

# **The Greater Northwest Baptist Church Statement of Faith\***

## **I. Of the Scriptures**

We believe that the Bible was written by men divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit; that every word of God proves true, and the Bible has God for its Author, salvation for its end, and truth without error for its matter; it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is eternal in its scope. We believe all Scripture is breathed out by God and is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and beliefs should be tried.

Proverbs 30:5-6; Romans 2:12; Phil. 3:16; II Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12-13, I John 4:1

## **II. Of the Living and True God**

We believe that there is one, true and living God, an infinite intelligent Spirit, who is the Maker and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; we believe His invisible attributes, eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, ever since the creation of the world. We believe He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness, abundant in power and worthy of all possible honor, allegiance, trust and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; each being equal in divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of creation and redemption.

Ps. 83:18,147:5; Isa.6:3; Jer.10:10; John 4:24, 10:30, 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; Rom.1:20; I Cor. 2:10-11, 12:4-6; II Cor.13:14; Eph. 2:18; Phil. 2:5-6; Col. 1:19-20, 2:9; Heb.3:4; I John 5:7; Rev.4:11.

## **III. Of the Fall of Man**

We believe that God created man in His own image; male and female He created them in His likeness in holiness and purity. But, by voluntary and willful transgression, man fell from that holy state and forfeited fellowship with his Creator; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners from birth, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, and therefore all mankind is under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and all are counted dead in their trespasses and sins.

Gen.1:26-27; Acts 17:26-28; Gen.2:16-17; Gen.3:6-24; Rom. 5:12; Rom.5:15-19; Rom.8:7; Isa.53:6; Rom.3:9-18, 23; Eph.2:1-3; Rom.1:18,32; Rom.2:1-16; Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom.3:19; Gal. 3:22.

## **IV. Of the Way of Salvation**

We believe that Christ died for our sins, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of His death on the cross. We believe that the salvation of sinners is enacted by God and mediated through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; God loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Salvation, referred to as "being saved" means deliverance or redemption from the penalty of sin and sin's consequences. God made Jesus who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was laid upon Him; And by His stripes we are healed. We affirm by faith that everyone who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ will

be eternally saved. We believe it is by grace we have been saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God.

Isaiah 53:5; John 3:14-18; Acts 15:11, 16:30-33; Romans 3:21-26, 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Philippians 2:8; Titus 3:5-7; Hebrews 1:3, 9:13-15; 1 John 2:25, 4:10, 5:10-13.

#### **V. Of Justification**

In faith, we affirm that by Jesus Christ everyone who believes in Him is justified, pardoned of sin, receives eternal life and the imputed righteousness of Christ our Redeemer, solely through faith in His blood. We believe that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have been made right in God's sight, and we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Therefore, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory and everyone who has been justified by His blood, shall be saved by Him from the wrath of God. We believe that everyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ, does not belong to Christ.

Acts 10:43, 13:39; Romans 3:28, 4:4-5, 4:23-25, 5:1-2, 5:9, 8:1, 8:9, 14, 8:29-31; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Philippians 3:7-9.

#### **VI. Of the Freeness of Salvation**

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them in repentance, and through obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel; rejection which involves him in eternal condemnation, separated from the Presence of God.

Pro. 1:24-26; Isa. 55:1; Matt. 11:20, 23:37; Mark 1:15; Luke 10:27; John 3:16-21, 5:40; Acts 13:46; Rom. 1:16-17, 9:31-33; I Cor. 15: 2-4; II Thess. 1:8; Rev. 22:17.

#### **VII. Of Grace in Regeneration**

We believe that repentant sinners are born again by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit; that regeneration creates within the believer a holy disposition of the mind and will before God. Regeneration is initiated in us in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with the divine truth of the Gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in a newness of life that has been wholly orchestrated by the grace of God.

Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 36:26; Matt. 3:8-10, 7:20; John 1:12-13, 3:3, 3:6-8; Rom. 2:28-29, 5:5, 8:9; I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 1:18-20, 5:17; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 3:14-21, 4:20-24, 5:9; Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 3:9-11; I Peter 1:22-25; James 1:16-18; I John 4:7, 5:1, 5:4, 18; Rev. 21:27.

#### **VIII. Of Repentance and Faith**

We believe that repentance and faith are produced in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt before God and helplessness in gaining salvation by our own efforts, and being fully persuaded the only way of salvation is by Christ, we turn to God with heartfelt repentance, confession and petition for mercy; at the same time wholeheartedly receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King, and relying on Him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior of our souls. Therefore, by Christ alone we gain access to God; Jesus is our Advocate before God the Father and He is the propitiation for our sins.

