

FAITH FELLOWSHIP



STATEMENT OF FAITH

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As confessional Christians a revised version of the *1833 New Hampshire Confession (NHC)* serves as Faith Fellowship's Statement of Faith. In addition to the *NHC*, Faith Fellowship also recognizes the need for greater clarity on doctrinal issues related to the trustworthiness of the Scriptures, Biblical sexuality, and the roles of men and women. Therefore we also confess the *Nashville Statement on Biblical Sexuality*, the *Danvers Statement on Complementarianism*, and the *Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*.

When it comes to the tenets of what we believe, we categorize doctrines as primary, secondary, and tertiary.

PRIMARY

Our primary doctrines are critical to the Christian faith and one must be willing to live in submission to them to become a Member of Faith Fellowship. All items listed in the following Statement of Faith are primary unless they are specifically marked as secondary.

SECONDARY

Our secondary doctrines are important and are taught and affirmed by the elders and pastors of Faith Fellowship, but affirmation of them is not required in order to become a Member. Secondary doctrines are marked in red.

TERTIARY

Our tertiary doctrines are open-handed issues within Faith Fellowship and various views may be debated but should not impact our unity as a church. Examples: end times, spiritual gifts, frequency of celebrating communion. *We do not include any tertiary items within our statement of faith.*

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH (1833, Modified Version)

I. OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction (*2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:21; 1 Sam 23:2; Acts 1:16; Acts 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Ps 119:11; Rom 3:1-2*). It has God for its author, salvation through Christ for its purpose (*2 Tim 3:15; 1 Pet 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom 1:16; Mark 16:16; John 5:38-39*), and truth without any mixture of error for its content (*Prov 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rev 22:18-19; Rom 3:4*). It reveals the principles by which God will judge us (*Rom 2:12; John 12:47-48; 1 Cor 4:3-4; Luke 10:10-16; Luke 12:47-48*). Therefore, it is and shall remain to the end of the world the true center of Christian union (*Phil 3:16; Eph 4:3-6; Phil 2:1-2; 1 Cor 1:10; 1 Pet 4:11*) and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (*1 John 4:1; Isa 8:20; 1 Thess 5:21; 2 Cor 8:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3:5; Eph 6:17; Ps 119:59-60; Phil 1:9-11*).

II. OF THE TRIUNE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God. He is an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is the LORD, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth (*John 4:24; Ps 147:5; Ps 83:18; Heb 3:4; Rom 1:20; Jer 10:10*). He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness (*Exod 15:11; Isa 6:3; 1 Pet 1:15-16; Rev 4:6-8*), and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love (*Mark 12:30; Rev 4:11; Matt 10:37; Jer 2:12-13*). In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (*Matt 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor 12:4-6; 1 John 5:7*). They are equal in every divine perfection (*John 10:30; John 5:17; John 14:23; John 17:5,10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor 2:10-11; Phil 2:5-6*), yet carry out distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (*Eph 2:18; 2 Cor 13:14; Rev 1:4-5; Rom 1:2,7*).

III. OF THE FALL

Humanity was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker (*Gen 1:27, 31; Eccl 7:29; Acts 17:26-29; Gen 2:16*). By voluntary transgression, however, humanity fell from that holy and happy state (*Gen 3:6-24; Rom 5:12*). As a result, all mankind are now sinners (*Rom 5:19; John 3:6; Ps 51:5; Rom 5:15-19; Rom 8:7*), not by constraint but by choice (*Isa 53:6; Gen 6:12; Rom 3:9-18*). Being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, they are now positively inclined to evil. Therefore, mankind stands under just condemnation to eternal ruin (*Eph 2:1-3; Rom 1:18,32; Rom 2:1-16; Gal 3:10; Matt 20:15*), without defense or excuse (*Ezek 18:19-20; Rom 1:20; Rom 3:19; Gal 3:22*).

