

Mission Grove Church **Theological Distinctives**

The theological distinctives within Mission Grove Church's faith statement reflect what distinguishes Mission Grove Church from other churches who would affirm the basic doctrines. These distinctives shape the way that Mission Grove Church is led and the direction the church is headed. We do not expect all members to embrace all aspects of these distinctives, but members should expect that the distinctives will be maintained in all ministry environments at Mission Grove Church. Theological discussions are encouraged so a variety of views may be acknowledged and expressed, but the teaching of Mission Grove Church will reflect and express our theological distinctives.

In essential beliefs we have unity (Ephesians 4:5-6).

In lower-essential beliefs we have liberty (Romans 14:1,4,12,22).

In all our beliefs we show love (John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 13:1-7).

THEOLOGICAL DISTINCTIVES

The theological distinctives within Mission Grove Church's faith statement further describe our core beliefs in greater detail as well as reflect what distinguishes Mission Grove Church from other churches who would affirm the basic doctrines.

1. The Trinity

We teach that there is one true, holy God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality. Though the Son submits to the Father, and the Spirit submits to the Father and to the Son, each Person is equal in every divine perfection and each executes a distinct, but harmonious function in the works of creation, providence, and redemption. Each divine person equally deserves worship and obedience.

(There is Only One God: Deuteronomy 4:35, 6:4; Isaiah 43:10, 44:6, 45:5-6; Mark 12:29; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; 1 Timothy 2:5; The Trinity: Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; Ephesians 1:3-14, 2:18, 3:14-18; 1 Pet 1:2; The Father is God: 1 Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 5:20; Phil 2:11; Jas 1:27; The Son is God: John 1:1-3, 5:18, 20:28; Acts 20:28; Col 2:9; Titus 2:13; Heb 1:8-9; 2 Pet 1:1; The Spirit is God: Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Cor 3:17-18; The Three Persons are not the Same Person, but are Distinct Persons: Matt 3:16-17; John 1:1-2, 14:26, 15:26, 17:24; Rom 8:11; 1 Corinthians 12:3-6; 1 John 2:1)

2. God the Father

We teach that God the Father is the Lord of heaven and earth, an eternal, infinite, unchanging, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, knowledge, wisdom, faithfulness, power, justice, patience, love and sole authority over all creation. In the beginning God created out of nothing the world and all things therein, thus manifesting the glory of His power, wisdom, and goodness. By His sovereign power He continues to sustain His creation. By His providence He is operating throughout history to fulfill His redemptive purposes.

(Genesis 1:1-31; Exodus 3:14, 6:3, 15:11, 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Samuel 2:6-8; 1 Chronicles 29:11; Job 42:2; Psalms 50:9-12, 89:11, 90:2, 100:5, 103:19, 104:24, 115:2-3, 135:5-6, 145:8-9; Isaiah 6:3, 41:21-23, 42:8-9, 43:7, 45:18-19, 46:9-10; Ezekiel 18:4; Daniel 4:35, 5:21; Jonah 4:2; Nahum 1:7; Habakkuk 1:13; Malachi 3:6; Matthew 5:48, 6:9, 11:25-27; John 1:12, 4:24, 5:17-18; Acts 17:24-25; Romans 2:4, 8:15, 9:15, 11:33-36, 16:27; 1 Corinthians 8:6, 10:13; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:3-6, 1:11; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:16-17; 1 Timothy 1:17; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 2:11; Hebrews 12:5-9, 13:5; James 1:13, 1:17, 4:13-16; 1 Peter 1:3, 1:15-16; 1 John 1:3, 4:8, 4:16; Revelation 4:8)



3. God the Son, Lord Jesus Christ

We teach that Jesus Christ is the eternal second person of the trinity through whose work and person God has achieved His redemptive purpose of reconciling all creation with Himself. Jesus was born of a virgin and is both fully God and fully man. He lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father and voluntarily atoned for the sins of all by dying on the cross as their substitute. Thus, Jesus satisfied divine justice and accomplished salvation for all who trust in Him alone. He rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, where He, the only Mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own. He shall come again to earth, personally and visibly, to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. In light of all of this, we teach that belief in Jesus Christ is the only way any person can be saved.

