

Statement of Faith

- (X) **Lawsuits between believers.** The Bible issues a strong indictment against lawsuits between believers (1 Corinthians 6:1-6) and strongly urges believers to settle things between themselves in a peaceful manner instead of taking the issue to court. It is better for a Christian to accept being wronged or cheated by another Christian than to seek redress against a brother through the judicial system (1 Corinthians 6:7).
- (Y) **Giving.** It is herein acknowledged and accepted that the greatest “Giver” ever known to mankind is God; who gave us, through Jesus Christ, the gift of salvation (John 3:16). God’s motivation for giving was love, ours must be also. God’s love was turned into an act of giving, ours must be also. God gave His very best, we must do also. God rewards unselfish giving to those in need with boundless liberality (Luke 6:38). Christians are commanded in the Old Testament to tithe (Malachi 3:10) or suffer under God’s curse, while in the New Testament Jesus acknowledged tithing, not as a law but as an accepted discipline (Matthew 23:23). It was commonly understood that those following God would pay tithes (Luke 18:12). The tithe is one-tenth of one’s gross income. The tithe should be paid into the church one attends. Beyond the tithe, the Christian is encouraged, by apostolic example, to give offerings and alms (Luke 11:41; Acts 10:2, 24:17). In all Christian giving, whether time, talent, or treasure, the proper attitude is one of liberality, as God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:6-11). The understanding is that the gift is no where near as important as the attitude of the heart in the act of giving.

AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Faith is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e. that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

- (A) **The Scriptures Inspired.** The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).
- (B) **The One True God.** The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent “I AM,” the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).
- (C) **The Adorable Godhead.** The terms *trinity* and *persons*, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from ‘gods many and lords many.’ We, therefore, may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being or three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).
- (D) **The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.** The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare: His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35). His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22). His miracles (Acts 2:22, 10:38). His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21). His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4). His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11, 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).
- (E) **The Fall of Man.** Man was created good and upright; for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” However man, by voluntary transgression, fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17, 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).
- (F) **The Salvation of Man.** Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.
- (G) **The Ordinances of the Church.** Baptism in Water. The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4). **Holy Communion.** The Lord’s Supper, consisting of the elements – bread and the fruit of the vine – is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers “till He come!”
- (H) **The Church and Its Mission.** The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshipped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason-for-being of Harvest Time of Tampa, Inc. as part of the Church is: To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16). To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13). To be a channel of God’s purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28, 14:12).

(I) The Baptism in the Holy Ghost.

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17, 10:44-46, 11:14-16, 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Ghost come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:38), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

(J) The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost. The baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.

(K) Sanctification. Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Ghost we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15,16).

(L) The Ministry. A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the Church in: Evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20); Worship of God (John 4:23,24), and (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16).

(M) Divine Healing. Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).

(N) The Blessed Hope. The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

(O) The Millennial Reign of Christ. The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7, 19:11-14, 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:27,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

(P) The Final Judgment. There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20, 20:11-15, 21:8).

(Q) The Bible This ministry has adopted the King James Version (1611) as its official version of the Bible. This version will be the final authority for faith and practice. However, this ministry acknowledges the scholarship and veracity of other versions as well, e.g. The New International Version, The New King James Version, New American Standard Bible Version, and Revised Standard Version. A clear understanding of the Bible written in English (King James Version, et al) may be enhanced by word and syntax studies in the original languages.

(Q) The New Heavens and the New Earth. "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:22).

(S) Ministry position regarding contemporary issues. Civil Government. As Christians, we are called to bear with our government wherever possible. (Romans 13:1-7). When and if a civil government refuses people the liberty to worship and obey God freely, it has lost its mandate of authority from God. At that point, a Christian should feel justified in disobeying. Jesus did not call for revolution against Rome, even though it was an oppressive conqueror of Israel. On the other hand, the apostles refused to obey an order not to preach and teach in Jesus' name (Acts 5:27-29). Blind obedience to government is never right. However difficult or costly it may be, we all must reserve the right to say no to things that we consider oppressive or immoral. (Hebrews 12:14; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Romans 12:18).

(T) Human Sexuality. Marriage is the act of joining together one man and one woman in holy wedlock. The Bible allows for no other combination of joining together to be identified as marriage. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-7; 1 Corinthians 7:2; Ephesians 5:31. The Bible says that it is an abomination for a man to lie with a man as with a woman, or a woman to lie with a woman as with a man (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13). The apostle Paul called it "shameful," the result of being given up by God to "vile passions" (Romans 1:24-27). In the Old Testament, those who practiced these things were removed from the congregation of Israel by execution. We are told in the New Testament that those who practice homosexuality will not enter the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9,10). The apostle Paul shows homosexuality as a final order of rebellion against God. This ministry, therefore, will not employ or retain in employment those who are known or revealed to be living a homosexual lifestyle. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 8:24, 26, 27, 32, 2:2; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10).

(U) Divorce and Remarriage. A study of the Bible reveals that God hates divorce (Malachi 2:14-16). Yet, even though God states His position on divorce, He has allowed for it to occur in specific circumstances. (Matthew 5:31,32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Corinthians 7:10-15). The admonition of the Lord is that Pastors and Deacons (Leaders) in the church must be husbands of one wife. (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6) However, it is clear from a reading of Scripture combined with a study of the practices of the historical era in which they were written, that the intention is to warn against plural wives, and not to determine that a leader, pastor, or elder may only marry once. The determination is that they may only have one wife at a time. Therefore, this ministry does not oppose the divorce and remarriage of leaders, pastors, or elders provided the circumstances of their divorce and remarriage are in line with the clear teaching of Scripture.

(V) Abortion. Abortion is wrong in that it violates God's commandment concerning the murder of a human life (Exodus 20:13). It is the taking of human life, for the bible shows that life begins at conception. God fashions us while we are in our mother's womb (Psalm 139:13). The prophet Jeremiah and the apostle Paul were called by God before they were born (Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15). John the Baptist leaped in his mother's womb when the voice of Mary, the mother of the Lord, was heard (Luke 1:44). Obviously, children in the womb have spiritual identity. There can, therefore, be no justification whatsoever supporting abortion.

(W) Missions. Jesus Christ, Himself, enjoined those who become His disciples to engage in missions activities (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). The Bible clearly appoints every Christian to be involved in missions, either in financial support of or going forth to work in. Paul pointed out that the gospel is the power of God to salvation (Romans 1:16) Therefore, to be involved in missions (both at home and abroad) is one of the Christians highest priorities.