IV. OF THE WAY OF SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is entirely of grace (*Eph 2:5; Matt 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor 3:5-7; Acts 15:11*), through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God (*John 3:16; John 1:1-14; Heb 4:14; Heb 12:24*), Jesus Christ our Lord. By the appointment of the Father, He freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin (*Phil 2:6-7; Heb 2:9, 14; 2 Cor 5:21*). He honored the divine law by His personal obedience (*Isa 42:21; Phil 2:8; Gal 4:4-5; Rom 3:21*), and by His substitutionary death made a full atonement for our sins (*Isa 53:4-5; Matt 20:28; Rom 4:25; Rom 3:21-26; 1 John 4:10; 1 John 2:2; 1 Cor 15:1-3; Heb 9:13-15*). He rose from the dead, and is now enthroned in heaven (*Heb 1:8; Heb 3; Heb 8:1; Col 3:1-4*). Jesus unites in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections and is qualified in every way to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior (*Heb 7:25; Col 2:9; Heb 2:18; Heb 7:26; Ps 89:19; Ps 14*).

V. OF JUSTIFICATION

We believe that a great gospel blessing which Christ (*John 1:16; Eph 3:8*) secures to those who believe in Him is Justification (*Acts 13:39; Isa 3:11-12; Rom 8:1*). Justification includes both the pardon of sin (*Rom 5:9; Zech 13:1; Matt 9:6; Acts 10:43*) and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness (*Rom 5:17; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Pet 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom 5:21*); that is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but only through faith in the Redeemer's blood (*Rom 4:4-5; Rom 5:21; Rom 6:28; Phil 3:7-9*). By virtue of this faith, His perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us by God (*Rom 5:19; Rom 3:24-26; Rom 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12*). Justification brings us, immediately at the time of salvation, into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity (*Rom 5:1-3, 11; 1 Cor 1:30-31; Matt 6:33; 1 Tim 4:8*).

VI. OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel (*Isa 55:1; Rev 22:17; Luke 14:17*). It is the immediate duty of all to accept these blessings by a heartfelt, repentant, and obedient faith (*Rom 16:26; Mark 1:15; Rom 1:15-17*). Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (*John 5:40; Matt 23:37; Rom 9:32; Prov 1:24; Acts 13:46*), which only magnifies his condemnation (*John 3:19; Matt 11:20; Luke 19:27; 2 Thess 1:8*).

VII. OF GRACE IN REGENERATION

We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again (*John 3:3,6-7; 1 Cor 1:14; Rev 8:7-9; Rev 21:27*). Regeneration consists in the giving of a new and holy disposition (*2 Cor 5:17; Ezek 36:26; Deut 30:6; Rom 2:28-29; Rom 5:5; 1 John 4:7*) to an otherwise rebellious sinner. It is accomplished in a way that is above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit and in connection with divine truth (*John 3:8; John 1:13; Jas 1:16-18; 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 2:13*), thus securing our voluntary obedience to the gospel (*1 Pet 1:22-25; 1 John 5:1; Eph 4:20-24; Col 3:9-11*). The proper evidence of regeneration consists in the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life (*Eph 5:9; Rom 8:9; Gal 5:16-23; Eph 3:14-21; Matt 3:8-10; Matt 7:20; 1 John 5:4,18*).

VIII. OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces that are wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God (*Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Eph 2:8; 1 John 5:1*). He convinces us of our guilt, danger, helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ (*John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; Acts 16:30-31*), causing us to turn to God with godly sorrow, confession, and pleas for mercy (*Luke 18:13; Luke 15:18-21; Jas 4:7-10; 2 Cor 7:11; Rom 10:12-13; Ps 51*), while at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King, and relying on Him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior (*Rom 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Heb 4:14; Ps 2:6; Heb 1:8; Heb 8:25; 2 Tim 1:12*).

IX. OF GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE

ELECTION IS A SECONDARY DOCTRINE: AFFIRMATION IS NOT REQUIRED TO BECOME A MEMBER.

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners (*2 Tim 1:8-9; Eph 1:3-14; 1 Pet 1:1-2; Rom 11:5-6; John 15:15; 1 John 4:19; Hos 12:9*). Being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, election includes all the means in connection with the end of salvation (*2 Thess 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt 20:16; Acts 15:14*). It is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable (*Exod 33:18-19; Matt 20:15; Eph 1:11; Rom 9:23-24; Jer 31:3; Rom 11:28-29; Jas 1:17-18; 2 Tim 1:9; Rom 11:32-36*). It entirely obliterates boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and an active imitation of His free mercy (*1 Cor 4:7; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Rom 3:27; Rom 4:16; Col 3:12; 1 Cor 3:5-7; 1 Cor 15:10; 1 Pet 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; Eph 1:16; 1 Thess 2:12*). It encourages the greatest possible exercise of human responsibility (*2 Tim 2:10; 1 Cor 9:22; Rom 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 2 Pet 1:10*). It may be discovered by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel (*1 Thess 1:4-10*). Election is the foundation of Christian assurance (*Rom 8:28-30; Isa 42:16; Rom 11:29*), and confirming our election deserves the utmost diligence (*2 Pet 1:10-11; Phil 3:12; Heb 6:11*).

