

REDEEMING GRACE CHURCH STATEMENT OF FAITH

What We Believe

At Redeeming Grace Church we affirm the faith, once for all, delivered to God's people and the truths that have united all Christ-followers since the beginning of the church. The following Statement of Faith further details the beliefs we hold as a church and references the scriptural texts upon which these beliefs are grounded.

The Bible

We believe the Bible, in its sixty-six book entirety, is God's word written by men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to humanity (Ex 24:4; Is 34:16; Jer 36; 2 Tim 3:15-17; Acts 2:16). It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction (Deut 4:1-2; Josh 8:34). It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its content (Rom 15:4; 16:25-26). Therefore, the Bible is complete, trustworthy, sufficient, inerrant, understandable, and the supreme authority and guide for all doctrine, conduct, and religious opinion (Ps 19:7-10; Ps 119; Is 40:8; Jn 17:17). It is the truth by which God reveals His character, activity, judgment, and mercy toward His creation (Deut 17:19; Jer 15:16). All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation (Matt 5:17-18; 22:29; Lk 21:33; 24:44-46; Jn 5:39; 16:13-15).

God

We believe that there is one and only one living and true God (Gen 1:1; Deut 6:1-4; Ps 83:18; Rom 1:20). He is infinite and perfect in intelligence, power, wisdom, sovereignty, holiness, justice, mercy and love (Jer 10:10; Ex 15:11; Ps 147:5; Is 6:3; Rev 4:11). To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience (Jer 2:12-13; Mk 12:30; 1 Pet 1:15-16; Rev 4:6-8). The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being (Jn 4:24; Jn 15:26; 1 Cor 2:10-11; 12:4-6). This Triune God acts together in creation, providence, revelation, and redemption (Mt 28:19; Jn 10:30; Jn 14:23; Heb 3:4).

- **The Father**

The Father is the first person of the God-head. God the Father reigns with providential care over all life and history in the created universe according to His glorious purposes (Gen 1:1; 2:7; Ex 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11; Deut 6:4; 1 Chr 29:10; Ps 19:1-3; Is 43:15; 64:8; Jer 10:10-13; Mt 6:9; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19). He initiated salvation by sending His Son, and He is the Father to those who become His children through saving faith in Jesus Christ (Mk 1:9-11; Jn 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8).

- **The Son**

The Son is the second person of the God-head (Ps 2:7) and known as Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God (Mark 1:1; Mark 3:11; Luke 4:41; Luke 22:70), became incarnated man by being conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (Is 7:14; Matt 1:18-23; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-18). Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God (Col 2:9; Heb 1:1-3), taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet entirely without sin (Matt 3:18; Matt 14:33; Matt 16:16; Gal 4:4-5). He honored the divine law by His personal obedience (Matt 17:5), and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made atonement and provision for the redemption of humanity from sin (Is 53; Lk 24:46; John 1:29; 2 Cor 8:9; Heb 7:14-28; 1 Jn 1:7-9). He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion (Matt 28:1-6; John 11:25-27; John 20:1-20; John 21; Acts 2:22-24; Rom 1:3-4; 1 Cor 15:1-8). He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God (Ps 110:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 7:55-56; Eph 1:20; Eph 4:7-10; Phil 2:5-11; Col 1:13-22; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22) where He is making intercession for all the children of God as the One Mediator (Rom 8:34; 1 Tim 2:5-6; Heb 4:14-15; Heb 9:12-15). Jesus being truly God and truly man is the only possible way of reconciliation between God and man (John 3:16-18; Rom 3:23-26; Rom 5:6-21; Rom 8:1-3; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:19-21). He will return one day in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission (Matt 16:27; John 12:44-50; 1 Cor 15:24-28; Titus 2:13-14; Heb 9:24-28; 1 Jn 3:2; Rev 19-20).

- **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the God-head (Gen 1:2; Ps 139:7; Matt 3:16; Matt 28:19; Mark 1:10; Acts 5:3; Acts 13:2). He inspired men of old to write the Scriptures (Is 61:1-3; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). Through illumination He enables men to understand truth (Ps 51:11; 1 Cor 2:10-14). He exalts Christ (Matt 12:28-32; Jn 16:7-14; Acts 7:55; 1 Tim 3:16). He convicts humanity of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (Acts 10:44). He calls men to the Savior and enacts their regenerating new birth (Rom 8:9-11; 1 Jn 4:13; Rev 22:17). At regeneration and conversion, the Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into the body of Christ (Joel 2:28-32; 1 Cor 12:13; Heb 9:14). The Spirit intercedes, indwells, seals, sanctifies, comforts, guides, teaches, guarantees, assures, enlightens, empowers and bears fruit for and in every believer (Lk 11:13; Lk 12:12; Lk 24:49; Jn 14:16-17; Jn 14:26; Jn 15:26; Acts 2:38; Rom 8:14-16; Rom 8:26-27; 1 Cor 3:16; Eph 1:13-14; Eph 4:30; 2 Tim 1:14). He grants spiritual gifts to all believers for ministry in the building up of the church (Acts 1:8; Acts 4:31; 1 Cor 12:3-11).

