

# STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

*of the*  
**Metro Baptist Church**  
*located in San Diego, California*

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## **The Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God; that the Scriptures are inerrant, infallible, God-breathed, and without error or omission in the whole and in the part; that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and divine direct revelation of God to man; that the Scriptures are to be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning; and that the Bible is our only and final authority in all matters of belief and practice (John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

## **The Godhead: The Trinity**

We believe in one Triune God (also called the Trinity), eternally existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19, Luke 3:22, John 14:10, 2 Corinthians 13:14).

**God the Father** – The First Person of the Trinity is God the Father. Though the three persons of the Godhead are One, the Son and the Holy Spirit willingly submit to the Father's directives (Matthew 26:42). He is the Father of Jesus (Luke 3:22) and of all the redeemed in Christ (Hebrews 2:11).

**God the Son** – The Second Person of the Trinity is God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin named Mary and is therefore completely divine and completely human (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14, 20:28). This He did in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (John 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8). He accomplished the redemption of mankind through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:18-36; Romans 3:24-25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5, 2:24). He then ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate, and we look for and wait for His promised, imminent return (Acts 1:9-10; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 22:20).

**God the Holy Spirit** – The Third Person of the Trinity is the Holy Spirit. He is sent to abide with us and dwell in us (John 14:16-17), convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8), and testify of Jesus (John 15:26). He is dwelling in everyone who is born again (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13). Without His power we are incapable of doing God's work effectively (Zechariah 4:6). We are commanded to be filled with Him (Ephesians 5:18) and walk in Him (Galatians 5:16, 25). He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures (John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Ephesians 1:17-18; 1 John 2:20, 27). He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of

Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14).

## **Humanity**

God created man in His own image, both male and female, in the persons of Adam and Eve, and they were sinless and innocent (Genesis 1:27; 2:21-25). Upon their disobedience by eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree, they were cursed and expelled from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 1:16-17; 3:1-24). This sin brought death upon the whole race and cursed all mankind to be born with a sinful nature. All men are therefore born spiritually dead and will each suffer physical death (Romans 3:10, 23; 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1; Hebrews 9:27). As a result of this sinfulness, every man is born in condemnation, and if a man dies in his sins he will be cast into Hell and eventually the Lake of Fire (John 3:18; Revelation 20:14). The only hope and man or woman has to be redeemed from sin and escape this eternal torment is to place his or her faith in Christ for salvation (John 3:3; 14:6; Hebrew 2:3).

## **Salvation**

We believe that salvation is the gift of God offered freely to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ Whose precious blood was shed when He was crucified on the cross of Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:9).

**Atonement** – Because of man’s inherent sin nature (Romans 5:12) and every individual’s own sinful behavior (Romans 3:10 & 23), human beings are estranged from God (Romans 8:7-8) and have no capacity to please Him (Romans 3:10-12) or to save themselves (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). But because God is full of mercy (Ephesians 2:4) and love (1 John 4:8) for His created ones, He has given the life of His Son (John 3:16) to atone for their sins. By Christ’s shedding of His blood on the cross He has once and for all paid the price that God demands for mankind’s redemption (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21). God is completely satisfied with the price that Christ paid for our sins (1 John 2:2) and will therefore accept into His beloved family and eternal presence all who will accept this gift by faith calling on the name of the Lord (John 1:12; Romans 6:23; 10:9-10,13).

**Repentance** – Though salvation is a free gift of God (Romans 6:23) and cannot be earned by good works (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5) it can only be received by one who is truly repentant (Luke 13:5). For one to repent he must change his mind about his sinful condition (Romans 3:10 & 23) and repudiate his self-righteousness (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 3:19; 17:30) by recognizing that his good works will not be accepted by God (Isaiah 63:6; Romans 3:28) nor will it secure him entrance into Heaven (Revelation 21:27). He must furthermore accept that the only way of salvation is the way offered by God through Jesus Christ (John 14:6) and that only by trusting Him can one be saved (Acts 4:12). This repentance combined with faith in the shed blood of Christ is acceptable to God and will result in a changed life (Luke 18:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 2:14).