X. OF SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of His holiness (*1 Thess 4:3; 1 Thess 5:23; 2 Cor 7:1; 2 Cor 13:9; Eph 1:4*). It is a progressive work (*Prov 4:18; 2 Cor 3:18; Heb 6:1; 2 Pet 1:5-8; Phil 3:12-16*). It begins in regeneration (*1 John 2:29; Rom 8:5; John 3:6; Phil 1:9-11; Eph 1:13-14*) and is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit—the Sealer and Comforter—by the continual use of God’s appointed means, especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer (*Phil 2:12-13; Eph 4:11-12; 1 Pet 2:2; 2 Pet 3:18; 2 Cor 13:5; Luke 11:35; Luke 9:23; Matt 26:41; Eph 6:18; Eph 4:30*).

XI. OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

We believe that all true believers endure to the end (*John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:18*). Their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark distinguishing them from superficial professors (*1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9*). A special providence watches over their welfare (*Rom 8:28; Matt 6:30-33; Jer 32:40; Ps 121:3; Ps 23:1-6, 91:11-12*), and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (*Phil 1:6; Phil 2:12-13; Jude 24-25; Heb 1:14; 2 Kings 6:16; Heb 13:5; 1 John 4:4*).

XII. OF THE HARMONY OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government (*Rom 3:31; Matt 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom 3:20; Rom 4:15*); that it is holy, just, and good (*Rom 7:12; Rom 7; Rom 14; Rom 22; Gal 3:21; Ps 119*); and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin (*Rom 8:7-8; Josh 24:19; Jer 13:23; John 6:44; John 5:44*): to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to genuine obedience to the Holy Law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the Means of Grace connected with the establishment of the visible church (*Rom 8:2,4; Rom 10:4; 1 Tim 1:5; Heb 8:10; Jude 20-21; Heb 12:14; Matt 16:17-18; 1 Cor 12:28*).

XIII. OF A GOSPEL CHURCH

We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers (*1 Cor 1:1-13; Matt 18:17; Acts 5:11; Acts 8:1; Acts 11:31; 1 Cor 4:17; 1 Cor 14:23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim 3:5*), joined together by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel (*Acts 2:41-42; 2 Cor 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor 5:12-13*). A visible church observes the ordinances of Christ (*1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thess 3:6; Rom 16:17-20; 1 Cor 11:23; Matt 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:6; 2 Cor 2:7; 1 Cor 4:17*); is governed by His laws (*Matt 28:20; John 14:15; John 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess 4:2; 2 John 6; Gal 6:2; all the Epistles*); and exercises the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word

(*Eph 4:7; 1 Cor 14:12; Phil 1:27; 1 Cor 12:14*). The only scriptural officers of the church are elders (also called pastors) and deacons (*Phil 1:1; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:22; 1 Tim 3; Titus 1*), whose qualifications and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

XIV. OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer (*Acts 8:36-39; Matt 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; John 4:1-2; Matt 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12; Acts 16:32-34; Acts 18:8*), into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit (*Matt 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Gal 3:27-28*). This demonstrates, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (*Rom 6:4; Col 2:12; 1 Pet 3:20-21; Acts 22:16*). Baptism is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and the Lord's Supper (*Acts 2:41-42; Matt 28:19-20; Acts and Epistles*) in which the members of the Church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to remember together the dying love of Christ (*1 Cor 11:26; Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20*); preceded always by solemn self-examination (*1 Cor 11:28; 1 Cor 5:1,8; 1 Cor 10:3-32; 1 Cor 11:17-32; John 6:26-71*).

XV. OF THE LORD'S DAY

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian tradition for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

(*Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10*).