Humankind

We believe humankind is the special creation of God, created male and female in His own image to glorify Him by enjoying perfect fellowship with Himself and being stewards over His creation (Gen 1:26-30; Gen 2:7; Acts 17:26-31). The gift of the two genders assigned by God and evident biologically is thus part of the goodness of God's creation (Gen 1:27; Gen 2:18-22; Matt 19:4; Mark 10:6). Every person is unique, possesses divine dignity and is worthy of respect (Gen 9:6; Ps 8:3-6). In the beginning humankind was innocent of sin and enjoyed a perfect relationship with each other and with God. Through the temptation of Satan, Adam willfully rebelled against the good command of a Holy God. This one act by the representative head of the human race, Adam, (Gen 3; Rom 5:12-19) brought sin, death, and comprehensive physical and spiritual corruption to the entire human race (Rom 1:19-23; 1 Cor 15:19-22). This resulted further in the cursing, disordering, and suffering of creation (Rom 1:24-32). Therefore, everyone is born spiritually dead, morally corrupt, and hopelessly inclined toward sin through the inherited sinful nature of Adam and stands eternally condemned before an infinitely Holy God (Ps 32:1-5; Ps 51:5; Is 6:5; Rom 3:10-23; Eph 2:1-3; Col 1:21-22). Satan tempts people to rebel against God, even those who love Him (Rom 7:14-25). Nonetheless, everyone is personally responsible to God for thoughts, actions, and beliefs (Ps 1; Jer 17:5). Only the grace of God can bring any human into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God (Rom 5:6; Rom 6:6; Rom 8:14-18; Rom 8:29; Eph 2:4-22).

- **Sanctity of Human Life**

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image (Gen 1:26-2:25). Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death (Ps 139; Acts 20:25; 1 Thess 5:14). We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Gen 9:5-7).

- **Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality**

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 (Gen 1:26-27). We believe that rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person (Rom 1:21-28). We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union before God, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25; Matt 19:3-9). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between one man and one woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 6:18; 1 Cor 7:2-5). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (Heb 13:4). We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful before God (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10). We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who repent of their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (1 Cor 6:11; Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10). We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Luke 6:31; Mark 12:28-31; Phil 2:14-16; Matt 5:16).

Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ alone (Acts 15:11). Salvation is the redemption of the whole person from sin, corruption, death, and eternal hell (Eph 2:1-10; Rom 3:21-26; Heb 9:13-15). It is accomplished through Jesus Christ, who took upon Himself our nature yet without sin, honored divine law with perfect obedience (John 1; Is 42:21), and by His death made a full atonement for our sins (2 Cor 5:21; Is 53:4-5); having been risen from the dead (Rom 4:25), he is now enthroned in heaven and has thus proven to be a sufficient and effective Savior for all who will trust in Him (Heb 1:3,12:1-2; Phil 2:3-11; 1 Cor 15:1-6). This salvation is offered as a free gift by God to all and must be received personally through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (1 Jn 4:10; Jn 3:16; Heb 7:25; Acts 2:38). Each individual believer is united to Christ by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. As a child of God, the believer is acquitted of all guilt and brought into a new relationship of peace with God (Heb 4:14; Gal 4:4-5; Matt 20:28; Col 3:1-4). Christians grow as the Holy Spirit enables them to understand and obey the word of God (1 Cor 3:5-7; 1 Jn 2:3; Matt 3:8).

- **God's Purpose In Election**

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners (Eph 1:3-14; 1 Pet 1:1-2, 2:9). We believe that this is perfectly and mysteriously consistent with the free agency and moral responsibility of man (Jn 15:4-19; Acts 13:48; Jn 10:16). God's eternal purposes gloriously display God's sovereign goodness, freedom, wisdom, holiness and unchangeableness in character (Jer 31:3; Rom 9:1-25; 11:5-36; 1 Thess 1:4-10). It further excludes any boasting of man, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active enjoyment of his free mercy in the life of every believer (1 Jn 4:19; 2 Thess 2:13-14; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Rom 3:27; Col 3:12; Jn 15:16; 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Pet 1:10-11; Phil 3:12). Finally, it is the foundation of Christian assurance and encourages us to seek holiness with utmost diligence (Lk 18:7; 2 Tim 1:8-9; Rom 4:16; 1 Pet 5:10; 2 Tim 2:10; Rom 8:28-30; Jn 6:37-40).