**Faith** – The acceptance of salvation is based upon faith. Faith is not fully synonymous with the English contemporary idea of belief, for faith is not mere mental assent to historical or even doctrinal truths (James 2:19). Saving faith is the trusting of God’s promise that He will accept all who come to Him trusting in the sacrifice of His Son Who was given on the cross of Calvary. When one believes that Jesus is the Son of God and that He died and rose again from

the dead and calls upon Him for salvation (Romans 10:9-10, 13) the sincere faith of the individual accesses the grace of God whereby he is given the free gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23). This faith is a resting upon the promise of God that He will save all who come to Him by Jesus Christ (John 6:37). If one is resting upon anything in addition to Christ or in exclusion to Christ, he is not truly trusting Christ and therefore his faith is vain and his profession is false (1 Corinthians 15:2).

**Justification** – Justification is the legal standing of the redeemed whereby the justified individual stands before God as righteous (Luke 18:14). Christ, having fulfilled all of the requirements of the law, has become the propitiation for sin, completely satisfying all of God's righteous demands (Colossians 2:14). The born again individual stands before God in the righteousness purchased by Christ and transferred by faith alone through grace alone (Galatians 2:16 & 3:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Justification cannot be bought or earned by good works, but can only be accepted as the free gift of God based on the atoning work of Christ on the cross (Romans 5:8-9, 6:23, 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

**Regeneration** – God warned Adam and Eve that if they partook of the forbidden fruit, they would surely die (Genesis 2:17). However, they did not die physically for many years (Genesis 5:4). The death they did experience that day was a death of their innocence (Genesis 3:10-11) and the death of their fellowship with God causing them to be cast out of His presence in the garden He had prepared for them (Genesis 3:23-24). Since this original sin, all humankind are born with the sin nature inherited from their ancestor Adam (Romans 5:12), are spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1), and are estranged from fellowship with God (Romans 8:7). Yet, God in His mercy has given His Son as a propitiation for our sins (John 3:16) so that this relationship might be restored (Colossians 1:21). Any individual who is born again by trusting Christ as Savior is made into a new creature in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5). This imputing of new life (Ephesians 2:5) into one previously dead is called regeneration (Titus 3:5). The newly regenerated one is then indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is no longer blind to spiritual things, and though still burdened with the sinful nature of his human flesh has the power to live the Christian life as God intends as he presents himself in service to God (Romans 6:12-14, 7:14-24, 8:9, 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Galatians 2:20).

**Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.** – All the redeemed in Christ, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1; 38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 1 Peter 1:4-5). It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15). Anyone once professing salvation and then falling away into professed unbelief is not evidencing a loss of salvation, but is evidencing that he was never truly born again (1 John 2:19).

## **The Church**

We believe that a New Testament Church is an organized body of baptized believers practicing two scriptural ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper), recognizing the headship of Christ, the supremacy of exalting Him and obeying His commands, and actively engaged in fulfilling the Great Commission (Luke 22:17-20; Matthew 28:19-20; John 14:15; Colossians 1:18; Revelation 2:4-5).

**Nature** – The local church is an assembly of professing Christians who are scripturally baptized and united into a local congregation. The main mission of the local church as defined by Christ in *The Great Commission* is to preach the gospel in all the world, to make disciples of all the nations, to baptize, and to instruct them to observe all of His commands. The work of the local church is a partnership between the shepherd (pastor) and the flock to edify one another and to evangelize the lost world. The local church is autonomous and free of any external authority or control (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Romans 16:1, 4; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

**Ordinances** – The local church has two ordinances – baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matthew 28:19, Luke 22:17-20).

**Baptism** – Baptism is an ordinance of public profession whereby the believer, after his confession of faith in Christ, is immersed into water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Baptism is a symbol of the believer's union with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and though as a command of Christ is essential for obedience, does not impart any saving grace and does not wash away sin (Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19; Acts 2:41; 36-39; Romans 6:3-5).

