

ORDINARY **PEOPLE** EXTRAORDINARY **GOD**

# STATEMENT OF FAITH



**NEWHOPE**  
BIBLE CHURCH

## **I. Final Authority for Matters of Faith and Practice**

This statement of faith does not exhaustively define the full extent of our beliefs – the Bible does. For the sake of New Hope’s faith, doctrine, practice, policy and discipline, our team of elders operate as the final interpretive authority on the Bible’s application in matters of faith and practice. We believe they will be held accountable for their faithfulness to God’s Word (1).

*References: (1) II Tim. 2:15; James 3:1*

## **II. About God**

We believe in the One True God (1), the creator (2), and ruler (3) of the universe. We believe He has existed eternally in three persons (4): The Father (5), the Son (6), and the Holy Spirit (7).

*References: (1) Is. 44:6-8; 45:5 (2) Gen. 1:1, 26, 27; Ps. 90:2 (3) I Tim. 1:17 (4) Matt. 28:19; Luke 3:22; 2 Cor. 13:14; I Peter 1:2 (5) I Cor. 8:6 (6) John 8:58; 10:33 (7) Gen. 1:2*

## **III. About the Son**

We believe that Christ Jesus is God represented as the Son (1), that He has existed eternally with the Father (2), and that He has revealed Himself by leaving His glory (3) to become man. His virgin birth (4) was foretold in the Old Testament (5) and accomplished in the New (6).

We believe that Christ lived a perfect life (7), enabling Him to offer Himself (8) as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people (9) through His death on the cross (10). He was buried and rose again from the dead three days later (11), demonstrating power and victory over sin and death (12). He later ascended into heaven (13) and is now preparing a place for believers (14) and mediating on their behalf before the Father (15). We believe He will return to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (16).

*References: (1) Matt. 1:22-23 (2) John 1:1-5 (3) John 1:14; Phil. 2:6-8 (4) Matt. 1:18-23 (5) Is. 7:14; 9:6-7 (6) Matt. 1:22-23 (7) Heb. 4:14 (8) Heb. 7:27 (9) Heb. 9:25-28 (10) John 3:14; 19:17-30 (11) I Cor. 15:3-4 (12) I Cor. 15:55-56 (13) Luke 24:50-53 (14) John 14:1-4 (15) I Tim. 2:5 (16) I Tim. 6:14-15; Titus 2:13*

## **IV. About the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God, coequal with the Father and Son (1). He is present in the world as God’s agent of conviction – making men aware of their need for Christ (2). At the moment of salvation, He indwells every believer (3), provides them with the power to live a life pleasing to God (4), gives them understanding of spiritual truth (5), and guides them in the doing of what is right (6). He empowers the Christian for service to God (7), and as Christians, we seek to live under His control daily (8).

*References: (1) Acts 5:3; 2 Cor. 3:17 (2) John 16:7-11 (3) John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 3:16; Rom. 8:9 (4) Acts 1:8; Phil 2:12-13 (5) John 16:13-14 (6) Gal. 5:16 (7) I Cor. 12:4-7 (8) Eph. 5:18*

## V. About the Communication of God to Man

### a. The Creation

We believe that God created the “heavens and the earth,” (1), meaning all that exists on earth or in space. He has done so to communicate His glory (2), His eternal power and divine nature to man so they are without excuse (3).

*References: (1) Gen. 1:1 (2) Col. 1:16 (3) Rom. 1:20*

### b. The Bible

We believe that God has revealed Himself through the written word – the 66 books and two Testaments of the Bible. He has revealed Himself through men – prophets and apostles – who wrote from God (1) under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit (2).

We believe that God by His nature is true (3), therefore, the words of Scripture are without error in their original writings. We believe that God is the ultimate authority (4), making His Word to us the final source of truth and guidance concerning faith, morality and the proper conduct of all mankind (5).

We believe that God’s Word can be interpreted literally, with understanding being given to the grammatical, historical and cultural context. By “grammatical” we mean attention must be given to the original languages in which the Bible was written. By “historical” we mean that attention must be given to the time period in which it was written. By “cultural” we mean that attention must be given to the original recipients, as well as the surrounding culture of the authors. Through this method of interpretation, we believe the Word of God may be applied to the Christian’s life (6).

