

## **Lakewood Bible Chapel Doctrinal Statement**

### **Concerning the Holy Scriptures**

We teach that the Scriptures (the completed canon of 66 Old and New Testament books) are the inerrant, infallible, and inspired Word of God. We teach the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. By verbal, we mean that the original writers were guided by the Holy Spirit in the exact choice of words, yet respecting and reflecting the personality, style, and vocabulary of each writer. By the word plenary, we mean that this divine verbal inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the original manuscripts – historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic – so that every word is both infallible as to truth and final as to divine authority.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; John 10:35; 2 Peter 3:16; John 5:39)

We affirm the literal method of interpretation which gives to each word the same exact basic meaning it would have in normal, ordinary, customary usage, whether implied in writing, speaking, or thinking. We teach that the greater part of the Bible makes sense when interpreted literally; that it is the only sane and safe check on the imaginations of man and that it grounds interpretation in fact. This approach does not blindly rule out literary devices such as: figures of speech, symbolism, allegories, and types; if the nature of the text so demands, only then can we depart from the literal interpretation. Therefore, when the plain meaning of the Scriptures makes common sense, we would seek no other meaning but rather take every word in its primary, ordinary, literal, usual sense, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

The following two principles are prerequisites to a proper interpretation of the Scriptures. First, one must be born again and have an utter dependence upon the Holy Spirit to guide and direct. Second, one must interpret according to the immediate context as well as according to the larger context, such as the scope or the design of the book itself, and then by comparing Scripture with Scripture.

(John 16:7-14; 1 Corinthians 2:7-16)

### **Concerning God**

We teach that there is one God who is a personal and eternal Spirit, perfect and unchangeable in all His attributes. This one God eternally exists in three Persons, indivisible, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each Person is coequal in essence, authority, and eternality; all have the same attributes, and perfections, and are worthy of the same homage, confidence, and obedience.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Kings 8:60; Psalm 90:12; Isaiah 45:56; Matthew 3:16-17; 16:16; 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:1-14; Luke 11:13, 22:70; John 10:30; 14:10-11, 16:17; Acts 5:3-4; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

**God the Father.** We teach that God the Father is Creator of heaven and earth, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, and measureless in power. We marvel and rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully and lovingly in the affairs of mankind; that He hears and answers prayer and that He saves from sin, its power over our life, and from spiritual death. He also takes the fear out of physical death for all who come to Him through faith in the penal substitutionary death of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

(Genesis 1:1; Psalm 34:6; 147:5; John 1:3; 3:36; 6:27; Romans 1:18-20; 6:1-13; 1 Corinthians 15:2-4; Ephesians 2:4-5; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 John 1:5; 2:1-2; 4:8; Revelation 3:20; 19:6)

**God the Son.** We teach the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son. We teach that He was pre-existent and is eternal, that He was conceived in the fullness of time by the Holy Spirit and was born of the virgin Mary. He is fully God and fully man. His death on the cross was substitutionary, representative, and a sufficient propitiation for the guilt of all men. He arose bodily from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father where He now carries on a ministry as advocate and intercessor for the saints. We teach His imminent, personal, and bodily return for the saints, preceding His coming in glory with the saints.

(John 1:1, 14; Luke 1:30-35; John 1:29; 1 Timothy 2:6; Romans 3:25-26; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 10:5-14; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 2:2; 1 Corinthians 15; Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 John 2:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:9-10; Revelation 19:11-16)

**God the Holy Spirit.** We teach the deity of God the Holy Spirit and that He eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son. We teach that the Holy Spirit was the agent in the revelation and the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the One who bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word. The primary function of the Holy Spirit is to glorify God the Son. He also convicts the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgement. He performs the work of regeneration in the hearts of believers, baptizing them into the body of Christ, sealing, indwelling, strengthening, and filling them. He also bestows spiritual gifts upon believers, empowering them for works of service.

(1 Corinthians 2:6-16; Ephesians 4:30; John 15:26; 16:8-10, 13-14; 16:7-8; Ephesians 1:13; 3:16; Genesis 1:2; 2 Peter 1:21; Acts 5:3-4; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 5:5; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 12; John 3:5-6; Ephesians 5:18)

### **Concerning Satan and Angels**

**Their Origin.** The angels were all created by God as a great host of sinless spirit-beings, most of whom kept their first estates of holiness and presently worship God and serve His purposes.

(Psalm 148:2-5; Matthew 26:53; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:14)

**The Fall of Some.** One of the angels, Lucifer, fell through the sin of pride, thereby becoming Satan, and influenced a large company of angels to follow him, who thereby became demons.

