

Doctrines of Mission Bible Church

(aka Written Doctrines, Doctrinal Statements, Church Doctrine, Doctrine, Statement of Faith)

At the center of Christian faith and practice stands the belief that God has spoken to the world in the person and work of Jesus Christ, which is accurately and authoritatively revealed in the Christian Bible (“the Holy Bible,” “the Bible,” “Scripture,” or “the Scriptures”). The Bible is the inspired, inerrant and sufficient Word of God and is thus the ultimate authority for life, faith and morals. Though the various theological statements of the church reflect succinct summaries of biblical boundaries, it is the Bible itself to which we are in ultimate submission.

The following Statement of Faith represents the core orthodox beliefs of the church from a biblical and historical perspective. While members are not required to fully understand or articulate all aspects of the Statement of Faith, the explicit rejection of any part of it disqualifies one from membership in Mission Bible Church. Revisions to the Statement of Basic Belief in order to more clearly align to Scripture shall be at the discretion of the Elders, with the understanding that such changes will be communicated to the Members of the church and affirmed through a vote.

The Holy Bible is the inspired, inerrant word of God and is the basis for this statement of faith.

1. We believe the Scriptures of the sixty-six canonical books of the Old and New Testament as being verbally inspired by God and inerrant and infallible in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority.
2. We believe there is one God, creator and sustainer of all things, unchanging, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who are equal in power and glory.
3. We believe Jesus Christ is true God and true man, was conceived of the Holy Spirit and was born of the virgin Mary. He led a sinless life and died on the cross as the sinner's substitute, shedding His blood for the forgiveness of sins. The third day He arose from the dead in the body which had been laid in the tomb. He ascended into heaven, where at the right hand of God the Father He is now our high priest and advocate.
4. We believe the Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to convict men of sin. He gives believers new life; indwells them when they believe, and guides and gives spiritual gifts for service. He also empowers preaching and teaching of the gospel.
5. We believe mankind was created in the image of God; sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death which is separation from God. From this state, he can be saved only by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, on the basis of His death and resurrection. Those who receive the Savior are born of the Holy Spirit, adopted as children of God, and kept eternally secure.
6. We believe in the existence of the devil (Satan), who is still working in the world to destroy the souls of men, and that he and all his angels and all who do not receive Christ as their Savior will eternally perish in the lake of fire.
7. We believe the true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Only those who are members of the true Church are eligible for membership in the local church which exists for worship, evangelism, and discipleship. As the church preaches the Scriptures to all the world, its endeavors will be guided by biblical leadership and supported by the wise stewardship of God's people.
8. We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion) are ordinances, given by our Lord, for believers to be observed by the Church during this present age. They are not, however, a means of salvation.

9. We believe that Christ will return personally and bodily to the earth in fulfillment of God's eternal plan. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in hell, and the fellowship of the saved in heaven.

At the conclusion of this list, the Church Constitution will note "A further explanation of our doctrinal statements is contained in Appendix A." That information is included in its entirety below.

Appendix A

INSPIRATION

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being verbally inspired by God and inerrant and infallible in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority.

Terms explained:

- **Verbally:** This means that the individual words of the Bible are true and without error in the original writings. Therefore, more than just the thought or concept is inspired, but also every word (Mat. 5:17,18; Prov. 30:5,6). The term "plenary" is often used with the word "verbal" to give the view that all Scripture is fully and equally inspired (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
- **Inspired (Inspiration):** Inspiration is that particular work of God by which the Holy Spirit, becoming the co-author of Scripture, supernaturally directed the writers of Scripture and without excluding their human intelligence, individuality, literary style, personal feelings, or any other human factor, God's own complete and coherent message to men was recorded in perfect accuracy and the very words of the Bible bear the authority of this divine authorship. Inspiration is not equivalent to dictation except in certain instances, as God uses the experience, feelings and thinking of the human author. The end result, however, is just as accurate as if God Himself had taken the pen. Hence, the Scriptures were inspired or breathed out by God and, though the authors were fallible men, what they wrote was without error (2 Peter 1:20,21). Inspiration does not suppress the intellectual ability and talent but rather uses that intellectual ability and talent (Luke 1:1-3; 2 Samuel 23:2).
- **Inerrant:** Inerrant means that the Scriptures in their original writings were without error (John 10:35; Luke 16:17).
- **Infallible:** Infallible means that the Scriptures in their original writings were incapable of error and never wrong (John 10:35; Luke 16:17).
- **Final Authority:** The Scriptures are God's special revelation (communication of truth) to man and because they are inspired and inerrant they become our final authority. However, we take careful note of what the Bible indicates as not being authoritative, such as Satan's statement to Eve in the Garden of Eden, "You surely shall not die." (Gen. 3:45; 2 Tim. 3:16,17).