*References: (1) 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Heb. 1:1 (2) 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:20-21 (3) Ps. 19:7-8; Is. 65:16; Matt. 5:18 (4) Is. 45:18 (5) Ps. 119:105; 160; Prov. 30:5; Heb. 4:12; James 1:22 (6) I Tim. 3:16; II Tim. 2:15*

### ***Other Means – How else does God communicate?***

Here at New Hope Bible Church we are not strict adherents to either Fundamentalism or Emotionalism/Mysticism as it pertains to the communication of God to man. Fundamentalism believes that God *only* communicates to us through the written Word. On the other extreme, Emotionalism/Mysticism believes that *everything* is some sort of communication from God to man.

New Hope stands in-between the two extremes: We believe that God may communicate through circumstances, through other people, and by His Spirit's testimony. Yet ultimately, we believe all things must submit to the authority of His Word. We do not believe God's communicating through our experience is the same as his revelation of himself to us through Christ and through Scripture. If there appears to be a contradiction between our own experience and the Word of God – God's Word reigns as the chief authority.

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**The Book of Genesis:** In our culture there is a lot of debate as to whether the Creation account, let alone any of the events in Genesis chapters 1-11, should be taken as literal, historical events. Here at New Hope we hold to a literal interpretation of Genesis 1-11, meaning we believe in a literal 6-24-hour day creation, as well as in the global catastrophe known as the "flood."

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### c. **Jesus Christ**

We believe that God has revealed Himself ultimately through the "Living Word," Christ Jesus (1). He is the ultimate expression of an invisible God (2) and the supreme expression of God's grace and truth (3).

*References: (1) John 1:1-5, 14 (2) Col. 1:15 (3) John 1:17-18*

## VI. **About Man**

We believe that man is the chief object of God's creation, made most valuable by being created in God's own image and likeness (1). We believe man was created to glorify God (2) and enjoy God forever (3).

*References: (1) Gen. 1:26; 5:1 (2) Is. 43:7; Matt. 5:16; I Cor. 10:31; Eph. 2:10 (3) Ps. 16:5-11; 144:15; Phil. 4:4; Rev. 21:3-4*

### a. **About Sin**

We believe that man, tempted by Satan, chose to disobey God (1), therefore tainting the nature of all men (2), putting us at odds with God (3). We call this disobedience "sin." Because of sin we are spiritually dead or *separated* from a Holy God (4), unable to save ourselves (5). Man can do nothing apart from God to restore himself or please God (6).

*References: (1) Gen. 3:1-7 (2) Rom. 5:12 (3) Rom. 1:18-32; Eph. 2:1-3 (4) Is. 59:2; Rom. 6:23 (5) Rom. 3:10-12; 5:8; Eph. 2:1 (6) Rom. 3:10-12; 14:23; Heb. 11:6*

## **b. About God's Wrath**

Our sin separates us from God because He is holy, but we also face the wrath of God because He is just (1). The wrath of God is against all men who stand condemned because of sin (2).

*References: (1) Ps. 7:11; 145:17; Rom. 1:18-32 (2) John 3:17-18; Rom. 1:18*

## **c. About Salvation**

We believe God has a desire to save man (1) and spare Him from His wrath. Because of this, He has provided a way by which men can be saved, namely, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (2).

Salvation is a free gift from God (3) in which He draws men to Himself (4), and by faith they accept the work of Christ done on their behalf (5). Men cannot earn salvation by good deeds or self-improvement (6). Only by trusting Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can men be justified, or made right, before God. Once a man believes and confesses, he is saved by grace (7) from the wrath of God (8) and given a new life in Christ (9). Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ (10).