(Genesis 3:15, 49:10; Numbers 24:17; Deuteronomy 18:15-18; 1 Chronicles 17:12-14; Psalms 2:6-12, 16:10, 22:1-18, 110:1-7, 118:22; Isaiah 7:14, 52:13-53:12; Daniel 2:44-45, 9:24-25; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 9:9, 12:10; Matthew 1:23-25, 28:18-20; Mark 1:1, 10:45; Luke 1:26-35, 2:10-11; John 1:1-3, 1:29, 5:18-23, 8:58, 10:17-18, 10:30, 14:6-10, 17:3-5, 20:28; Acts 1:9-11, 2:22-24, 4:11-12, 13:33-35, 17:30-31, 20:28; Romans 5:6; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-17, 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Timothy 2:5, 3:16; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 1:2-12, 2:14-18, 4:14-15, 7:23-28, 9:25-28, 10:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19, 2:22, 3:18; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 2:1-2, 5:11-13; Revelation 1:5)

4. God the Holy Spirit

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the eternal third person of the Trinity. The essential accompaniment of a genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ is a life of holiness and obedience, attained by believers as they submit to the Holy Spirit. He was sent into the world by the Father and the Son to apply to mankind the saving work of Jesus Christ. Believers are called to be both Spirit-filled and Spirit-led. We teach that Holy Spirit is Jesus' comforting replacement, is the Divine Author and Interpreter of Scripture, convicts of sin, restrains evil, grants new life to the spiritually dead, places all believers into Christ and the one true church, convinces them to repent and believe, indwells them permanently, empowers biblical preaching, gives Christians access to God, leads them away from and empowers them for victory over sin, transforms them into the image of Jesus, produces godly character, prays for them, gifts them for ministry, seals and protects them until He raises them from the dead and in all things brings glory to Jesus.

(Genesis 1:2; Exodus 4:30-31, 7:17; Job 33:4; 1 Kings 17:24; Psalms 33:6, 51:11, 104:30, 115:3, 139:7-10; Isaiah 6:9-10 (compare to Acts 28:25-27), 32:14, 44:3, 61:1, 63:10-11; Ezekiel 36:27, 39:29; Joel 2:28-29; Matthew 3:16, 12:28-32, 28:19; Luke 1:35, 7:15-16; John 3:2-8, 6:63, 10:38, 14:11, 14:16-17, 14:26, 15:26-27, 16:7-15; Acts 1:16, 2:22, 5:3-4, 10:38, 15:28, 28:25; Romans 1:4, 8:2-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, 3:16, 6:11, 6:19, 12:4-13, 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 3:17, 12:12, 13:14; Galatians 5:16-18, 5:22-23; Ephesians 1:13-14, 2:18, 2:22, 4:7-12, 4:30, 5:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 9:14, 10:15-16; 1 Peter 1:10-11, 1:23-25; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13)

5. The Bible

We teach that the Scriptures are true, from God, authoritative, inerrant, and sufficient. The Bible is composed of 66 books of the Old and New Testament. The Bible simultaneously speaks with the authority of God and reflects the backgrounds, styles, and vocabularies of the human authors. The canon closed with the Book of Revelation; no writing or person has authority equivalent to or superseding the Bible, nor does the Bible receive its authority from any person, tradition, institution or experience. The Bible is propositional revelation, the mind of God adequately expressed with human language to the original authors using words and sentences, not subjective impressions or experiences. The Bible is not a collection of speculative beliefs; it is God's revelation of reality in words without which we cannot understand reality correctly. Because God is its primary author, in all areas that the Bible speaks it is true, in no way misleading or contradictory and should be believed and obeyed. There is no truth that is inconsistent with the Bible. We accept the historical record in the Bible as accurate, and we reject the idea that truth and morality are relative, subjective or socially constructed.

(Psalms 12:6, 19:7-9, 119:160; Jeremiah 26:2; Matthew 4:4, 5:18, 24:35; John 10:35, 16:12-15, 17:17; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:7-13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Titus 1:2; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Jude 3; Revelation 22:18-19)



6. Salvation

We teach that the central purpose of God's revelation in the Bible is to call all people into fellowship with Himself. Originally created to have fellowship with God, humanity defied God, choosing to go his independent way, and thus was alienated from God and suffered the corruption of nature, rendering him unable to please God. The fall took place at the beginning of human history, and all individuals since have suffered these consequences and are thus in need of the saving grace of God. The deserved penalty for sin is death, both physical and spiritual. The salvation of humanity is wholly a work of God's free grace, not the result, in whole or in part of human works or goodness and must be personally appropriated by repentance and faith. When God has begun a saving work in the heart of any person, He gives assurance in His Word that He will continue performing it until the day Jesus returns. Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. A person receives salvation when he or she believes that Jesus is Lord and that His death, burial, and resurrection is the only means through which one can be eternally saved. If one has been genuinely saved, he or she cannot lose it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian.

(Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Isaiah 59:1-2; John 3:16, 14:6, 20:31; Romans 3:23, 5:8, 6:23, 10:9-13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Galatians 3:26; Colossians 1:9-22; Ephesians 2:8-9; Philippians 1:6; Titus 3:5)

7. Creation

We teach that God created the world from nothing and governs all things at all times in all places.

We will recognize and accept the views and discuss the differences between that of an "old earth" and "young earth." While an old earth versus a young earth belief will be debated, we whole heartedly believe that God's creative work is the overflow of the love present within the Trinitarian fellowship. Creation, according to the design of God, was good. God doesn't let the world exist. He makes the world exist. He upholds the universe by the word of His power, and He holds the world together in himself.

(Genesis 1:1-2:3; Psalms 19:1; 24:1; 33:6; 147:4-5; Job 38:4-7; Isaiah 40:9-31; 45:18; Nehemiah 9:6; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 4:11)

8. Humanity

We teach that people are made in the spiritual image of God and are called to be like Him in character and purpose. We are designed then to be His representatives, pointing the rest of creation back to God. We teach Adam and Eve, the parents of the entire human race, were real people who were created in innocence, without sin and with the capacity, desire and mandate to glorify God in all things. All human beings, whether in the womb or out, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or level of health, are images of God and are, therefore, inherently valuable and worthy of respect and protection. All human beings begin to exist as individuals at the moment of conception. Thus, we oppose abortion and euthanasia as well as research and procedures that destroy unborn children. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, we are marred by a sinful attitude that separates people from God and causes many problems in life. However, through the grace and power of God's salvation and the Holy Spirit, the believer has the opportunity to live a full and meaningful life as God's workmanship. Death seals the eternal destiny of each person. For all mankind, there will be a resurrection of the body into the spiritual world and a judgment that will determine the fate of each individual. Unbelievers will be separated from God into condemnation. God's judgment will reveal His justice by consigning them to perpetuate in eternal retribution their own rejection of God. Believers will be received into eternal communion with God and will be rewarded for works done in this life.

(Genesis 1:26-31, 2:15-3:20, 5:2, 6:5, 8:21, 9:6; 1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chronicles 6:36; Job 5:18-19; Psalms 14:1-3, 143:2; Proverbs 6:16-19; Ecclesiastes 7:20, 8:11; Isaiah 13:11, 43:7; Jeremiah 17:9; Ezekiel 18:4; Daniel 12:2; Matthew 7:11, 10:31, 12:12, 25:41-46; John 3:19, 5:29, 6:39, 6:44, 6:65; Romans 1:18-32, 3:9-23, 5:10-21, 6:17, 6:20, 6:23, 7:18, 8:7-11; 1 Corinthians 2:14, 6:17-20, 11:7, 15:35-49; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, 4:14, 5:8; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:1-3, 2:11-12, 4:17-18; Colossians 1:21, 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Timothy 1:10, 2:26; Titus 3:3; James 2:10-11, 3:9; 1 John 1:8, 1:10; Revelation 4:11, 20:4-6, 20:11-15)



9. Men and Women

We teach that God's original and very good creation included making both men and women in His image. This makes both genders equal in value, dignity, respect, worthy of protection, and salvation. However, the two genders are not identical. They were created to complement each other in role and function both in the church and in the Christian home. We teach that all Christians are charged with the Great Commission. All Christians, both men and women, participate in the ministry of the church together, and we teach that male and female image bearers flourish best in partnership, with Scripture describing these relationships with brotherly and sisterly love. Therefore, godly brotherly and sisterly love will be the foundation for how we treat one another, and this love will extend to our brothers and sisters from other local ministries and beyond.

In the Christian home, husbands have been given the responsibility of humble sacrificial leadership and wives have been given the responsibility of willing, intelligent submission to that leadership, as both serve and submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21-33). Because these marriage roles reflect God's very good creative purpose, being ordained by Him before sin entered the world, living in accordance with them fosters relational peace, blessing and joy. This is why we teach that biblical marriage can only exist between one man (having XY sex chromosomes) and one woman (have XX sex chromosomes). We affirm all people's value before God, and we as a church commit to loving all people as Christ loved us. We strongly deny any version of complementarianism or theological position that leads to the subjugation, intimidation, marginalization, abuse or neglect of any man or woman. *(Genesis 1:26-27, 2:18-24, 5:1-2, 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 14:33-35; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:11-14, 3:1-2; Titus 1:6; James 3:9; 1 Peter 3:1-7)*