**The Lord's Supper** – The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of remembrance in which regenerated believers partake as a memorial to death of the Lord. The bread represents Christ's broken body and the cup represents His shed blood (Luke 22:17-20). After sufficient soul-searching, each born-again individual may partake of the Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-30). These ordinances, though very important, do not impart any saving grace to the participant (John 6:63; Ephesians 2:8-9).

**Offices** – Within the local church, the Scriptures have authorized the two offices of pastor and deacon (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13). The pastor is also referred to as the elder or bishop of the local congregation. He is to oversee, provide spiritual leadership, feed the flock of God, edify the saints, and equip members of the congregation for the Lord's service (Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 5:1-2). Other men serve the church as deacons. The deacons, while primarily serving the church in the areas of administering the physical needs of the congregation, are also to be holy men who use their spiritual giftedness to serve the congregation, assist the pastor, and lead the congregation by example in fulfilling the Great Commission (Acts 6:2-4; 1 Timothy 3:8-13).

**Civil Disputes** – In the context of the local church, Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. The local church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between individual members and between members and the church. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32).

## **The Eternal State**

We believe that every human has an eternal soul and will reside forever in either Heaven or Hell. Those who believe on Christ for salvation will spend eternity in Heaven and those who do not believe will spend eternity in Hell (Matthew 25:46; John 3:16-18; 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-14).

**Heaven** – Heaven is the abode of God with Christ at His right hand and where He resides with His holy angels (1 Peter 3:22). It is an eternal city made by God Himself (Hebrews 11:10). Christ promised His disciples that when He returned to Heaven He would prepare a place for them there and would return to receive them to it (John 14:2-3). When the believer closes his eyes in death, he is immediately ushered into the presence of the Lord in Heaven, which is the eternal abode of all of the redeemed of mankind who have received Christ as Savior (Luke 16:22; 2 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Peter 1:4). Only those who have been born again will see this Kingdom (John 3:3). In eternity, Heaven is the promised place for all of God’s children where there will be no sorrow, pain, sickness or death (Revelation 21:3-4). Nothing defiling will enter there (Revelation 21:27). It is a place of glorious worship of God Who is full of splendor and majesty (Revelation 19:4; 21:10-12).

**Hell** – Hell is the abode of the dead who died in their sins without trusting Christ as Savior (Luke 16:19-31). It is a place of fire and torment (Mark 9:43-49). The torments of Hell are eternal with no hope of relief or end (Luke 16:24; Revelation 14:11). Those currently suffering in Hell will remain there until they are brought before the Great White Throne to be judged (Revelation 20:11). After this judgment, all of the dead, regardless of their former earthly prominence, will be cast into the eternal Hell called the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:12-15). They will spend eternity in this torment for their sins and their rejection of Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). Though all unbelievers will suffer eternal torment and sorrow, the Scriptures indicate a differentiation in the level of punishment, based upon their opportunity to witness the works of God in this life (Matthew 10:14-15; 11:21-24; Luke 10:14; 12:47-48).

### **Angels, Satan, and Demons**

We believe that God has created spiritual beings. Angels faithfully serve and glorify God; demons, former angels, were cast out of Heaven with their leader Satan (Hebrews 1:13-14; Revelation 12:9).

**Angels** – Angels are created, spiritual beings (Hebrews 1:14). They are superior to humans in wisdom (2 Samuel 14:20), but not omniscient (Matthew 24:36); they are stronger than mankind (2 Peter 2:11), but not omnipotent (Revelation 12:7, Daniel 10:13); they are a company or “host,” but not a race (Psalm 148:2). While the word “angel” literally means “messenger,” that is not the extent of their function. They worship God in His presence (Psalm 148:2, Matthew 18:10), protect God's children from harm (Acts 5:19, Matthew 4:6), render service to the saved (Hebrews 1:14), execute God's judgment (Genesis 19:12, Acts 12:23, Revelation 16:1-21), carry home the saints at their death (Luke 16:22) and play a part in the Lord's Second Coming (Matthew 24:31; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Revelation 7:2, 16:1, 21:12).