*References: (1) 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9 (2) John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 15:11 (3) Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9 (4) John 6:44 (5) John 1:12; Gal. 3:6; Eph. 2:8-9; Heb. 11:6 (6) Is. 64:6; Rom. 3:21-28; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7 (7) Rom. 10:9-17 (8) Rom. 5:1 (9) 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:1-4 (10) John 10:27-29; 1 John 5:13*

## **d. About Marriage, Gender and Sexuality**

We believe that God created men male and female, two distinct sexes that together reflect the image and nature of God (1). We believe that the term "marriage" denotes the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive relationship (2) and it has served as an image of God's relationship to Israel, and Christ's relationship to the Church (3). We believe that God intends for all sexual intimacy to occur within the context of this unique relationship between a man and woman (4). Therefore, we believe that any form of sexual immorality – as defined by the Bible (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and the use of pornography) – is sinful and offensive to God (5).

Therefore, in order to preserve the integrity of New Hope Bible Church as a local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the members of New Hope and the surrounding community, it is imperative that (a) all persons employed by New Hope and (b) all functions held on New Hope's property be in agreement with this statement about marriage, gender and sexuality (6).

*References: (1) Gen. 1:26-27 (2) Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:3-6 (3) Is. 54:5; 62:5; Eph. 5:25-27 (4) I Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4 (5) Matt. 15:18-20; I Cor. 6:9-10 (6) Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; I Thess. 5:22*

#### **e. About Eternity – Heaven and Hell**

Because God created man in His likeness (1), we believe people were created to exist forever. We believe in a literal place called Heaven and a literal place called Hell. We believe in a conscious existence after death (2).

We believe that all those who are saved, at the moment of physical death, will immediately be with the Lord (3). Then, in God's timing, the dead in Christ will be raised (4). First, they will be given glorified bodies (5), then they will be judged and rewarded (6), and finally, they will spend eternity with God (7).

We also believe that all those who reject God's free offer of salvation will remain separated from God – and all that He represents: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, etc., – for eternity. When they die they will inhabit a place of torment (8). Then, at the end of time, God will raise the dead to be judged (9) and cast them into Hell for eternity (10).

*References: (1) Gen. 1:26 (2) Luke 16:19-31 (3) 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21-23 (4) 1 Thess. 4:16 (5) Rom. 8:29-30; Phil. 3:20-21 (6) Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:9-10 (7) 1 Cor. 2:7-9; Rev. 20:11-15 (8) Luke 16:28 (9) Rev. 20:11-13 (10) Rev. 20:14-15*

### **VII. About the Christian Life**

#### **a. About Perseverance and the Believer's Security**

We believe that salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not the self-effort of man (1). God will cause all those who are in Christ to persevere to the end (2). Those who reject Christ, failing to persevere to the end in faith, were never truly in Christ – this is *not* to say the believer never falls into sin (3). Once a person is truly justified, they are sure to be glorified in the end (4). Not one true believer will fall from the grip of God (5).

It is the Spirit of God who works in the believer, bearing fruits of obedience (6) and testifying that the believer is truly a child of God (7). It is the Holy Spirit that seals the believer in Christ for eternity (8). If one does not bear any fruit, they should examine themselves to see if they are truly saved (9).

*References: (1) 2 Thess. 1:11-12; Heb. 13:20-21 (2) Phil. 1:6 (3) I John 2:19; Heb. 3:14 (4) Rom. 8:29-30 (5) John 10:27-30 (6) Gal. 5:22-23 (7) Rom. 8:16 (8) Eph. 1:13-14 (9) 1 Cor. 13:5*

## **b. About the Church**

The Church is not a building. The Church is composed of all true believers – in the past, present and future world. This Church is then represented locally in bodies like ours – New Hope Bible Church. Each local church is autonomous, but striving to work in fellowship and cooperation with others.

We believe the purpose of the local church includes the following elements: It is for encouraging believers in their faith (1), keeping them from the deceitfulness of sin (2), drawing them together in worship of God (3), equipping them to serve Christ (4), and motivating them to evangelize the lost (5). Each element of the church is to be characterized by love and unity (6).

The head of every local church is Christ (7). It is shepherded by faithful elders (pastors) and served by faithful deacons (8). Every member, including the leadership, is an equally important part of the body (9).