**This paragraph replaces the original New Hampshire Confession with The Baptist Faith and Message 2000. We edited this section to reflect Faith Fellowship's teaching on the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day (Sunday) is a day for corporate worship and fellowship— a celebration of the coming kingdom of God.*

**We desire our members to also practice a sabbath rest, to take 1 in 7 days to rest from work and to be refreshed in the Lord. Whether Saturday, Sunday, or a different day, we encourage each member to regularly practice the Sabbath.*

**We also desire our members to view Sunday worship gatherings positively as one that is chiefly about reverencing, rejoicing & resting in the finished work of the cross with God's beloved people each Sunday; making every effort to participate in the weekly corporate worship services.*

XVI. OF THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society (*Rom 13:1-7; Deut 16:18; 1 Sam 23:3; Exod 18:23; Jer 30:21*); and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed (*Matt 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13; 1 Tim 2:1-8*); except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (*Acts 5:29; Matt 10:28; Dan 3:15-18; Dan 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20*), who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth (*Matt 23:10; Rom 14:4; Rev 19:16; Ps 72:11; Ps 2; Rom 14:9-13*).

XVII. OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (*Mal 3:18; Prov 12:26; Isa 5:20; Gen 18:23; Jer 15:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom 6:16*). Only those who through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem (*Rom 1:17; Rom 7:6; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 3:7; Rom 6:18, 22; 1 Cor 11:32; Prov 11:31; 1 Pet 4:17-18*). In contrast, all those who continue in rebellion and unbelief are wicked in His sight, and under His curse (*1 John 5:19; Gal 3:10; John 3:36; Isa 57:21; Ps 10:4; Isa 55:6-7*). This distinction holds both in and after death (*Prov 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Prov 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; Luke 9:23-26; John 12:25-26; Eccl 3:17; Matt 7:13-14*).

XVIII. OF THE WORLD TO COME

We believe that the end of the world is approaching (*1 Pet 4:7; 1 Cor 7:29-31; Heb 1:10-12; Matt 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt 28:20; Matt 13:39-40; 2 Pet 3:3-13*). At the last day Christ will descend from heaven (*Acts 1:11; Rev 1:7; Heb 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess 4:13-18; 1 Thess 5:1-11*), and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution (*Acts 24:15; 1 Cor 15:12-59; Luke 14:14; Dan 12:2; John 5:28-29; John 6:40; John 11:25-26; 2 Tim 1:10; Acts 10:42*). Then a solemn separation will take place (*Matt 13:49,37-43; Matt 24:30-31; Matt 25:31-33*), as the wicked will be sentenced to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy (*Matt 25:35-41; Rev 22:11; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Pet 2:9; Jude 7; Phil 3:19; Rom 6:32; 2 Cor 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Cor 4:18*). This just judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness (*Rom 3:5-6; 2 Thess 1:6-12; Heb 6:1-2; 1 Cor 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom 2:2-16; Rev 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 1 John 4:17*).

THE NASHVILLE STATEMENT (2017)

ARTICLE 1

We affirm that God has designed marriage to be a covenantal, sexual, procreative, lifelong union of one man and one woman, as husband and wife, and is meant to signify the covenant love between Christ and his bride the church.

We deny that God has designed marriage to be a homosexual, polygamous, or polyamorous relationship. We also deny that marriage is a mere human contract rather than a covenant made before God.

ARTICLE 2

We affirm that God's revealed will for all people is chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage.

We deny that any affections, desires, or commitments ever justify sexual intercourse before or outside marriage; nor do they justify any form of sexual immorality.

ARTICLE 3

We affirm that God created Adam and Eve, the first human beings, in his own image, equal before God as persons, and distinct as male and female.

We deny that the divinely ordained differences between male and female render them unequal in dignity or worth.

ARTICLE 4

We affirm that divinely ordained differences between male and female reflect God's original creation design and are meant for human good and human flourishing.

We deny that such differences are a result of the Fall or are a tragedy to be overcome.

ARTICLE 5

We affirm that the differences between male and female reproductive structures are integral to God's design for self-conception as male or female.

We deny that physical anomalies or psychological conditions nullify the God-appointed link between biological sex and self-conception as male or female.

ARTICLE 6

We affirm that those born with a physical disorder of sex development are created in the image of God and have dignity and worth equal to all other image-bearers. They are acknowledged by our Lord Jesus in his words about “eunuchs who were born that way from their mother’s womb.” With all others they are welcome as faithful followers of Jesus Christ and should embrace their biological sex insofar as it may be known.