TRINITY

We believe in one God eternally existing in one essence, yet three co equal persons, the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Terms explained:

- **Eternally existing:** There is but one God (Deuteronomy. 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6,14,18,21-22; Mark 12:29-32), Who has no beginning and no ending (Ps. 90:1-2; Gen. 1:1).
- **Three in One:** God is one in essence, yet three persons, co-equal, eternally existing (Mat. 28:19; Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 1:4; John 12:26; 15:26; 16:15; 1 Peter 1:2; Acts 2:32-36; I Cor. 12:3-6, II Cor. 13:14).
- **Co-equal:**
 - The Bible tells us that the Father is God (John 6:27; Rom. 1:7).
 - The Son is recognized as God (John 1:1; 20:28; Heb. 1:8; I John 5:19-27; Phil. 2:6).
 - The Holy Spirit is also identified as God (Mat. 28:19; Acts 5:4,9).

INCARNATION

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by God, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born to the virgin Mary.

Terms explained:

- **Jesus Christ:** Jesus Christ had two natures in one person, so that He was simultaneously fully God and fully man, and this relationship was such that there was no dividing of person nor confounding of the two natures. (John 1:1-14).
- **Conceived by the Holy Spirit:** The conception of Jesus was a divine act of God, without human agency (Mat. 1:18; Luke 1:26-38).
- **Born to the virgin Mary:** At the time of Christ's conception and birth, Mary was a virgin (Mat. 1:18-25; Isa. 7:14; Luke 1:27).

HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, Who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He is the life of the believer, and He empowers the preaching and teaching of the gospel.

Terms Explained:

- **Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, equal with the Father and the Son (John 14:16; Mat. 28:19).
- **Convicts:** Jesus Christ said that the Spirit would perform this ministry with respect to the world (John 16:7-11).
- **Life:** The Holy Spirit is the agent of spiritual birth (John 3:5-8). The Spirit regenerates, indwells, seals, and baptizes into the Church body all believers (1 Cor. 12:13; Titus 3:5; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 1 Cor. 6:19; Rom. 8:9,11; 2 Cor. 1:21,22). The believer's life is strengthened and guided by the Spirit (Eph. 1:13; 3:16; John 16:13; Rom. 8:4,14,26-27). The believer is commanded to be filled or controlled by the Spirit, so that the characteristics of Christ likeness will be evident in a powerful life (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16).
- **Empowers:** The Holy Spirit enables the spreading of God's word in testimony, preaching and practical living (John 15:26-27). Spiritual obedience will give fruit to a spiritually powerful life of service for Christ (Eph. 5:15-21; Gal. 5:22-25).

MANKIND

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God, sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature.

Terms explained:

- **Created in the image of God:** Gen. 1:27; 5:1; 1 Cor. 11:7.
- **Separation from God:** When mankind, of its own free will, chose to disobey God, it sinned (the breaking of God's law). This original sin separated us from God, Who, because of His holiness, could not tolerate sin, and therefore, judged such sin (Rom. 6:23; 3:10; 8:7; Gal. 3:22).

ATONEMENT

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the basis of His shed blood.

Terms Explained:

- **Representative:** This means that Jesus Christ represented all the sins of the world and that He who knew no sin was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:14-21). As Adam was the representative of man in the fall, so Christ was the representative of man in the Atonement (1 Cor. 15:22). Therefore, if Christ represented all, His sacrifice will cover all (John 3:16).
- **Substitutionary:** This is called the "vicarious" suffering since Christ died in our place. He did not die for His own sin (Heb. 4:15-16; 1 John 3:5), but died for the sins of others (1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:8).
- **All Who Believe:** The gift of salvation provided by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is for all mankind (Rom. 1:13; 1 John 2:2), yet only those who exhibit faith are justified (Gal. 2:16; 3:11).
- **Justified:** Justification is that act of God whereby He declares the guilty and depraved sinner to be righteous because of God's own righteousness having been imputed, or credited to the sinner (Deut. 25:1; Prov 17:15; Rom 3:23-26; 4:5 8,25; 5:18; 8:33).