- **Regeneration**

We believe that regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus (Jn 3:7; Ez 36:26; Jas 1:16-18; 1 Pet 1:22-25). It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, which is accompanied by repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 2:28-29; 2 Cor 5; 1 Jn 4:7, 5:1-4, 5:18; Eph 4:20-24; Col 3:9-11; Matt 3:8-10;)

- **Repentance and Faith**

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties and inseparable graces produced in our souls in connection to the regenerating Spirit of God (Ps 51; Mk 1:15; Jas 4:7-10). Each believer being deeply convinced of their guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, turns to God with genuine sorrow for sin, confession and desire for divine mercy (Lk 15:18-21; 18:13; Acts 2:37-38, 11:18; 16:30-31; Jn 16:8; 2 Cor 7:11). At the same time the believer heartily receives the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King, and relies on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior (Rom 10:9-11; Eph 2:8; Heb 7:25; 2 Tim 1:12; 1 Jn 5:1).

- **Justification**

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures those who believe in him is justification (Rom 3:24-26, 4:23-25, 5:17-21). Justification is the pardon of sin and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness (Matt 9:6; Acts 10:43; Rom 4:4-5, 5:1-9; Phil 3:7-9; 1 Jn 2:25; 1 Jn 2:12). It is the imputation of perfect righteousness to the Christian not in consideration of any works which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood (Is 53; Acts 13:39). Justification brings the believer into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God and secures every other blessing purchased by Christ's blood (Zech 13; Jn 1:16; 1 Cor 1:30-31; 1 Tim 4:8; Titus 3:5-7).

- **Sanctification**

We believe that sanctification is the process by which we are made partakers of God's holiness (1 Thess 4:3; 1 Jn 2:29; Eph 1:4). It is a progressive work that it is begun in regeneration and that it is carried on in the hearts and lives of believers by the presence and power of the permanent indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Thess 5:23; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 1:13-14; 2 Cor 13:5). Sanctification comes primarily through

the continual use of the appointed means-especially the Word of God, prayer, ongoing repentance, and deep communion with God's people in the church (Phil 3:12-16; Rom 8:5; Eph 4:11-12; Phil 1:9-11, 2:12-13; Heb 6:1; 1 Pet 2:2; 2 Pet 1:5-8).

- **Glorification**

We believe that glorification is the final and perfect culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed (2 Tim 4:8; Rom 8:17-30, 13:11). Every believer will be cleansed of all sin and be made perfectly holy in body and spirit (1 Cor 15:51-57). All believers will enjoy eternal perfection in the unending presence and joy of the Triune God (Col 3:4; 1 Pet 1:3-5; Rev 20-22).

- **Perseverance of the Saints**

We believe that only real believers will endure unto the end: that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors (Matt 13:20-21; Jn 6:66-69, 8:31; 1 Jn 2:19, 5:18). A special providence watches over their welfare and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (Ps 91:11-12, 121:3; Jer 32:40; Matt 6:30-33; Rom 8:28-39; Phil 1:6, 2:13; Heb 1:14; 1 Jn 4:4; Jude 24).

- **Harmony of the Law and the Gospel**

We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government (Rom 3:31; Lk 16:17). It is holy, just, and good (Ps 119; Rom 7:7-22). The inability which the scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin and willful rebellion against a Holy God (Jer 13:23; Rom 3:20, 4:15, 8:7-8). One of the great ends of the gospel is to deliver believers from this sinful disposition and to restore them to right relationship with God through a Mediator to genuine obedience to the law through the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church (Matt 5:17; Gal 3:21; Rom 8:2-4, 10:4; Heb 8:10).

The Church

We believe that a New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local assembly of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2; Acts 2:41-47, 6:3-6). Each assembly operates under the Lordship of Christ (Matt 16:15-19; Rev 2-3). In such an assembly each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord (Matt 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:4-5; Eph 5:22-31). The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation (Acts 15:1-30; Eph 1:22-23, 2:19-22, 3:8-21; Col 1:18).

