-5; Ephesians 5:3-14,2-33; Hebrews 13:4

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## **Civil Government**

We believe civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of human society; the leaders are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed. The only exception are in matters opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1-7; Revelation 19:16