*References: (1) Heb. 10:23-25 (2) Heb. 3:13 (3) Eph. 5:18-20; Col. 3:16 (4) Eph. 4:11-12 (5) Matt. 28:19-20 (6) Eph. 4:11-16 (7) Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23; Col. 1:18 (8) 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9 (9) 1 Cor. 12:12-26*

## **c. About the Ordinances**

We believe that Jesus instituted two ordinances for the local church: Baptism and Communion, otherwise known as the Lord's Supper. We believe He commanded us to continue practicing these ordinances (1). Each ordinance is a symbolic act that reminds us of great spiritual truths.

We believe that for those who are baptized, it is a sign of their fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection, of their union with him (2), it signifies their remission of sins (3), and their submission to God through Jesus Christ to live and walk in newness of life (4). We believe that those who personally profess repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ are the only proper subjects of this ordinance (5). We believe the outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, in which the individual is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (6). We believe immersion, or dipping of the person into water, is necessary for this ordinance to be administered properly (7). Therefore, we reject the Roman Catholic practice of baptizing children. We do, however, practice the dedication of children (8).

We believe the supper of the Lord Jesus was instituted by him the same night he was betrayed. It is to be observed in his churches to the end of the age as a perpetual remembrance and display of his death and sacrifice (9). It is given for the confirmation

of the faith of believers in all the benefits of Christ's death, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, and their further engagement in and to all the duties they owe him. The supper is to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Christ and each other (10). The supper consists of the bread, a symbol of the body of Christ, and the cup, a symbol of the blood of Christ (11).

We believe that in the Lord's Supper, Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor is any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sin of the living or the dead. It is only a memorial of the one offering Christ made of himself on the cross once for all (12). Therefore, we reject the Roman Catholic belief in transubstantiation.

We believe that only those who personally profess repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ may participate in the Lord's Supper, and that they must do so with a clear conscience before God. Anyone who participates in an unworthy manner commits a grievous sin against Christ (13).

*References: (1) Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26 (2) Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27 (3) Mark 1:4; Acts 22:16 (4) Rom. 6:4 (5) Mark 16:16; Acts 2:41; 8:12, 36, 37; 18:8 (6) Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 8:38 (7) Matt. 3:16; John 3:23 (8) Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 22:6 (9) 1 Cor. 11:23-26 (10) 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, 21 (11) 1 Cor. 11:23-26 (12) Heb. 9:25, 26, 28 (13) 1 Cor. 11:27-30*

#### **d. About Spiritual Gifts**

We believe that once a person is saved they are not only indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but gifted by the Holy Spirit. There are a variety of spiritual gifts referenced in Scripture (1). We know that each one is important (2), each one is for the common good of the local church (3), and that each one is meant to glorify God (4).

We also believe that some gifts were reserved to a specific time. We believe "sign" gifts (5) such as speaking in tongues, miracles, healings, prophecy - in certain forms - as well as apostleship, are no longer functioning in the church today (6).

*References: (1) Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4; 1 Pet. 4 (2) 1 Cor. 12:14-18 (3) 1 Cor. 12:7 (4) 1 Cor. 10:31 (5) 1 Cor. 14:22 (6) 1 Cor. 13:12-13*

### **VIII. About Satan**

We believe that Satan exists as a personality. He is real. He was created by God and chose to rebel (1). He is the enemy of God, but He has been defeated through the work of Jesus Christ (2).

We believe that Satan works to destroy the testimony of believers and hinder the proclamation of the gospel (3). Ultimately Satan is under the authority of God (4) and he will one day be cast into the lake of fire – along with all His servants – to face eternal punishment (5) in a place designed by God for him (6).

*References: (1) Is. 14:12-14; Ez. 28:13-15 (2) Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14-15 (3) 2 Cor. 2:11; 1 Pet. 5:8 (4) Job. 1:6-12; 1 Pet. 3:18, 22 (5) Rev. 20:10 (6) Matt. 25:41*

## **IX. About the Second Coming of Christ**

We believe the second coming of Christ could be at any time (1). We believe in the literal and personal return of Christ in two forms – first He will come to receive the Church before the tribulation (2), then He will come again at the end of the tribulation to establish a literal millennial (1,000 year) Kingdom (3).

*References: (1) Matt. 24:27; 36; Mark 13:32 (2) 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 3:10 (3) Rev. 19:11-20:6*