**Satan** – Satan is a real personality, not just a force or power as some suppose. He is described with characteristics that could only constitute a real being (Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28). He is called the Devil (Matthew 13:39), Satan (Matthew 4:10), a dragon (Revelation 12:3), a serpent (Genesis 3:1), Beelzebub (Matthew 10:25), and Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12). Satan was the first to sin by being filled with pride (Isaiah 14:13) and led man to sin in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). Satan's only desire and purpose is to oppose and overthrow God and rule His creation (Isaiah 14; Revelation 12). Satan will be locked in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years during the millennial reign of Christ (Revelation 1:1-2). He will then be released for a short season to oppose God in one final battle (Revelation 1:3, 7-9). After being defeated by God he will be cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity (Revelation 7:10).

**Demons** – Demons, sometimes called devils, are fallen angels who were cast out of Heaven because they aligned themselves with Lucifer (Revelation 12:7-9). They are now Satan's minions in executing his furious plans to torment mankind and to thwart the purposes of God. They currently assist Satan in a spiritual battle against God's saints on earth (Ephesians 6:12). They await their eternal torment with Satan in Hell and the Lake of Fire (2 Peter 2:4, Matthew 25:41).

### **Creation**

We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods and He created man as a fully developed being in His own image and likeness. We reject evolution, theistic evolution, and the day-age theory as unscriptural theories of origins (Genesis 1:1-2:3; Colossians 1:16-17; Revelation 4:11).

### **Civil Government**

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically-assigned spheres of responsibility under God (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13-14).

### **Family Relationships**

We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society and that the family consists of one man married to one woman and, if they have been so blessed, their children (Genesis 1:27-28).

**Regarding the Church** – Men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but He has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and chosen men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12).

**Regarding the Home** – The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage and blessing from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction (Genesis 1:26-28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 7:3-5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Colossians 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

**Regarding Divorce and Remarriage** – God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one spouse dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery with the only possible exception being on the grounds of fornication (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:1-3). There is complete forgiveness for those who are truly repentant and seek mercy from God through Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21-26; 10:8-17; Ephesians 3:1-10; James 5:16-20; 1 John 1:7, 9).

## Human Sexuality

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman (Hebrews 13:4).

**Sexual Sin** – Any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God’s gift of sex. God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one’s gender by surgery or appearance. A person is the gender of their birth for their entire life regardless of the results or consequences of surgery. Gender is a part of the creation and design of God and is not the result or consequence of personal feelings or surgical manipulation (Genesis. 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30, 20:10-16; Deuteronomy 23:17-18; 2 Samuel 11:2-12:15; Isaiah 5:20-21; Romans 1: 22-32; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:20; Galatians 5:16-23; Hebrews 12:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Timothy 1:8-17, Hebrews 13:4). There is complete forgiveness for those who are truly repentant and seek mercy from God through Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21-26; 10:8-17; Ephesians 3:1-10; James 5:16-20; 1 John 1:7, 9).

**Marriage** – Marriage is and can only be a single and exclusive union of one man (who has been continuously male since his birth and who does not claim to be male on the basis of gender reassignment surgery) and one woman (who has been continuously female since his birth and who does not claim to be female on the basis of gender reassignment surgery) and thus this is the only use of the term “marriage” sanctioned by God and compatible with the Holy Scriptures (Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:3-9; Ephesians 5:3-5; 28-33; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5; 10; Galatians 5:18-25). The above language is not intended to convey or imply that a person can in fact redefine their gender with surgery or reassign themselves to a new gender (See Section on Sexual Sin above).

## Human Life

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God and that human life is therefore sacred and precious (Genesis 1:26-27; Exodus 20:13).