We deny that ambiguities related to a person’s biological sex render one incapable of living a fruitful life in joyful obedience to Christ.

ARTICLE 7

We affirm that self-conception as male or female should be defined by God’s holy purposes in creation and redemption as revealed in Scripture.

We deny that adopting a homosexual or transgender self-conception is consistent with God’s holy purposes in creation and redemption.

ARTICLE 8

We affirm that people who experience sexual attraction for the same sex may live a rich and fruitful life pleasing to God through faith in Jesus Christ, as they, like all Christians, walk in purity of life.

We deny that sexual attraction for the same sex is part of the natural goodness of God’s original creation, or that it puts a person outside the hope of the gospel.

ARTICLE 9

We affirm that sin distorts sexual desires by directing them away from the marriage covenant and toward sexual immorality— a distortion that includes both heterosexual and homosexual immorality.

We deny that an enduring pattern of desire for sexual immorality justifies sexually immoral behavior.

ARTICLE 10

We affirm that it is sinful to approve of homosexual immorality or transgenderism and that such approval constitutes an essential departure from Christian faithfulness and witness.

We deny that the approval of homosexual immorality or transgenderism is a matter of moral indifference about which otherwise faithful Christians should agree to disagree.

ARTICLE 11

We affirm our duty to speak the truth in love at all times, including when we speak to or about one another as male or female.

We deny any obligation to speak in such ways that dishonor God's design of his image-bearers as male and female.

ARTICLE 12

We affirm that the grace of God in Christ gives both merciful pardon and transforming power, and that this pardon and power enable a follower of Jesus to put to death sinful desires and to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

We deny that the grace of God in Christ is insufficient to forgive all sexual sins and to give power for holiness to every believer who feels drawn into sexual sin.

ARTICLE 13

We affirm that the grace of God in Christ enables sinners to forsake transgender self-conceptions and by divine forbearance to accept the God-ordained link between one's biological sex and one's self-conception as male or female.

We deny that the grace of God in Christ sanctions self-conceptions that are at odds with God's revealed will.

ARTICLE 14

We affirm that Christ Jesus has come into the world to save sinners and that through Christ's death and resurrection forgiveness of sins and eternal life are available to every person who repents of sin and trusts in Christ alone as Savior, Lord, and supreme treasure.

We deny that the Lord's arm is too short to save or that any sinner is beyond his reach.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Gen 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-24; Exod 20:14; 20:17; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Deut 5:18, 21; 22:5; Judg 19:22; 2 Sam 11:1-12:15; Job 31:1; Ps 51:1-19; Prov 5:1-23; 6:20-35; 7:1-27; Isa 59:1; Mal 2:14; Matt 5:27-30; 19:4-6, 8-9, 12; Acts 15:20, 29; Rom 1:26-27; 1:32; 1 Cor 6:9-11, 18-20; 7:1-7; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 5:24; Eph 4:15, 20-24; 5:31-32; Col 3:5; 1 Thess 4:3-8; 1 Tim 1:9-10, 15; 2 Tim 2:22; Titus 2:11-12; Heb 13:4; Jas 1:14-15; 1 Pet 2:11; Jude 7

THE DANVERS STATEMENT (1988)

COMPLEMENTARIANISM IS A **SECONDARY DOCTRINE**: AFFIRMATION IS NOT REQUIRED TO BECOME A MEMBER.

The Danvers Statement summarizes the need for the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) and serves as an overview of our core beliefs. This statement was prepared by several evangelical leaders at a CBMW meeting in Danvers, Massachusetts, in December of 1987. It was first published in final form by the CBMW in Wheaton, Illinois in November of 1988.

