

Foundational Beliefs

These Foundational Beliefs do not exhaust the extent of our faith at The Grove Community Church. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God, speaks with the final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, and it is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the Senior Pastor and the Governing Board are the Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

All employees of The Grove Community Church must affirm their individual belief in and adherence to these Foundational Beliefs.

Tenets of Faith

The Bible is the ultimate authority for our faith and life. The following statements of truths are intended as a basis of mutual understanding among us. (I Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42) These beliefs are held to be essential to our Christian faith and non-denominational ministry. They do not contain all Biblical truth, only what we consider to be the essentials of our fundamental doctrines.

(a) God

There is one God (Deuteronomy 6:4), who is infinitely perfect (Matthew 5:48), existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19; I John 5:6-10; II Corinthians 13:14)

(b) Jesus

Jesus Christ is true God and true man. (Philippians 2:6-11; John 1:1, 14) He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. (Luke 1:35-38) He lived a sinless life and died upon the cross as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. (I Peter 3:18; Romans 5:8) He arose from the dead (Acts 2:23-24) and is now at the right hand of the Father as our great High Priest. (Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 4:14-16)

(c) Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son as God. (II Corinthians 3:17-18) He is sent to indwell, guide, teach, and empower the believer (John 16:13; John 14:16-17, 26; Acts 1:8); and convict the world of sin. (John 16:7-11) It is the will of God that every believer should live

by and be filled with the Holy Spirit, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. (John 16:5-14) The Gifts of the Spirit are available to all believers today.

(d) The Bible

The Old and New Testaments, without error as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of all people. They represent God's only rule of Christian faith and practice. (II Peter 1:20-21; II Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12)

(e) Man, Sin, Heaven, Hell

Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27); he fell through disobedience, causing both physical and spiritual death. All men are born with a sinful nature (Romans 3:23), are separated from God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 15:20-23) Man was created to exist forever. He will either exist eternally separated from God by sin or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. (John 3:16) To be eternally separated from God is death or Hell. (Revelation 20:15) To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life or Heaven. (Romans 6:23) Heaven and Hell are places of eternal existence.

(f) Salvation

Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all people who repent of their sins, confess with their mouth, and believe in their heart that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior. (Romans 10:9-10)

(g) Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of being set apart from sin, and dedicated unto God. Positional Sanctification happens at Salvation. (Romans 6:1-11, 13) Progressive Sanctification happens as we daily submit our lives to obey and follow Christ. (Romans 12:1-2; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12)

(h) The Church

The Church consists of all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and have acknowledged Him as Lord and Savior. Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23), which has been commissioned by Him to go into all the world as a witness, preaching the Gospel to all nations, making disciples. (Matthew 28:19-20)

The local Church is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together for the worship of God, prayer, fellowship, edification through the Word of God, and the proclamation of the Gospel. It

is also where the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are observed. (Acts 2:41-47)

(i) Resurrection

There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust, the everlasting joy of the redeemed, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost. (I Corinthians 15:20-23; John 5:24-29)

(j) Christ's Second Coming

The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent (Hebrews 10:37), and will be personal and visible. (Luke 21:27) This is the believer's blessed hope, and is a vital truth which is an incentive to holy living and faithful service. (Titus 2:11-14)

Statements of Faith

We believe a person must repent of their sins to become a Christian; and, by faith believe (Ephesians 2:8-9), personally receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. (Mark 10:15)

(a) Repent

Repentance requires that we acknowledge (or agree with God) that we have sinned (Romans 3:23; 6:23), then confess those sins to God. (I John 1:9) Repentance is a change in behavior, turning to God and away from sin.

(b) Believe

Believing requires that we actively put our faith in who Jesus is (John 3:16-18) and what He has done. (Romans 5:8; II Corinthians 5:19) It only requires faith (John 3:16-18), there is nothing else we can do to get to God (I Timothy 1:15; Romans 10:17; Ephesians 2:8-9); yet, placing our faith in Christ will change us completely.

(c) Receive

Jesus died for everyone. (John 6:40) He is waiting to be personally invited into our life, but He won't force Himself on anyone. (Revelation 3:20) Receiving, or asking, Christ into our life through prayer allows us to become a child of God. (John 1:12; Galatians 4:5)

(d) Assurance

If we have confessed with our mouth, and believed in our heart, that Jesus is Lord, we can know that we have eternal life. (Romans 10:9-11, 13)

Statements of Biblical Truth

The commitment to follow Jesus Christ and conform our lives to the message of the Bible always has been and will continue to be counter-cultural. As Christians we are instructed not to conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. (Romans 12:2)

There are often standards and beliefs within the world around us that do not align with the Bible. In many cases these differences do not drive a wedge between believers and non-believers; however, there are times when standing for Biblical truth creates a great divide between Christians and the culture we live in. It is our commitment to address these areas of disagreement with a full amount of love and grace while also being faithful to Biblical truth.

The following statements of truths are intended as a basis of mutual understanding among us. (I Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42) They do not contain all Biblical truth, only those that seem to summarize what our faith requires of us and those truths that are most questioned within the current culture.

(a) The Ten Commandments. (Exodus 20:1-18)

In the Old Testament, God gave 10 life-encompassing rules by which we are to live:

- (1) God is one, and He alone is God.
- (2) We are not to make or worship any other god or idol.
- (3) We are not to use God's name irreverently.
- (4) We need to set apart and dedicate a day of rest to God.
- (5) We are to respect and care for our parents.
- (6) We are not to murder.
- (7) We are not to sleep with or have sex with anyone except the one we married.
- (8) We are not to take anything that does not belong to us.
- (9) We are not to lie or manipulate the truth.
- (10) We are not to be jealous of what others have.

(b) The Commandments Restated by Christ.

In the New Testament, Jesus restated the 10 life-encompassing rules by simply saying, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27)

(c) Physical Healing

In the Old and New Testaments provision is made through the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of our physical bodies. (Matthew 8:16-17; Isaiah 53:4-6) Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil are taught in the Scriptures and are privileges for the Church in this present age. (James 5:13-16)

(d) Human Life is Sacred

God's Word has told us in the Old and New Testaments that human life is sacred from conception to its natural end (Psalm 139:13; Isaiah 49:1; Jeremiah 1:5); and believers must have concern for the physical and spiritual needs of all people. (Matthew 22:37-39; Romans 12:20-21; Galatians 6:10)

(e) Marriage and Human Sexuality

The Bible has given us God's design for the gift of sex, and it is to be exercised and enjoyed only within the covenant relationship of marriage between one biological man and one biological woman. (1 Corinthians 7:1-5) It is God's intention that those who enter marriage would seek, in mutual love and respect, to live in Christian fidelity. (Matthew 19:4-6) God has expressly condemned sexual intercourse outside of the marriage covenant. This prohibition applies to married people committing adultery, to sexual relationships between unmarried men and women, and to homosexual practice. (1 Corinthians 6:9) It is God's expectation that the unmarried should live pure and celibate lives, refraining from sexual intimacy. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 7:7-9) Marriage as designed by God is meant to be a beautiful illustration of Christ's relationship with the church. (Ephesians 5:22-33)

(f) Gender Creation is Sacred

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably created each person from the moment of conception as distinctly male or female, and every person's God-given gender is reflected by and aligned with their biological creation (Gen. 1:26-31; 2:18-25; 5:1,2). These two distinct and complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. To reject one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person and is a sin against God (1 Tim. 5:1-2; Tit. 2:1-6).