



STATEMENT OF
FAITH

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe in what is termed “The Apostles’ Creed” as embodying all the fundamental doctrines of orthodox evangelical Christianity. In addition to the fundamental doctrines of the faith we realize that there are of a number of variant nuances of interpretation and denominational emphases that polarize the Body of Christ toward diverse positions. As a non-denominational ministry, the Rock Church is intentional in teaching the core doctrines of the Christian faith without fixating on discordant beliefs. In this regard we affirm the general statement as originated in the early church by St. Augustine, “In Essentials, Unity; in Non-essentials, Liberty; in All Things, Charity.” For those interested in studying the various doctrinal positions within orthodox Christianity, courses are made available through Rock U that survey the broad range of Biblical and Systematic Theology. We draw upon our Statement of Faith and Christian Conduct for guidance in interpreting particular matters Scripturally and with spiritual wisdom.

THE BIBLE

We affirm our confidence in God’s inerrant Word. We treasure its truths, and we respect its reproofs.

The 66 books of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and written centuries ago by chosen men of God. The Bible is without error in its original manuscripts, is completely reliable as the final authority in all matters of doctrine and practice, and is centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ. The Bible is fully true in all that it teaches or affirms. The entire text of Scripture, including the very words, are a product of the mind of God expressed in human terms and conditions and written through human instruments without negating their personality, culture and freedom. See 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; and 2 Peter 1:20–21.

GOD THE FATHER

We acknowledge the Creator-God as our heavenly Father, infinitely perfect and intimately acquainted with all our ways.

As the first person of the Trinity, the Father is the source and ruler of all things and is fatherly in His relationship with creation in general and believers in particular. And although there is one eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, holy, just, loving, true, and unchangeable God, in the unity of the one God there are three divine persons— Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—equal in power but distinct in roles. See Psalm 103:19; Matthew 28:19; and 1 Peter 1:2.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

We claim Jesus Christ as our Lord—the one God who came in human flesh—the object of our worship and the subject of our praise.

As the second person of the Trinity, the Son reveals the Father. According to the Father's plan, the eternal Son humbled Himself and became incarnate, inseparably uniting undiminished deity with true humanity. As fully God and fully man, Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, died to pay in full the penalty for our sin, rose bodily and miraculously from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will come again in glory. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings; His substitutionary atoning death; bodily resurrection; ascension into heaven; perpetual intercession for His people; and personal, visible return to earth. See John 1:1–3, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 1:1–3; and 1 John 5:11–12.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We recognize the Holy Spirit as the third member of the Godhead who is incessantly at work convicting, convincing, and comforting.

As the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is the personal agent of the Father and Son for revelation and regeneration. We believe in the Holy Spirit, who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower in ministry all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Jesus Christ and that He is an abiding Helper, Teacher, and Guide. We believe that the seeking believer is filled with the Holy Spirit and power for service, either at the time of or subsequent to regeneration, which is a separate work from the indwelling Spirit for salvation. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit and in the exercise of all biblical gifts of the Spirit as reflected through the fruit of that same Spirit. See John 14:26; Acts 1:5, 8; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; and Ephesians 1:13–14.

THE TRINITY

Though the word “Trinity” is never used, nor is the doctrine of Trinitarianism ever explicitly taught in the Scriptures, the Biblical evidence of this reality is clearly revealed. God's being is perfectly unified and simplex: of one essence. This essence of deity is held in common by Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The three Persons are co-substantial, co-inherent, co-equal and co-eternal in the Godhead with regard to both the divine essence and function. See Deut. 6:4, 20:2-3, Psalm 2:7, Psalm 68:18, Isaiah 6:1-3, 9:6, Hebrews 1:1-13, 1 Tim. 1:17, 1 Cor. 8:4-6, 1 Peter 1:2, John 1:17, Phil. 2:11, Matt. 3:16-17, Acts 5:3-4, Rev. 1:8, 4:8.

THE DEPRAVITY OF HUMANITY

We confess that Adam's fall into sin left humanity without the hope of heaven apart from a new birth made possible by the Savior's substitutionary death and miraculous, bodily resurrection.

As a result of Adam's rebellion, all people have fallen under the curse of death. Unable and unwilling to please God, all humans are undeserving of His blessings, blinded to His truth, and dead in their sins—spiritually and, ultimately, physically. This state of judgment before the just and holy God is a condition that permeates every facet of human life and cannot be cured apart from the grace of God through Jesus Christ. See Genesis 3; Jeremiah 17:9; and Romans 3:10–18, 23; 5:12.

SALVATION

We believe the offer of salvation is God's love-gift to all. Those who accept it by faith, apart from works, become new creatures in Jesus Christ.