10. Sanctification

We teach that sanctification is the process of a believer becoming more like Jesus through the continuing work of the Holy Spirit as he or she follows the Scriptures. Spiritual growth and sanctification begins when someone is born again and continues throughout one's life, and the process is completed at death or when the Lord returns. While the Word and the Spirit assure one of practical sanctification, it always remains imperfect in this life. After a sinner is regenerated, there is some element of corruption left in every Christian, which is the source of the internal war between the flesh and the Spirit. In general, spiritual growth occurs as Christians grow in love for Jesus through the Gospel, follow the Spirit's leadership into holiness, feed on His Word and are in fellowship with other believers for encouragement and service.

(John 17:17; Acts 20:32, 26:18; Romans 6:1-8:17, 15:16; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 1:30, 6:11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:20-5:21, 5:26-27; Philippians 2:12-13, 3:12-19; Colossians 2:6-7, 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11, 10:10, 13:12; James 3:2; 1 Peter 1:2, 2:11)

11. The Church

We teach the true Church, the Church Universal, is made up of every person who has ever been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, united to Christ, repented of his or her sins and trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation. We teach that the Church is the body of Christ sent into the world to shine forth the glory of God. Though there is one people of God, the Church is distinct from Israel. It began on the Day of Pentecost and will continue until its completion at the Rapture. Each local church, as an expression of the true Church, is made up of redeemed individuals who have joined together for worship, instruction, fellowship, service and evangelism. Jesus is the Supreme Authority in the Church and He delegates that authority through His Word to qualified elders in each local church (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1). Scripture calls elders to lead the church (1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:1-2), preach the Word (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:9), protect the church from false teaching (Acts 20:17, 28-31; Titus 1:9) pray for and visit the sick (James 5:14; Acts 20:35), equip the saints for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12) and use proper judgment in theological and doctrinal matters (Acts 15).

(Matthew 16:18, 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21, 30-31; Acts 1:8, 2:1-21, 38-47, 8:3, 9:31, 20:28; Romans 11:25-29; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 3:16-17, 10:31-32, 11:3, 12:12-28; Galatians 6:16; Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:11-3:6, 3:10, 3:15, 4:7-16, 5:23-27; Colossians 1:18, 1:24, 1:28-29, 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11-13; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 15; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 9:12, 13:7, 13:17; 1 Peter 2:9-10, 5:2-3; Revelation 19:7-8, 21:9;

Religious Liberty: Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:18-20; 5:29; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; 1 Peter 2:13-17)

12. Baptism & Communion

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a confessing believer into water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ to regularly consider and remember His saving-death on the cross and its implications for our lives. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Baptism: Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:10; John 3:23; Acts 8:38-39, 10:44-47; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 1:14-17; Colossians 2:12; Communion: Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:17-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 11:20-32).

13. Sexuality

We teach God created sex as part of His good creation (Genesis 2:24) and intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (Hebrews 13:4), meaning God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:3). We love all people, including those caught in these sins and will always express that love by encouraging repentance (1 Corinthians 13:6) from any form of sexual immorality. We also teach that God offers forgiveness, redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin in these matters (1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Timothy 1:11; Titus 2:14; 1 John 1:9), seeking His mercy through Jesus Christ. We teach that every person must be shown compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity; hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual or group are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the Scriptures nor the doctrines of this church. *(Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 13:1-7, 16:14; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3-5; 1 Timothy 1:9-11; Titus 2:14; 1 John 1:9)*



14. Angels

We teach that angels are created, personal beings, and therefore should not be worshiped. They worship God and carry out His purposes in the world. We teach that Satan, also known as the Devil and several other names, is not equal with God, but is a created being and a fallen angel. He is not God's equal opposite, but is the enemy of both God and humanity, who took numerous angels with him when he rebelled and helped introduce sin to the human race. He and his demonic army, though they know their end, have been and continue to propagate deception, sin and false religion until they are finally defeated and punished eternally in the Lake of Fire for their rebellion.