RESURRECTION, ASCENSION, EXALTATION

We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, His ascension into Heaven and His present life there as High Priest and Advocate for us.

Terms Explained:

- **Resurrection:** We believe that after three days, Jesus Christ arose bodily from the grave (Luke 24:23-40). The doctrine of the resurrection is essential to salvation (Rom. 10:9,19; 1 Cor. 15:12,23,35-37).
- **Ascension:** After His resurrection and forty day ministry Jesus ascended up into Heaven (Acts 1:1-11; 1 Peter 3:22).
- **High Priest And Advocate:** Since Christ's atonement has restored our relationship with God, we now can approach God through Christ, Who as our High Priest represents us before God. As our Advocate, He compassionately deals with our needs and strengthens us (John 14:18; Heb. 4:14; 5:1-10; 13:5; 7:25; 8:1-2; 9:11-15,24).

SALVATION

We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again by the Holy Spirit, and thereby become children of God and heirs of eternal life.

Terms explained:

- **Faith:** Faith is the "gift of God" (Eph. 2:8) and is produced by the Word of God (Rom. 10:14,17). We are saved by faith alone apart from works (Eph. 2:9; Rom. 3:20; Titus 3:5). However, genuine faith necessarily leads to good works (Eph. 2:10; Mat. 5:16; James 2:17-26).
- **Born again by the Holy Spirit:** The new birth (regeneration) is absolutely necessary for fellowship with God (John 3:7). Man is totally passive in regeneration since it is completely a work of God (John 1:13; 3:6). The new birth is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:8) by which He creates within a person a new nature, a new heart, a new spirit (John 3:5; 2 Peter 1:4; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26; 2 Cor. 5:17).
- **Children of God:** Those who have received the Spirit of Christ have therefore been born again into God's family (John 1:1-12; Rom. 8:9,14-17). As members of His family we not only have fellowship with our Father in Heaven, but we are being transformed by the Holy Spirit into the image of Christ, and when Christ returns we will be completely changed in body and spirit to be like Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:19-23; 1 John 3:2). This experience of the life of Jesus Christ within us now by the presence of the Holy Spirit and forever ours in the presence of Jesus Christ is "eternal life".

HEAVEN AND HELL

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in hell, and the fellowship of the saved in heaven.

Terms explained:

- **Bodily resurrection:** Those saints who are "asleep in Jesus" will be raised at the same time the living saints are "raptured" and changed (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-58). After the resurrection, all the unsaved will stand before the Great White Throne for judgment, and since their names will not be found in the Book of Life, they will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 20:11-15; 21:8,27; Mat. 25:31-46; Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Acts 13:48).
- **Everlasting conscious suffering:** Luke 16:19-31; Mat. 25:30; 24:51; Heb. 12:23; 2 Cor. 5:6-9; Phil. 1:23; Rev. 6:9; 20:4.
- **Heaven:** We believe heaven to be a literal place where Jesus Christ is preparing an eternal home for believers of all ages (John 14:1-6; Heb. 1:10-16).
- **Hell:** We believe hell to be a literal place where all unsaved will spend eternity (Rev. 20:15; Mat. 13:36-43).

DEVIL

We believe in the existence of a personal devil, who is still working in the world to destroy the souls of men and that he and all his angels and all who receive not Christ as their Savior will eternally perish in the lake of fire.

Terms explained:

- **Devil:** Though a created being and one the highest angels, the devil fell because he wanted to be greater than God (Isa. 14:12-15).
- **Eternally perish:** The judgment upon the devil and his followers is an unending punishment (Rev. 20:10,14,15; 19:20).

CHURCH

We believe in the Church, whose mission it is to preach the Scriptures to all the world, all of its endeavors being guided by multiple leadership and supported by the wise stewardship of God's people.