Ps. 2:6, 51; Mark 1:15; Luke 15:18-21, 18:13; John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38, 3:22-23, 11:18, 16:30-33; Rom. 10:9-11; II Cor. 7:11; Eph. 2:8; I Tim. 10:12-13; II Tim. 1:12; Heb. 1:8, 4:14; James 4:7-10, 7:25; I John 2:1-3, 5:1.

### **IX. Of God's Purpose of Grace**

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God and that we were chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of God the Father who works out everything in conformity to His will. We believe He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ and graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; this being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man but utterly excludes boasting. God's unmerited grace promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God and is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable. In Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. He has made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ. We believe all who are the elect of God are included in Christ having heard the message of truth; those who believe the Gospel of salvation. Those whom He predestined are marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of all those who are God's possession—to the praise of His glory.

Ex. 33:18-19; Isa. 42:16; Jer. 31:3; Luke 18:7; John 6:37-40, 10:16, 15:16; Acts 1:24, 13:48, 15:14; Rom. 3:27, 4:16, 8:28-30, 9:23-24, 11:5-6, 11:28-29, 11:32-36; I Cor. 1:26-31, 3:5-7, 9:22, 15:10; Eph. 1:3-14; Phil. 3:12; Col. 3:12; I Thess. 1:4-10; II Thess. 2:12-14; II Tim. 1:8-9, 2:10; Heb. 6:11; James 1:17-18; I Peter 1:1-2, 2:9, 5:10; II Peter 1:10-11; I John 4:19.

### **X. Of Sanctification**

We believe it is God's will that we should be sanctified, and that sanctification is the process by which we are made partakers of His holiness; that it is a progressive work and that it is begun in regeneration. We believe that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer so we will grow up in our salvation and grow to maturity in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Pro. 4:18; Matt. 26:41; Luke 9:23, 11:35; John 3:6; Rom. 8:5; II Cor. 3:18, 7:1, 13:5, 10; Eph. 1:4, 1:13-14, 4:11-12, 4:30, 6:18; Phil. 1:9-11, 2:12-13, 3:12-16; I Thess. 4:3, 5:23; Heb. 6:1; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 1:5-8, 3:18; I John 2:29.

### **XI. Of Perseverance of the Saints**

We believe that those redeemed by God are kept by His power and might. We believe that those who hold to Christ's teaching are His true disciples and He is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy. He is the only wise God, our Savior worthy of all glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, because of His keeping power and eternal grace.

Kings 6:16; Ps. 37:18, 66:8-10, 91:11-12, 121:3; Job 17:9; Jer. 32:40; Matt. 6:30-33, 10:22, 13:20-21; John 6:66-69, 8:31, 13:18; Rom. 8:28, 15:3-5; 1 Cor. 1:7-9; Phil. 1:6, 2:13; Col. 1:28-29; Heb. 1:14, 3:14, 6:10-12, 13:5; II I John 2:19, 2:27-28, 3:9, 4:4, 5:18; Jude 24-25.

### **XII. Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel**

We believe that Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes, and in Him the law of God is fulfilled. God has set the Law as the eternal and unchangeable

rule of His moral government; and that it is holy, just, and good. The Scriptures rightly ascribe that fallen men are wholly unable to fulfill its precepts and this failure arises entirely from their love of sin. We believe what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering, and He condemned sin in the flesh. Through Him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification we were not able to obtain under the law.

Ps. 119; Matt. 5:17, 22:37-40; Luke 16:17; John 6:44; Rom. 3:20-22, 3:31, 4:13-15, 7:7, 12, 7:14-22, 8:2-4, 8:7-8, 9:30-32, 10:4; Gal. 2:21, 3:21; Phil. 3:8-10; I Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; Jude 20-21.

### **XIII. Of a Gospel Church**

We believe that the visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers who are united with the Universal Church through the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace; associated by covenant in the 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; that its only scriptural officers are pastors and deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. To the Church, the body of believers, Christ Himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers to equip His people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. We believe that each member of the body is endowed with at least one spiritual gift; to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. All spiritual gifts are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He distributes them to each one as He determines to be exercised in the unity of love.

Matt. 18:17; John 14:15, 15:12; Acts 2:47, 2:41-42, 5:11, 8:1, 11:21-23, 14:23, 15:22, 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-20; I Cor. 1:1-3, 4:17, 5:12-13, 11:2, 11:23-24, 14:12, 14:23; II Cor. 2:17; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 4:7; I Thess. 4:2; II Thess. 3:6; I Tim. 3:5; I John 4:21; II John 1:6; III John 1:1-8; I Cor. 12; I Tim. 3; Titus 1.