(Genesis 3:1-24; Numbers 22:22; 1 Kings 19:5; Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7; Psalms 34:7, 91:11-12, 103:20-21, 104:4, 148:2-5; Nehemiah 9:6; Isaiah 6:2-3; Daniel 8:16-17, 9:20-23, 10:11, 12:6-7; Matthew 4:3-10, 13:39-42, 13:49-52, 18:10, 24:31, 25:41, 28:2; Mark 8:38; Luke 1:19, 2:13-14, 15:7, 16:22, 20:36; John 5:4, 8:44, 12:31; Acts 5:20, 7:53, 8:26, 10:5, 12:5-11, 27:23; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4, 6:15, 11:3, 11:14; Ephesians 2:2, 3:9-10, 6:11-12; Philippians 2:9-11; Colossians 1:16, 2:18; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 1 Timothy 3:6, 3:16, 5:21; 2 Timothy 2:26; Hebrews 1:6-7, 1:14, 2:2, 12:22; James 2:19, 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 3:8; Jude 6; Revelation 1:1, 5:11-12, 7:11-12, 9:11, 12:4, 20:2, 20:10)

15. End Times

Regarding the end times, we understand there is much debate within Christian circles about the exact details of Christ's return. We encourage open dialogue on such matters, with the emphasis placed upon the fact that Christ is returning and the urgency that should place in the heart of believers. We will respect the discussion on the specifics and different views surrounding Christ's return. Included in our discussion will be the teaching an imminent, physical, personal, visible and future return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth. We will include teaching that belief in the Rapture of the Church will take place before the 7-year tribulation period begins. Jesus will return to earth at the end of this 7-year period to defeat the enemies of a repentant Israel, literally fulfill God's covenants to them and set up His peaceful, righteous and worshipful Kingdom in Jerusalem on the Throne of David. He will reign as earth's King for 1000 literal years, after which time Satan as well as both his spiritual and human followers will be judged and cast into the Lake of Fire. After that, this present creation will be destroyed and remade into a New Heavens and a New Earth.

(Genesis 12:1-3; 2 Samuel 7:11-16; 1 Chronicles 17:8-14; Isaiah 11:1-16, 65:17-25; Jeremiah 31:31-37; Ezekiel 36:22-38; Daniel 2:44, 9:24-27, 12:2; Zechariah 8:1-17, 12:10, 13:9; Matthew 5:12, 6:20, 13:40-42, 24:3-51, 25:41-46; Mark 13:32; Luke 10:20, 12:33; John 5:22-29, 14:2; Acts 1:9-11, 2:29-30, 10:42, 17:31; Romans 2:8-16, 6:16-23, 8:17, 8:30, 11:25-29, 13:12, 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:10-4:5, 13:12, 15:24-28, 16:22; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, 12:2-4; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:5; Philippians 1:21-23, 3:20-21, 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, 3:13, 4:13-5:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, 2:7-14; 2 Timothy 2:10, 4:1; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 6:2, 9:27, 11:16, 12:22-23; James 1:15, 5:7-9; 1 Peter 1:4, 4:5-7, 5:4; 2 Peter 2:17, 3:7-12; 1 John 3:2; Jude 6, 14-15, 23; Revelation 1:7, 6:17, 7:16-17, 11:15, 14:11, 19:1-22:5)

16. Evangelism and Missions

We teach that it is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. We define a disciples as someone who follows Jesus, fellowships with believers, and fishes for people (a metaphor for reaching unbelievers found in Matthew 4:19). The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer should birth a genuine love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests upon believers to take the Gospel to the entire world, as commanded by Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness supported by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods of proclamation in harmony with the Gospel of Christ.

(Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17)



17. The Kingdom

We teach that the Kingdom of God is the power of God working through the people of God. It includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men and women who willfully acknowledge Him as King. People enter the Kingdom of God through commitment to Jesus through salvation. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

(Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 6:9-10, 33; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 14:17; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13-14; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22)

18. Stewardship

We teach that God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have been called to steward the resources and relationships with which God has entrusted to them. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Gospel.

(Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19)

19. Social Issues

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. We are called to be light to a dark world and spread the Gospel through word and deed. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. As ambassadors for Christ, every Christian should live and serve in a way that promotes the principles of righteousness, truth, and Christ-like love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

(Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8)

20. Gifts of the Holy Spirit

We teach that all spiritual gifts seen in the New Testament— including those of prophecy, healing, and speaking in tongues—did not cease with the death of the apostles but continue for consistent and well-ordered use in the Church for the purpose of upbuilding the body of Christ. This theological belief is referred to as continuationism. Our practice is guided by and under the authority of the Word of God to be exercised in the manner of humility worthy of our calling as Christ followers. The purpose of spiritual gifts is to glorify God, serve others, and build up God's Church. While some gifts are not as prevalent in practice today, we do not believe that any spiritual gift ended with the close of the New Testament or the death of the last apostle.

(John 14:26; 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 2:38-39; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; Ephesians 4:11, 1 Peter 4:10-11)