(Isaiah 14:12-17; 1 Timothy 3:6; James 2:19; 2 Peter 2:4)

**Satan's Work.** The work of Satan and the demons is the attempted subversion and supplanting of the work of God. By a subtle deception, Satan accomplished the moral fall of the first parents (Adam and Eve) of the human race, subjecting them and their offspring to his own power.

(Genesis 3:1-7; Job 1:12; 2:6; Ezekiel 28:13-15; Zechariah 3:1-2; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Ephesians 2:2)

Satan continues as the enemy of God, the accuser of God's people, and persistently seeks to counterfeit the work of God and distort the truth of God.

(2 Corinthians 2:10-11; 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:12, 16; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:10)

We teach that Satan was conquered at the cross, and that at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years. After the thousand years, he will be loosed for a

short season to deceive the nations into rebelling against Christ; at that time, he will be judged by God and “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,” where he shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.

(John 12:31; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:1-3, 10)

## **Concerning Man**

**His Pre-fall Nature.** Adam, the Federal Head of all mankind was directly, instantly, and uniquely created in the image of God on the sixth, literal day of creation. He was created an immortal being with a sinless, rational nature, high intelligence, and moral responsibility to God.

(Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; James 3:9)

**His Purpose.** Man was created with the divine mandate that he should glorify God, enjoy God’s fellowship, and fulfill God’s will and purpose in the earth. He was blessed and commanded to: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that creeps on the earth.”

(Genesis 1:26-30; Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11)

**Man’s Fall.** God also commanded man: “From any tree of the garden you may surely eat; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it; for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” Adam sinned by disobeying this command, and “through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.”

(Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; Romans 5:12; 1 Timothy 2:13-14)

**His Present Condition.** As a consequence, the whole of creation was cursed. Man became totally depraved in his nature, subject to the wrath of God, inherently corrupt, and incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. Thus, he is enslaved to sin and hopelessly lost apart from the salvation which is in the Lord Jesus Christ. The fall of man was an historical and irreversible act, the effects of which are imputed to all people in all ages, Jesus Christ excluded. Thus, all people are sinners by divine pronouncement, nature, deed, and face God’s wrath, judgment, and condemnation.

(John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 1:8; Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 5:12-19; James 2:10)

## **Concerning Salvation**

We teach that salvation involves the deliverance of man from the curse of sin and its penalty. Salvation is offered as a free gift to those who trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who, by His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, obtained eternal salvation for the believer. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work.

(John 1:12; Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; Romans 8:30; Ephesians 2:4-10)

**Predestination and Election.** From all eternity, believers were predestined and elected in Christ for salvation, apart from works. The decree of election is the free and sovereign choice of God, made in eternity past, to set His love on certain individuals. This divine determination was not based on anything within the believer, but solely because of the good pleasure of God’s will. He chose them to be saved

from sin and damnation and to inherit the blessings of eternal life through the mediatorial work of Christ.

(John 6:37-40, 44-51; 10:25-29; Acts 2:23; Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:4-10; Romans 8:29-30, 9:9-26; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9-10)

**Regeneration**, or new birth, precedes saving faith and is a work of God the Holy Spirit whereby He indwells and makes once dead and spiritually separated sinners a new creation, giving them spiritual life. It is a total transformation of the whole person which manifests itself in conviction and repentance of sin, including unbelief. The Holy Spirit is the active Agent in the reconciliation between Holy God and sinful man.

(Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; John 1:13; 3:5-6; Romans 3:23; 8:2-11, 29-30; Ephesians 2:4-5)

**Faith** is defined in the Scriptures as “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Because faith is a gift from God, the Author and Perfector of Faith, man is fully dependent on the faith supplied by God in order to obtain salvation, which reconciles us to God. Genuine saving faith always produces a heart that is marked by ongoing repentance and obedience in the life of a believer.

(Romans 3:24, 8:29-30; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 11:1, 12:2; James 2:14-17)

**Justification** is a result of the faith that comes from regeneration and is God’s judicial declaration of a sinner as righteous, or “not guilty,” because his sins have been pardoned and are no longer counted against him. Justification is not based on the believer’s righteousness, but on Christ’s righteousness divinely imputed to the sinner as an abiding gift.