Because fallen humans are unable to save themselves, God, according to His own sovereign mercy, acts to save those who come to Him by grace through faith and repentance. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer the penalty of death in place of condemned humanity. Simply through believing the good news that Jesus Christ died for his or her sins and then rose from the dead, a person can be forgiven of all sin, declared righteous by God, reborn into new life, and guaranteed eternal life with God. Salvation is by grace alone and involves faith and repentance according to the Scriptures. See John 3:16; Luke 7:44-50, 24:46-49; Acts 3:38-40, 15:11, 16:31; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5; and Ephesians 1:4-12, 2:8-9.

THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

We anticipate our Lord's promised return, which could occur at any moment.

According to the Father's plan, Jesus Christ will one day return in power to bring completion of salvation and rewards to believers and judgment and wrath to unbelievers. The Bible teaches that the years leading up to the judgment will be marked by increasing evil, but the actual time of the end is unknown. It could begin at any moment. Though the details of Christ's return are sometimes unclear, its reality is certain, and all believers are called to live holy lives in anticipation of His coming. See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Hebrews 9:28; and Revelation 19:11-16.

RESURRECTION OF HUMANITY

We are convinced that all who have died will be brought back from beyond—believers to everlasting communion with God and unbelievers to everlasting separation from God.

Though a believer's spirit is ushered into the Lord's presence immediately upon physical death, the fullness of salvation awaits Christ's return, when He will resurrect believers in glorified bodies like His own immortal body that can never die. While all believers throughout history will enjoy eternal life in perfect paradise, unbelievers will be resurrected to suffer eternal conscious punishment for their sins. See John 11:23-27; 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; and Revelation 20:4-21:5.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

We know the Lord is continuing to enlarge His family, the universal body of Christ, over which He rules as Head.

The body of Christ is the ever-enlarging universal church consisting of true believers in heaven and on earth over whom Jesus Christ reigns as Lord. Regardless of denomination, all true believers are spiritually baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ's body and are therefore spiritually united with Him and with one another. See Romans 12:4–5; 1 Corinthians 12:12–14; Ephesians 4:11–16; and 1 Peter 2:9–10.

THE FAMILY OF GOD

We are grateful to be a part of the local church, which exists to proclaim God's truth, to administer the ordinances, to stimulate growth toward maturity, and to bring glory to God.

Believers are called to faithful membership in a visible, local congregation for the purpose of mutual encouragement and spiritual growth. As the family of God, a healthy local church is marked by God-glorifying worship, Scripture-centered teaching, intimate fellowship, and vivid expressions of the church's faith, hope, and love through evangelism, disciple-making, financial support, and service. See Acts 2:41–47; Philippians 2:1–4; and Hebrews 10:24–25.

CHRISTIAN ORDINANCES

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ committed two ordinances to the Church: 1) baptism, and 2) the Lord's Supper. We believe in baptism by immersion (when medically possible) and communion, both of which are open to all believers in Jesus Christ. We believe baptism as stated to the disciples by Jesus (baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit) in partial fulfillment of the great commission. The Great Commission instructs us to make disciples while we are going throughout the world and while we are going about our daily activities. As you are going, "baptizing," and "teaching" are the means by which we fulfill the command to make disciples within the Matthew 28:19-20 Great Commission. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death. To those who rightly, worthily, and with faith receive it, the bread and the cup is a partaking symbolically of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Though Jesus Christ is really present, no change is effected in the elements that are never to be considered objects of worship. The supper is also a symbol of the love and unity that Christians have among one another. See Mark 14:22-24; John 6:53-58; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8, 10:16, 11:20, 23-29, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:41, Romans 6:1-4, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:4-6.

CHRISTIAN IDENTITY, CHARACTER AND VIRTUE

We believe that God sovereignly places every true believer "in Christ" as they appropriate His grace through faith (1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 3:17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 2:12) resulting in a new identity that is found in Christ alone. As such, all Christ-followers should manifest and yearn for continuous growth in the genuine likeness of Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures. This includes the concepts of personal authenticity, character, virtue, marriage, family, gender and sexuality. (Ephesians 4:25–26, 32; Hebrews 12:1; Philippians 1:6). Within Biblical orthodoxy, God's people who are in a saving relationship with Jesus Christ are to live in holiness and obedience as they submit to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit applies Christ's saving work by enlightening the minds and hearts of sinners to their need to be saved. He renews and indwells each believer upon salvation, becoming his or her source of

assurance, strength, wisdom, and gifting for building up the church. The Holy Spirit guides believers in understanding and applying the Bible. Appropriated by grace through faith, the Holy Spirit's work empowers believers to lead a life of Christ-like character and to bear fruit for the Father's glory.

As such, 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 (Genesis 1:26-27). "Sin" is the Biblical definition ascribed to people who reject God's purpose, laws and design and who seek to affirm their own truth and lifestyle apart from God's created order. Rejection of God's created design and one's biological gender is the rejection of the image of God within that person (Genesis 3; Malachi 2).

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25; Malachi 2). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 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, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.)

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

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity as affirmed in the Scriptures (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual in or outside of the Rock Church's membership are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the Scriptures nor the doctrines of the Rock Church.