**Abortion** – Human life begins at conception. The unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life and is therefore murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth control, population control, or for the physical or mental well being of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44). There is complete forgiveness for those who are truly repentant and seek mercy from God through Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21-26; 10:8-17; Ephesians 3:1-10; James 5:16-20; 1 John 1:7, 9).

**Euthanasia** – The direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of overzealous treatment (Exodus 20:13, 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28).

**Capital Punishment and War** – God has ordained that civil governments have the right and responsibility to judge and execute those found guilty of a capital offense and to wage war. These rights are reserved only for civil government (Genesis 9:6; John 18:36; Romans 13:1-7).

## Love

We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. Any behavior or attitudes which are hateful and harassing toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the Holy Scriptures or the doctrines of the church (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Galatians 6:1-2; Philippians 2:2-4; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 Peter 4:1-11; 1 John 3:17-18).

## Missions and Church Planting

We believe that God has given the church a Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to all people and every nation so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. We furthermore believe that it is the obligation of this local church to reproduce itself, as God provides the means and opportunity, into other communities of our own nation which are lacking a sound, Bible-believing church (Isaiah 49:6; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 2:32; 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Philippians 4:15-18; Revelation 5:9; 14:6).

## Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his tithe or offering once the gift has been made (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Malachi, 3:8; Luke 6:38; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

## Biblical Holiness

We believe that God is holy and that He has commanded that the church and the Christian strive to practice and maintain a standard of biblical holiness corporately, individually and in the home (1 Peter 1:15-16).

**Personal Holiness** – All the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from immodest and immoderate appearances. The believer is to exercise discernment so as to avoid questionable activities (Romans. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Hebrews 5:14 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

**Ecclesiastical Holiness** – Believers in Christ are commanded to withdraw themselves from every brother that walks in a way which does not conform to the Scriptures (2 Thessalonians 3:6). The church must be grave in its awareness of falsehoods and unscriptural practices (Ephesians 5:15). When an organization or an individual is recognized as practicing or professing things which are

against the Bible, the people of God must mark that person or organization and have no fellowship with them (Romans 16:17). This would also include persons or organizations which in themselves may seem to be doing right, but by their own unscriptural associations have disqualified themselves from fellowship (2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 2 Corinthians 6:17).

**Holiness in Worship** – Acceptable worship is holy worship focused on God, honoring Christ, centered on the Bible, and considering the Lord as the primary audience. Therefore, pleasing God is the ultimate goal in worship. Any form of so-called worship that makes man its center or attempts to please man before God is not true worship. The church must be vigilant to pursue worship practices that exalt Jesus Christ, conform to the command and principles of Scripture, and avoid any pressure to be conformed to the world. This would exclude the use of music styles and so-called worship practices that originate from or accentuate sinfulness, sensuality or rebellion (1 Samuel 15:23; Psalm 29:2; 40:3; 96:9; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:22-23; 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

### **Sign Gifts**

We believe that sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. Ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. We believe that every believer immediately upon being saved receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit; that God still works miracles today, but that “sign gifts” such as speaking in tongues (known, spoken languages), predictive prophecy, healing and miracles are not operational in this age (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9; 2 Timothy 4:20).

### **The Second Advent of Christ**

We believe in that *blessed hope*, the personal, imminent return of Christ, Who will rapture His church prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom which was promised to the nation of Israel (Psalm 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Jude 14-15; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

### **Authority of the Statement of Faith and Practice**

This Statement of Faith and Practice does not exhaust the extent of what we believe or what we practice. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe and practice. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith and Practice accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and, therefore is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church and distributed by the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith and Practice.

### **Commitment to the Statement of Faith and Practice**

Metro Baptist Church is fully and unashamedly committed to an aggressive propagation and defense of the Christian Faith and stands in strong opposition to any dilution or compromise of those Fundamental Truths that are basic to the Christian Faith. We stand in direct opposition to any and all unbiblical inclusivism or ecumenism which gives approbation to those who deny essential, fundamental Truth.