RATIONALE

We have been moved in our purpose by the following contemporary developments which we observe with deep concern:

1. The widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complementary differences between masculinity and femininity;
2. the tragic effects of this confusion in unraveling the fabric of marriage woven by God out of the beautiful and diverse strands of manhood and womanhood;
3. the increasing promotion given to feminist egalitarianism with accompanying distortions or neglect of the glad harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving, humble leadership of redeemed husbands and the intelligent, willing support of that leadership by redeemed wives;
4. the widespread ambivalence regarding the values of motherhood, vocational homemaking, and the many ministries historically performed by women;
5. the growing claims of legitimacy for sexual relationships which have Biblically and historically been considered illicit or perverse, and the increase in pornographic portrayal of human sexuality;
6. the upsurge of physical and emotional abuse in the family;
7. the emergence of roles for men and women in church leadership that do not conform to Biblical teaching but backfire in the crippling of Biblically faithful witness;
8. the increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities devised to reinterpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts;
9. the consequent threat to Biblical authority as the clarity of Scripture is jeopardized and the accessibility of its meaning to ordinary people is withdrawn into the restricted realm of technical ingenuity;
10. and behind all this the apparent accommodation of some within the church to the spirit of the age at the expense of winsome, radical Biblical authenticity which in the power of the Holy Spirit may reform rather than reflect our ailing culture.

PURPOSES

Recognizing our own abiding sinfulness and fallibility, and acknowledging the genuine evangelical standing of many who do not agree with all of our convictions, nevertheless, moved by the preceding observations and by the hope that the noble Biblical vision of sexual complementarity may yet win the mind and heart of Christ's church, we engage to pursue the following purposes:

1. To study and set forth the Biblical view of the relationship between men and women, especially in the home and church.
2. To promote the publication of scholarly and popular materials representing this view.
3. To encourage the confidence of lay people to study and understand for themselves the teaching of Scripture, especially on the issue of relationships between men and women.
4. To encourage the considered and sensitive application of this Biblical view in the appropriate spheres of life.
5. And thereby
 - to bring healing to persons and relationships injured by an inadequate grasp of God's will concerning manhood and womanhood,
 - to help both men and women realize their full ministry potential through a true understanding and practice of their God-given roles,
 - and to promote the spread of the gospel among all peoples by fostering a Biblical wholeness in relationships that will attract a fractured world.

AFFIRMATIONS

Based on our understanding of Biblical teachings, We affirm the following:

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood (*Gen 1:26-27, 2:18*).
2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart (*Gen 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:12-14*).
3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin (*Gen 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9*).
4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women (*Gen 3:1-7, 12, 16*).
 - In the home, the husband's loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.
 - In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual

responsibility, and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.

5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women (*Gen 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal 3:28*).

Both Old and New Testaments

also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community (*Gen 2:18; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; 1 Tim 2:11-15*).

6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.

7. In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership (*Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7*).

8. In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (*Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:2-16; 1 Tim 2:11-15*).

9. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission domestic, religious, or civil ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin (*Dan 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet 3:1-2*).

10. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries (*1 Tim 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9*). Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.

11. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (*1 Cor 12:7-21*).

We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at large.

THE CHICAGO STATEMENT (1978)

PREFACE

The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian Church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour are called to show the reality of their discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our Master. Recognition of the total truth and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture is essential to a full grasp and adequate confession of its authority.

The following Statement affirms this inerrancy of Scripture afresh, making clear our understanding of it and warning against its denial. We are persuaded that to deny it is to set aside the witness of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit and to refuse that submission to the claims of God's own Word which marks true Christian faith. We see it as our timely duty to make this affirmation in the face of current lapses from the truth of inerrancy among our fellow Christians and misunderstanding of this doctrine in the world at large.

This Statement consists of three parts: a Summary Statement, Articles of Affirmation and Denial, and an accompanying Exposition. It has been prepared in the course of a three-day consultation in Chicago. Those who have signed the Summary Statement and the Articles wish to affirm their own conviction as to the inerrancy of Scripture and to encourage and challenge one another and all Christians to growing appreciation and understanding of this doctrine. We acknowledge the limitations of a document prepared in a brief, intensive conference and do not propose that Statement be given credal weight. Yet we rejoice in the deepening of our own convictions through our discussions together, and we pray that the Statement we have signed may be used to the glory of our God toward a new reformation of the Church in its faith, life and mission.

We offer this Statement in a spirit, not of contention, but of humility and love, which we by God's grace to maintain in any future dialogue arising out of what we have said. We gladly acknowledge that many who deny the inerrancy of Scripture do not display the consequences of this denial in the rest of their belief and behavior, and we are conscious that we who confess this doctrine often deny it in life by failing to bring our thoughts and deeds, our traditions and habits, into true subjection to the divine Word.

