

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT SECTION

2.01—STATEMENT OF FAITH

(A) The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed, and therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to man.

The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. We believe that the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible is the divinely preserved Word of God for the English speaking people and that it has enjoyed a miraculous manifestation of God's approval and blessing throughout history. (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21). As such, the King James Version of the Bible is the governing authority of the Church.

(B) The Godhead

We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three 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; John 14:10; II Corinthians 13:14).

(C) The Person and Work of Christ

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8)
2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 Peter 1:3-5)
3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ 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. (Acts 1:9-10; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2)

(D) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that 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; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14)
2. We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)
3. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God

uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12)

4. We believe that the 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. (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

(E) The Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

(F) Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to all mankind by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that all sins, except blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, are forgivable. (Matt. 12:31-32; John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 1 John 1:9)

(G) The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers

1. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1; 38-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; 1 Pet. 1:4-5)

2. We believe that 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. (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)

(H) The Church

1. We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons. (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27)

2. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)

3. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)

4. We recognize water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as the two Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the Church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

(I) Separation

We believe that 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 all immodest and immoderate appearances, piercings, and bodily markings. (Lev. 19:28; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)

(J) 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. (Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

(K) The Eternal State

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13)

2. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6)

3. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)

(L) The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

(M) Creation

We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11)

(N) 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. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

(O) Dispensationalism

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined

dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations—the law, the Church, and the kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6)

(P) Human Sexuality

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, polygamy and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

2. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

(Q) Family Relationships

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God 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 men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the Church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the Church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. 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 from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children Biblical spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

(R) Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery. Persons who have suffered the trauma of divorce and have remarried should not seek to justify or excuse their position, but should approach it with a spirit of repentance and seek God's forgiveness. As with all sin, the church should seek to restore those who have experienced marital dissolution. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the Church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

(S) Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is

murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:44)

(T) Euthanasia

We believe that 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 over-zealous treatment. (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)

(U) Love

We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both 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 the 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. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17:21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)

(V) Lawsuits between Believers

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. 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 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)

(W) Capital Punishment

We believe that God has ordained human government with the authority to humanely execute those guilty of murder. (Gen. 9:6; Romans 13:1-4)

(X) Missions

We believe that God has given the Church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations 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 the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)

(Y) 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 (first tenth) 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. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

SECTION 2.02—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members.

SECTION 2.03—BIBLE TRANSLATIONS AND LITERATURE

The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible is the official translation of Open Door Baptist Church and the only version to be used in the pulpit and teaching ministry. The need to use literature or media that is not available in the KJV may arise at times, on these occasions permission must be granted by the Pastor for their use and a statement must be made reinforcing the official position of Open Door Baptist Church. (Matthew 5:18)

SECTION 2.04—COVENANT

We understand that our testimony as Christians requires our personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and separation from sin. We further realize that as members of Open Door Baptist Church, we represent the Lord Jesus Christ as well as this local church. Therefore, we believe that the ultimate priority in life is to know and love the Sovereign God, and purpose to glorify Him in all that we do, seeking to build our goals around His priorities, as they are taught and revealed in His Word (Psalm 31:23; 119:2; Matthew 6:24-33; 22:34-40; John 4:23; Philippians 3:7-10).

We consider our bodies to be the living temple of God and acknowledge His demand that our bodies be kept clean from sin and that it be daily set apart for His use (Romans 12:1-2; II Corinthians 6:14-18; I Peter 1:14-16). We regard marriage to be a Biblical and holy institution and will endeavor to conduct ourselves in such a manner so as to continually strengthen our homes and marriages (if applicable) and the marriages of those around us (Genesis 2:21-25; Proverbs 6:32; Matthew 5:27,28; Hebrews 13:4).

We purpose to guard our tongues and keep our words in harmony with the Word of God. We further intend to avoid gossip and unkind speech, which is neither helpful nor necessary (Psalm 19:14; Proverbs 14:28; Luke 6:45; Ephesians 5:29-32; Philippians 4:8; James 1:19).

We do also endeavor to be faithful to the church of Jesus Christ in the areas of prayer, attendance, service, and Scriptural giving, which includes giving cheerfully and regularly at least ten percent (10%) of our incomes (Luke 18:1; Hebrews 10:25; Psalm 100:2; II Corinthians 9:6,7).

We aspire to use our lives as a positive, godly testimony to those who do not know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and purpose to become consistent personal soul-winners (Psalm 126:5,6; Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 5:13-16; John 15:8).

We respect God-ordained authority in the local church and pledge ourselves to submit and pray for those in authority that they might function according to the principles, standards, and doctrines of God's Word (I Thessalonians 5:12,13; I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7,17).

We purpose that our activities and conduct will be used as a means of encouragement and growth

to other believers, and in no way be used to weaken their Biblical convictions and/or hinder their spiritual progress (Proverbs 28:10; Matthew 18:6; Romans 14:13; I Corinthians 8:9-13). We believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of God and that it is to be taught and preached as such. We believe the King James Bible is the preserved Word of God in the English language and that God's Word is the final authority for our lives (Psalm 19:7-9; 119:11, 44, 128, 167; II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20, 21).

We further acknowledge that differences of opinion and/or misunderstandings easily surface under even the best of conditions, and purpose to communicate openly, honestly, and lovingly with those we have offended or those who have offended us, following the principles as given in the Word of God regarding such situations (Matthew 18:15-17; Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 4:6). We understand the importance of maintaining a positive testimony for Jesus Christ regarding one's personal appearance and will dress modestly as an expression of inner godliness (I Corinthians 3:17; I Timothy 2:9, 10; I Peter 3:1-7).

We moreover refuse to defile our minds with sinful and/or questionable literature, music, movies and television programs. We will further abstain from gambling, dancing that is worldly, mixed swimming that is immodest, oath-bound secret societies and partnerships with unbelievers, the use, possession or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, and non-medicinal narcotic or hallucinogenic drugs, along with all forms of sexual immorality (Psalm 101:3; Proverbs 19:27; 20:1; Habakkuk 2:15; Romans 12:21; 14:8; I Corinthians 10:31; II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:22; James 4:4).