Terms explained:

- **Body of Christ:** The collective body of believers in Jesus Christ is the Church (Eph. 5:23-32; Col. 1:18; Mat. 18:20; Eph. 1:22-23, Col. 2:19; 3:15).
- **Mission:** Mat. 28:18-20; Rom. 15:6; Eph. 1:15-23.
- **Preach:** By this term we encompass all of the believers who are to declare and make known God's truth through the totality of their lives, in addition to the formal proclamation of the Word of God (Eph. 3:8-10; 4:15,16; Col. 1:10-28).
- **Stewardship:** As members of God's family we recognize the obligation under which God places us to exercise care and concern with regard to all time, possessions, wealth and persons as may be entrusted to us. One mark of the spiritually wise person is the mature choices made with respect to these areas (Mat. 20:8; Gal. 4:2; Luke 16:2,3; 1 Cor. 4:1,2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25).
- **Tithe:** We believe the guideline of ten per cent to be highly appropriate, yet we recognize the individual believer as free from compulsion or formal requirements in stewardship matters or church support (Lev. 27:30-33; Num. 18:21-29; Deut. 12:5-7,17-18; 14:22-29; 26:12; Gen. 14:17-24; Luke 11:42; Mat. 23:23f; Heb. 7:1ff).
- **Offerings:** We believe that offerings consist of any gift, whether money, time or effort, that is freely given in response to the direction of God's Spirit (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:24 9:15).

ORDINANCES

We believe that the ordinances of the Church given by our Lord, are Baptism and the Lord's table (Communion).

Terms explained:

- **Baptism:** Baptism is commanded of all believers and it is an act of obedience signifying the believer's death, burial and resurrection "in Christ" (Rom. 6:3,4; Acts 18:8; 1 Peter 3:21). The disciples were commanded to see to it that baptism was a part of their ministry (Mat. 28:19,20; 16:16) and the pattern of the book of Acts (Acts 2:38-41; 8:12,13,36,38) indicates the widespread practice of water baptism for believers. This church does not believe in baptismal regeneration, nor do we hold that baptism is necessary for salvation.
- **Lord's Table (Communion):** On the night of His arrest, Jesus instituted what is known as the Eucharist, or Communion service, which symbolizes and calls our attention to the atonement. This celebration is one in which we look back to the finished work of Christ and also forward to the yet to be completed consummation of our redemption (Mat. 26:26-30; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23-30; 2 Peter 2:13).

ESCHATOLOGY (Last Things)

We believe in the blessed hope, the personal, visible and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Terms Explained:

- **Blessed Hope:** The return of the Lord is an event that believers ought to wait for with high expectation and excitement. As still imperfect people, we eagerly await the restoration of all things to perfect Christ likeness after the return of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13; Rom. 8:18-25; 1 Peter 1:7,13; 4:13; 2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:7).
- **Personal, visible:** Jesus, not just in spirit, but in bodily form, will return to this earth (Acts 1:11).
- **Imminent:** The Church, as God's steward, ought to consider the return of Christ as an event which is about to happen, and therefore, though patient, we are to be alert to such an event as we seek to glorify Him through our lives (Mark 3:33-37; Mat. 24:22,24,29-51; Luke 21:34).
- **Patient Lifestyle:** The Bible's teaching concerning the Lord's impending return is always set in the context of practical exhortation, focusing upon our present lifestyle, rather than upon undue speculation (2 Peter 3:11; Mat. 24:42-51).

GENDER, MARRIAGE, AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. Affirmation of that rejection is tantamount to bearing false witness which is clearly sinful.

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25). Mission Bible Church will only conduct a marriage ceremony and recognize the marriage between a biological man and a biological woman.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated.

This statement specifically gives the Elders the right and authority to prohibit acts or omissions, including but not limited to (a) permitting any church assets or property, whether real property, personal property, intangible property, or any property or asset of any kind that is subject to the direction or control of the church, to be used in any manner that would be—or, in the sole determination of the Elders, could be perceived by any person to be—inconsistent with this Statement on Gender, Marriage and Sexuality; and (b) permitting any Church facilities to be used by any person, organization, corporation, or group that would or might use such facilities to convey, intentionally or by implication, what might be perceived as a favorable impression about any definition of marriage other than that contained in this Section.

Further, Mission Bible Church's Statement on Marriage and Sexuality is based upon God's will for human life as conveyed to us through the Scriptures, upon which this Church has been founded and anchored, and this shall not be subject to change through popular vote; referendum; prevailing opinion of Members or the general public; influence of or interpretation by any government authority, agency, or official action; or legal developments on the local, state, or federal level.