(Romans 3:24, 8:29-30; Acts 13:38-39; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

**Sanctification** is God’s will for those whom He has justified and set apart as holy. It is the ongoing work God does in the life of a believer, specifically, conforming him into the image of Christ. Sanctification includes the believer’s responsibility to participate in this ongoing work through obedience and repentance, which the Holy Spirit began at regeneration, and primarily comes through the general means of grace (The Scriptures, Prayer, Fellowship of the Saints, and the Lord’s Supper).

(Acts 2:42; Romans 8:29-30, 13:14; John 17:17; Titus 2:11; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 Peter 1:15-16)

**Glorification** is the culmination of salvation, which includes the resurrection of the body and the perfecting of a believer’s reason, emotions, and will, and is the final blessed and abiding state of the believer. Glorification is the total transformation of the whole regenerate person, perfecting them in holiness, and consequently preparing them an eternity of glorifying God and enjoying Him forever.

(Romans 8:29-30; Revelation 20:6; 21:4)

## Concerning the Church

**Its Nature.** We teach that all who place their faith in Christ are united together immediately by the Holy Spirit in one spiritual body, the Church, of which Christ is the head. The Church was prophesied by Christ, born on the day of Pentecost, is being gathered from every nation and tribe and tongue and people, and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own. In addition to the spiritual union and communion which extends to the entirety of the body of Christ, the members of this one spiritual body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies of believers.

(Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:4-5; 2:46-47; 11:15; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:4-6; 5:25-27; Colossians 1:18; ; 2 Peter 3:9; Hebrews 10:25)

### **Its Mission.**

Edification: The church is to build up, strengthen, and encourage, believers in their faith through the teaching of the Word of God and mutual, loving care of each member for one another.

(1 Corinthians 12; 14; Colossians 1:28; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:2)

Evangelism/Discipleship: The church is to be a light for God and the Gospel in a dark world. The final command of Christ was for His followers to make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey all that Christ commanded. The church thus has a worldwide mission to spread the Gospel to all peoples and nations.

(Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 4:3-6)

Worship: The church is a body of believer-priests offering exaltation, worship, giving and service to the Triune God. New Testament worship includes the Apostles teaching, prayer, breaking of the bread, and the fellowship of the Saints.

(John 4:23-24; Acts 2:42; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Hebrews 13:15-16; Revelation 5:13)

### **Ordinances:**

**Baptism.** We teach that water baptism is commanded by Christ for those who have believed in Him, and that immersion was practiced and taught by the New Testament church. Water baptism is not regenerative but is an outward sign and declaration of an inward transformation where the believer publicly identifies with the Lord Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.

(Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-4, 6; Colossians 2:12; Ephesians 2:4-6; Acts 2:38-41; 10:48; 1 Peter 3:21)

**The Lord's Supper.** We teach that the Lord's Supper is a remembrance of the Lord's sacrifice in which His body was given for us, and of His blood that was shed for our sins as well as an expectation for His coming again. We practice a weekly observance of this ordinance because of the great emphasis placed on it in the Scriptures. There are two requirements that should be met before a person partakes of the supper. First, a person should be born again. Second, a Christian should examine himself or herself to determine if he or she is in fellowship with the Lord. We teach that it is the Lord's table and as such is open to all believers. Not only is the Lord's Supper a memorial of what Christ has done on the cross, but it also shows our faith in that past work and faith in his anticipated return.

(Matthew 26:26-27; Mark 14:22-23; Luke 22:19, 22; Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:23-30)

### **Its Organization and Relationships**

We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government to administering order, discipline, and worship according to Holy Scriptures.

(Acts 14:23; 20:28, 32; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

**Offices.** We teach that there are two biblically designated offices in the church serving under Christ: elders and deacons. At Lakewood Bible Chapel, the elders are the pastors of the church (also called

overseers, or shepherds, in the Scriptures). Some of the elders serve in a full-time capacity and others are self-supporting pastor-elders. There is no one pastor called the senior pastor. Only Christ is acknowledged as the Chief Shepherd of the church. The elders jointly teach, lead, and protect the church under Christ, the Chief Shepherd. The elders are also responsible for initiating and directing church discipline. The church is to submit to their God-given leadership. Their leadership should be distinguished as pastoral, shared, male, qualified, and servant-like.

(Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Hebrews 13:17)

The deacons operate as both assistants to the elders and servants of the church. Their ministry is to provide official, responsible care for the physical welfare of all members of the church and thus relieve the pastor-elders so that they can give priority time and attention to teaching the Word and prayer.

(Acts 6:1-6; 1 Corinthians 14:40; 1 Corinthians 5; Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:1-12)

**Spiritual Gifts.** We teach that every member of the body of Christ has been given at least one spiritual gift according to the sovereign will of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual gifts are given in order to serve others, build up the body of Christ, promote unity, and advance the Gospel worldwide.