We invite response to this statement from those who see reason to amend its affirmations about Scripture by the light of Scripture itself, under whose infallible authority we stand as we speak. We claim no personal infallibility for the witness we bear, and for any help which enables us to strengthen this testimony to God's Word we shall be grateful.

A SHORT STATEMENT

God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.

Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.

The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.

Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

ARTICLE I

We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.

We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human service.

ARTICLE II

We affirm that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture.

We deny that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.

ARTICLE III

We affirm that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.

We deny that the Bible is merely a witness to revelation, or only becomes revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.

ARTICLE IV

We affirm that God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means of revelation.

We deny that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God's work of inspiration.

ARTICLE V

We affirm that God's revelation within the Holy Scriptures was progressive.

We deny that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.

ARTICLE VI

We affirm that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.

We deny that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.

ARTICLE VII

We affirm that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.

We deny that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.

ARTICLE VIII

We affirm that God in His work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.

We deny that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.

ARTICLE IX

We affirm that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write.

We deny that the finitude of fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God's Word.

ARTICLE X

We affirm that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.

We deny that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

ARTICLE XI

We affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.

We deny that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.

ARTICLE XII

We affirm that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.

We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of

Scripture on creation and the flood.

ARTICLE XIII

We affirm the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.

We deny that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

ARTICLE XIV

We affirm the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

We deny that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth claims of the Bible.

ARTICLE XV

We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.

We deny that Jesus' teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.

ARTICLE XVI

We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history.

We deny that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.

ARTICLE XVII

We affirm that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word.

We deny that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture.

ARTICLE XVIII

We affirm that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

We deny the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, de-historicizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.

ARTICLE XIX

We affirm that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

We deny that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without grave consequences, both to the individual and to the Church.

STATEMENTS ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The biblical teaching on the subject of two church offices, Elders and Deacons, is found in 1 Timothy 3:1-16 and Titus 1:5-9. Though there are three (3) terms used for the offices of the church, i.e. bishop, elder, and deacon, a careful analysis of these terms indicates that bishop and elder are used interchangeably, with the bishop simply being the 'ruling' or leading elder (senior pastor). The plurality of the elders of the Church share the spiritual authority of the church. The plurality of elders serve the spiritual needs of the church while the deacons serve the physical needs of the church under the oversight of the elder team.

WOMEN IN MINISTRY

The Church affirms the God-ordained and significant role that women should play in establishing and serving the local church. However, the Bible is clear that men and women do not have the same roles. The Scriptures clearly state that men are to serve in the office of Elder and that women are not to serve in church positions in which they exercise authority over men or in which they teach doctrine to men (1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Timothy 3:1-2, Titus 1:6-9).

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

The effectiveness of joining together will be determined by the level of the commitment we make. In a society where so few make commitments and still fewer keep them. Faith Fellowship seeks people who are determined to know the joy Christ intended for His body, the church. To this end, members of Faith Fellowship must be willing to live in submission to the Statement of Faith. Further, they must be willing to abide by the entire Membership Covenant as follows:

- I have, by faith, become a follower of Jesus Christ, and I have been baptized as a visible way of demonstrating this commitment (Mark 8:34-37; Acts 2:37-38).
- I will seek to grow in my relationship with God by prioritizing spiritual disciplines, such as bible reading and prayer (Romans 12:12; 1 Peter 1:23-2:3).

- I will consistently attend the Sunday worship services of Faith Fellowship (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- I will find a place to serve within the church body (1 Peter 5:10-11; Ephesians 4:11-16). • I will encourage and spur on my fellow church members to love and good works and practice the “one another” commands of the New Testament (John 13:34; Colossians 3:12-17; Hebrews 10:24-25).
- I will seek, by the Spirit's power, to boldly share the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20).
- I will submit to the authority of God's Word and to the delegated authority that God has given to church leadership, outlined in His Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 13:7,17).
- I will, when personally offended, neither criticize other church members nor listen to any gossip concerning them. Instead, I will speak directly and lovingly only with those involved (Ephesians 4:29-32; Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 5:1-2).
- I will financially support the mission of Faith Fellowship by giving cheerfully and sacrificially to Faith Fellowship (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5, 9:6-11).
- I will strive to be an active, consistently attending member of a Community Group (Acts 2:46-47; Ephesians 4:14-16; Romans 12:9-13).