- **Ordinances**

We believe that the Bible defines the two ordinances of the church as baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit upon the verification of the believer's credible profession of saving faith in Jesus Christ (Matt 28:18-20). It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of the Savior Jesus Christ (Rom 6:3-5; Col 2:12). It is to be normally practiced within the confines of the gathered local church as a public witness, endorsement, and celebration of the person's faith (Acts 2:41; Eph 4:5). The Lord's Supper is the partaking of bread and of the cup by believers together as a continuing memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Christ (Matt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-28; Lk 24:14-18). It is an act of thankful dedication to Him and serves to unite His people until He returns (1 Cor 11:23-26). Baptism is the initial endorsement of one's credible profession of faith and the Lord's Supper is the ongoing affirmation that one is living consistent with their profession. As such, baptism and Lord's Supper serve as the God-ordained mechanisms for authenticating and protecting the witness of the gospel in the world and preservation of individual Christian souls (Matt 18; 1 Cor 6).

- **Church Governance**

We believe the local church is to be led, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, by men whose character serves as an example to the flock and who are able to teach (Titus 1; 1 Peter 5:3; Heb 13:7). Such men, recognized and affirmed by the church, oversee the church in the office of elder/pastor (Acts 15:4-

6, 15:22-23, 16:4, 20:17, 21:18; Phil 1:1). This office is to be held only by men, because God's creation of the man before the woman indicates God's intention for the man to lead in the home and church (1 Tim 2:8-15; 3:1-7; Eph 5:22-33). The membership of the assembly exercises God given authority in decisions by giving their recommendations and affirmations as well as formal votes (Matt 16:19; Acts 6:1-6; 13:2). The membership holds the right and responsibility to submit to, pray for, and build up Godly eldership (Heb 13:17). The membership also holds the right and responsibility to admonish and even discipline any Elder when biblically warranted substantiation of an accusation has been made against him (1 Tim 5:19). Also, the membership of the assembly holds the solemn responsibility to exercise church discipline on any member, including elders, that is caught in clear public unrepentant sin (Matt 18; 1 Cor 6). The Biblical office of deacon is for men or women who have met the Biblical qualifications and are recognized as being capable and trustworthy to assist the elders in the task of meeting the physical needs of the church, its members, and its ministries (1 Tim 3:8-13; Phil 1:1). The deacons serve under the authority of the elders to maximize the comprehensive flourishing of the assembly (Acts 6:1-6).

- **Evangelism and Missions**

We believe that it is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations (Matt 22:9-10, 28:18-20; 1 Thess 1:8). The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others (Jn 15:7-16). Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ (Matt 9:37-38; Acts 1:8, 13:2-3; Rom 10:13-15). The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations (Matt 24:14; Lk 24:46-53; Jn 20:21). It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ (Matt 10:5-15, 13:18-43; Lk 10:1-18; Acts 2; 2 Tim 4:5).

- **The Church and Government**

We believe religious liberty, rooted in Scripture, is the inalienable right of all individuals to freedom of conscience with ultimate accountability to God (Gen 1:27; Matt 22:21). Church and state exist by the will of God (Gen 9:5-17; 1 Pet 2:13-16). Each has distinctive concerns and responsibilities, from control by the other. Christians should pray for civil leaders, obey and support government in matters not contrary to Scripture (Rom 13:1-7). The state should guarantee religious liberty to all persons and groups regardless of their religious preferences, consistent with the common good (1 Tim 2:1-4).

The Return of Christ

We believe God, in His own time and His own way, will bring all things to their appropriate end (Matt 24:14; 24:36-44). The certain hope of the Christian is that Jesus Christ will return suddenly, personally and visibly in glory to receive His bride, the church (Jn 14:1-3; Rev 21). The righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and dwell forever with the Lord (1 Cor 15:51-58; 1 Thess 4:13-18; Phil 3:20-21). Christ will return to establish His kingdom when the earth will be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Hab 2:14). The Lord will conquer all human rebellion and bring the wicked to judgement, when the unrighteous will be assigned to the everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels (Is 2:2-4; Dan 2:44-45; Matt 25:41-46; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 20:10). The ultimate victory is the eternal state, the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth where all is made perfect and right (Is 11:6-8; Eph 1:9-10; Rev 21-22).

Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust all beliefs and convictions of Redeeming Grace Church. The Word of God itself, as the inspired, infallible, and sufficient Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the final source of all that we believe. For any doctrinal issue not specifically addressed in this Statement of Faith, final interpretive decision will be discerned and explained by the council of elders. For any doctrinal division in the church over an issue contained within this Statement of Faith, Article V2 of the church Constitution shall govern.