“We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church, not for personal edification, but for the building up of the body. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith.

We teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles, including healing, in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the Apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers.”\*

(John 16:13-14; Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 12:12, 13:8-10; Ephesians 4:7-16; 1 Peter 4:11; Hebrews 2:1-4).

\*Cited with permission from Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California.

**Gender Roles.** We teach that all believers in Jesus Christ, whether male or female, are members of the body of Christ enjoying complete equality in personhood, dignity, and worth. We teach that both men and women should use their spiritual gifts to their fullest potential.

We also affirm that God created men and women differently to fulfill distinct gender roles, and that these differences are to be understood and enjoyed. In the formal gathering of the entire local church, women should not teach or exercise authority over men, but men should lead the church’s public worship in prayer and ministry of the Word. Since the biblical order is male headship in the home, the local church family should do all in its power to consistently support and display this pattern in both its official and unofficial meetings. Women with teaching or evangelistic gifts have many opportunities available for teaching other women or children.

(1 Timothy 2:8, 11-15; 1 Corinthians 14:33-36; Galatians 3:28)

**Marriage and Family.** We teach that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Almost every good institution found in society is first found, in principle, in the family. Family is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Sin has deeply damaged marriage and the family. We teach that the divine power provided in salvation enables believers to restore and fulfill God's original intentions in creating marriage, rather than remake marriage as egalitarian, genderless, or as a same-sex union.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman (as defined in Genesis 1-2, and also quoted by Jesus Christ in Matthew 19:4 and Mark 10:6) in a covenant commitment for life. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for men and women the framework and boundaries for intimate companionship and sexual pleasure, the means for the procreation of the human race, and a relationship where each gender complements and completes the other for each other's holiness and maturity.

We teach that all believers should be "subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she would be holy and blameless. So, husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great, but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and a heritage from the Lord. We teach the sanctity of human life, and that abortion is murder. Parents are to teach their children the Word of God, training them up in the way they should go.

(Genesis 1:27-28; Ephesians 5:24-25, 33; Titus 2:4-5; 1 Peter 3:7; Colossians 3:18; Psalms 139:13, 16; Proverbs 1:8; 22:6, 15; Colossians 3:20)

## **Concerning Last Things**

**The Intermediate State.** At death the spirit of the believer passes immediately into the presence of Christ and it remains there in joyful fellowship. The souls of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades. Here they remain until the second resurrection when both body and soul are cast into eternal damnation.

(Luke 16:22-23; 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23)

**The Rapture of the Church.** The next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the imminent personal, bodily coming of Jesus Christ in the air to receive to Himself those who have died and all

those who are alive in Christ at His coming. This event is the blessed hope set before believers in Scripture and we are encouraged to be constantly looking for it. During this time with Christ, two significant events occur; believers will be judged and rewarded at the Bema seat according to their works and will participate in the marriage supper of the Lamb. We teach that there is a clear distinction between Israel and the Church throughout the Scriptures, that each has their own origins, missions, and earthly destinies. We do not believe Church has superseded Israel and that the church is not the “New Israel.”

(John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:2; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 9-11; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; Revelation 3:10, 19:7-10)

**The Tribulation Period.** After the removal of believers from the earth, the wrath of God will be poured out upon the unbelieving world for sin. This period will last for seven years and will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth, at which time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will also be raised. This is known as the first resurrection. Satan and his angels will be bound for a thousand years.

(Daniel 9:27; Jeremiah 30:7; Matthew 24:15-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; 6; 19:11-21; 20:2)

**The Millennium.** After the seven-year tribulation period and the judgment of Christ upon the earth, Christ will establish His literal, earthly messianic kingdom in which He will reign with His saints over Israel and all the nations of the earth for a literal, one thousand years. After this thousand-year period, Satan will be loosed from the abyss and lead a worldwide, final rebellion against Christ. At this point, Satan, his demons, and all unbelievers will be destroyed and cast into the eternal lake of fire.

(Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:1-16; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Revelation 20:1-10)

**The Eternal State.** Finally, the unsaved dead will be raised and judged and committed to eternal punishment. This is the second resurrection and the Great White Throne Judgment. The saved will enter the new heavens and the new earth to live with Christ eternally. Having fulfilled His redemptive and kingdom missions as the Son of Abraham and the Son of David, Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father that the triune God will reign forever with His people.

(Mark 9:43-48; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 20:11-15; 21:1-4; 22:5, 11)