### **XIV. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit according to His commandment. It is a public act to demonstrate faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior in a symbolic and solemn way. We believe that baptism is an outward display that represents the inward reality of coming to faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We believe He is God incarnate, and His atoning death was the sacrificial means by which those who turn to Him in faith are forever reconciled to God. Immersion in water is symbolic of baptism into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit and demonstrates our belief that we have died with Him and raised to the newness of life in His name. The purpose of baptism is to give a visual testimony of our heartfelt commitment to Christ and is the first step of Christian discipleship in obedience to Scripture.

Baptism is prerequisite to the Lord's Supper; in which the members of the church by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the body and blood of Christ for the atonement of our sin; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

Baptism: Matt. 3:5-6, 3:11, 28:19-20; Mark 1:7-9, 6:16; John 1:33, 3:22-23; Acts 2:38, 2:41-42, 8:12, 8:36-39, 10:47-48, 11:15-17, 16:32-34, 18:8, 22:16; Rom.6:4; I Cor. 11:26, 11:17-32; Gal.3:26-28; Col. 2:12; I Peter 3:20-21. Lord's Supper: Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; I Cor. 5:6-8.

## **XV. Of the Christian Sabbath**

We believe that a Sabbath day of rest is commanded by God. Therefore, we set aside the first day of the week as the Lord's Day; We keep it sacred to religious purposes including corporate worship of God, gathering to hear the word of the Lord and congregational study of Scripture, and bringing tithes and offerings; we, as a local body, assemble ourselves in observance of the atonement of Christ, that we may stand firm in one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the Gospel. We believe there remains a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from His. We, therefore, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for the rest prepared for the people of God, we commit to honor the Sabbath to the glory of God.

Gen. 2:3; Ex. 20:8 Lev. 19:30; Ps. 26:8, 118:15, 24; Isa. 56:2-8, 58:13-14; Mark 2:27; Luke 4:16; John 20:19; Acts 11:26, 13:44, 17:2-3, 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 4:3-11, 10:24-25; Rev. 1:10.

## **XVI. Of the Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society and are God's servants, and agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. All people are subject to the governing authorities provided by God. His magistrates must be conscientiously honored and obeyed; except in those matters that are in opposition to the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ revealed in Scripture. Governing authorities are ordained by God; But He alone possesses absolute authority as Supreme Ruler; as King of kings and Lord of lords He has absolute power in the government of the world.

Ex. 18:20-21, 23; Deut. 16:18; II Sam. 23:3; Ps. 2, 72:11; Jer. 30:21; Dan. 3:15-18, 6:7-10; Matt. 22:21, 23:10; Acts 4:18-20, 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7, 14:4, 14:9-13; Titus 3:1; I Tim. 2:1-4; I Peter 2:13; Rev. 19:16;

## **XVII. Distinction Of the Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; and a distinction between those who serve God and those who do not. The righteous, by faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God; while all who continue in impenitence and unbelief are wicked in His sight, and under the curse; We believe this distinction holds true among all mankind in life and after death. Therefore, whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

Gen. 18:23; Ps. 10:4; Pro. 10:24, 11:31, 12:26, 14:32; Eccl. 3:17; Isa. 5:20, 55:6-7, 57:21; Jer. 15:19; Mal. 3:18; Matt. 7:13-14; Luke 12:4-5, 9:23-26, 16:25; John 3:36, 8:21-24; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 1:17, 6:16, 18, 22, 7:6; I Cor. 11:32; Gal. 3:10; I Peter 4:17-18; I John 2:29, 3:7, 5:19.

## **XVIII. Of the World to Come**

We believe that the end of the world is approaching and this world in its present form is passing away. A time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear Christ's voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to life eternal, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. A solemn separation will then take place between the righteous and the wicked; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, according to God's principles of righteousness. Therefore, let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy. "Look, He is

coming with the clouds,” and “every eye will see Him, even those who pierced him;” and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of Him.” So, shall it be! Amen.

Dan. 12:2; Matt. 13:37-43, 49, 24:30-31, 24:35, 25:31-46, 28:20; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 14:14; John 4:36, 5:28-29, 6:40, 11:25-26; Acts 1:11, 3:21, 10:42, 17:31, 24:15; Rom. 2:2-16, 3:5-6, 6:23; I Cor. 4:5, 6:9-10, 7:29-31, 15:12-58; II Cor. 4:18, 5:10-11; Phil. 3:19; I Thess. 4:13-18, 5:1-11; II Thess. 1:6-12; II Tim. 1:10; Heb. 1:10-12, 6:1-2, 9:28; I Peter 4:7; II Peter 2:9, 3:3-13; I John 2:17, 2:28, 4:17; Jude 7; Rev. 1:7, 20:11-12, 22:11.

\*An adaptation from the Holy Scriptures and The New Hampshire Confession of Faith.