

ROCKDALE COMMUNITY CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. **The Holy Scriptures** (cf. 1689 BCF Chapter 1)

God has revealed all that is necessary for life and salvation in the sixty-six books of the Bible, which is the Word of God (1). All Scripture is inerrant and infallible, transmitted through human authors by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2). Scripture alone* is the final authority in all matters of doctrine and practice. The authority of Scripture is derived from its Author and not from the opinions of men (3).

2. **God and the Trinity** (cf. 1689 BCF Chapter 2)

There is one true and living God (1) who exists in three eternally distinct persons (2): the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (3). These three are one in being (4), united in purpose (5), and equally worthy of glory and adoration (6). God is invisible, eternal, omni-present, almighty, all-knowing, unchanging, dependent upon none, sovereign, righteous, holy, just, gracious, loving, merciful, patient and good (7).

3. **Creation** (cf. 1689 BCF Chapter 4)

God created all that now exists in six days and from nothing, and it was all very good (1). The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit acted together in the work of creation (2). Out of all living things, only man was created in God's image. God granted him dominion over all lesser forms of life and over the earth itself (3).

4. **Providence** (cf. 1689 BCF Chapters 3 & 5)

God orders and directs His universe in every detail (1). Every event in nature and every human action and decision is according to His decree and purpose (2). In God's infinite wisdom and power, all things work together for the benefit of His people (3), and for His glory (4).

5. **The Fall and Its Effects** (cf. 1689 BCF Chapters 6, 7 & 9)

God made Adam perfect, holy and upright (1), appointing him representative head of the human race (2). He fell from his original righteousness into sin when he disobeyed God's command (3). By his sinful act, Adam brought all people into a state of death and condemnation, passing to each one of them a corrupt sinful nature (4).

6. **Man's Inability** (cf. 1689 BCF Chapter 6 & 9)

The fall brought every man into a state of utter depravity, meaning every dimension of his being is distorted by sin (1). Apart from the grace of God, fallen man treats sin as his master (2), God as an enemy (3), and the message of the cross as foolishness (4). Until he is born again, he possesses neither the desire nor the ability to love God, to keep His laws, to understand the gospel, to repent of sin, or to trust in Christ (5).

7. **The Birth and Life of Christ** (cf. 1689 BCF Chapter 8)

God sent His Son into the world to save His people from their sins (1). Conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (2), Jesus was and is both God and man (3). He was tempted in all things yet without sin (4), living the perfect life of righteousness on behalf of His people (5).

8. **The Death of Christ** (cf. 1689 BCF Chapter 8)

Jesus died on the cross (1) as the perfect sacrifice for sin (2), forever finishing the substitutionary work of atonement (3) for His people (4).

9. The Resurrection of Christ (cf. 1689 RCF Chapter 8)

On the third day, Jesus rose bodily from the grave (1). The resurrection affirms the deity and authority of Christ (2) and assures believers of their future bodily resurrection (3).

10. The Ascension of Christ (cf. 1689 BCF Chapter 8)

Jesus ascended into heaven (1) to appear in the presence of God as our perpetual High Priest, presenting Himself as the only acceptable sacrifice for sin (2). He is the one and only Mediator between God and men (3), and Head of His church (4). He intercedes forever on behalf of His people (5) and rules over all things for their sake (6).

11. Election and Responsibility (cf. 1689 BCF Chapters 3, 6, 9 & 10)

Before the foundation of the world, God elected a great multitude of men and women to eternal life (1) as an act of His free grace alone*. This election was in no way dependent upon His foresight of human faith, decision, works, or merit (2). In the unsearchable realm of God's sovereign will (3), all men remain responsible beings, subject to God's commands to repent and believe, and accountable to God for their rebellion, impenitence and rejection of Christ (4).

12. Calling and Regeneration (cf. 1689 BCF Chapters 7, 10, 14 & 15)

To accomplish God's redemptive purpose (1), the Holy Spirit works effectively through the gospel of Christ (2), regeneration elect sinners (3) and drawing them irresistibly to repentance and saving faith (4).

13. Justification (cf. 1689 BCF Chapters 8, 11 & 12)

The elect are declared righteous in the sight of God because of Christ's perfect life, His substitutionary death and the imputation of His righteousness (1). Justification can never be the reward or result of human works or merit (2), nor does it grow out of an infusion of Christ's righteousness (3). It is granted by grace alone' through faith alone' (4) in the person of Christ alone' (5).

14. Sanctification (cf. 1689 BCF Chapters 13, 15 & 16)

According to God's purpose in predestination, the justified are progressively conformed to the image of Christ (1). All true believers direct their will and affections toward this purpose (2), putting to death desires and deed of the flesh (3) by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit (4) as God's Word is more fully understood and applied (5). While sinless perfection will never be attained in this life (6), it is a certainty in heaven (7).

15. Perseverance (cf. 1689 BCF Chapters 15, 17 & 18)

All who are chosen, called, regenerated and justified shall preserve in faith and never finally fall away (1). Perseverance is not a human accomplishment but a work of God through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit who creates, sustains and nourishes a living, growing, transforming and enduring faith in all true believers (2).

16. The Church (cf. BCF Chapters 22, 26 & 27)

A local church is a visible representation of the body of Christ and is under the authority of Christ alone' (1). Nevertheless in every local church, qualified elders are appointed to serve Christ as they care for His body (2). Qualified deacons are to assist elders as needs arise (3). Each member of the church is uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit to edify the body (4). A local church must recognize and fellowship with the universal body of Christ as represented in other true churches (5).

17. Baptism (cf. 1689 BCF Chapters 28 & 29)

Baptism is an act of Christian obedience (1). We believe our practice of baptism by immersion in water (2), best symbolizes both the believer's union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection to new life (3) and his cleansing from sin (4). Baptism may only be administered to those who demonstrate repentance from sin and make a credible profession of faith in Christ (5).

18. The Lord's Supper (cf. BCF 1689 BCF Chapters 28 & 30)

Christians may, and indeed, must regularly partake of the Lord's Supper (1). By breaking and eating the bread and drinking the cup, believers remember the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross (2). Through the Lord's Supper, they affirm and celebrate their oneness, their separation from the world and their fellowship with Christ in the New Covenant (3).

19. Evangelism (cf. 1689 RCF Chapters 16,26,27 & 29)

It is the calling of every local church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that Christ has commanded (I). It is a priority in evangelism to unite new believers with local churches (2).

20. The Return of Christ (cf. 1689 RCF Chapters 31 & 32)

The Lord Jesus Christ shall come again to raise the dead bodily, both righteous and unrighteous (1). The justified shall enjoy everlasting life in the presence of God in heaven, while the unjustified shall eternally endure God's wrath in hell (2).

21. God's Everlasting Covenant (cf. 1689 RCF Chapter 7)

The distance between God and His creature man is so great that, although men, endowed as they are with reason, owe obedience to Him as their creator, yet they could never have attained to life as their reward had not God, in an act of voluntary condescension made this possible by the making of a covenant (I).

Furthermore, since man, by reason of his fall into sin, had brought himself under the curse of God's law, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace (2), in which He freely offers life and salvation by Jesus Christ to sinners. On their part He requires faith in Him that they may be saved (3), and promises to give His Holy Spirit to all those who are elected unto eternal life, in order that they may be made willing and able to believe (4).

God's covenant is revealed in the gospel; in the first place to Adam in the promise of salvation by "the seed of the woman", and afterwards, step by step, until the full revelation of salvation was completed in the New Testament (5). The salvation of the elect (6) is based upon a covenant of redemption that was transacted in eternity between the Father and the Son; and it is solely through the grace conveyed by this covenant that all the descendants of fallen Adam who have been saved have obtained life and a blessed immortality; for the terms of blessing which applied to Adam in his state of innocence have no application to his posterity to render them acceptable to God (7).

22. The Glory of God (cf. 1689 RCF Chapters 2 & 16)

Christians must live for God's glory *alone**(1) through their awareness and enjoyment of His person (2), submission to His authority (3), and reliance upon His goodness (4). In truth, all things that have or will transpire, serve to glorify God as their highest purpose (5).