

Statement of Faith

What we believe...

There are 7 fundamental doctrines in the New Testament which lay the foundation for people to go onto spiritual maturity and fulfilling their potential in Christ. As this is set out in the bible, every church which aims to follow biblical tradition (as opposed to human tradition) should acknowledge these.

This is taken from Hebrews 6:1,2:

Faith towards God
Repentance from dead works
Baptisms (of water and Spirit)
Laying on of hands
Resurrection of the dead
Eternal judgement

Faith towards God - The bible simply declares the existence of God. He is the creator of all things (visible and invisible) and all things consist of Him. There is only one true God (who is the one Lord) and there is none beside Him. He is the Almighty, the only Creator and the only Saviour. The one true God manifested Himself as a man, Jesus Christ. Jesus manifested the ultimate name of God "Yahweh is Salvation". Jesus is the highest name of God and is the only name given to humanity whereby we must be saved. Jesus Christ was also 100% man meaning that as a man, He is the son of God. To understand the incarnation, we must accept that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily. The doctrine of Christ means that in the Lord Jesus Christ we have both the Father and the Son. Jesus Christ is called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. If you have seen Jesus Christ, you have seen the Father because He is the brightness of His Glory and express image of the person of the invisible God. This dual nature allowed Jesus to show Himself as God and Creator whilst also allowing His death on the cross for the sins of the world. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead on the third day for our justification and to destroy the power of death and sin. This could not be achieved outside of the incarnation of God as a man because God is a Spirit (and cannot die). This is why God prepared a body for Himself. This death, burial and resurrection is the biblical definition of the Gospel. This resurrection is the testable, falsifiable claim of the Gospel and we are invited to test it. Not many belief systems have a claim that can be falsified in this way. In other words, if Jesus Christ did not come back from the dead, then all Christians are wasting their time with all that they do. If He did come back from the dead, then He is both Lord and God and will return for His Church. Test this for yourself, are you up to the challenge?

(Gen 1:1, Isa 43:10-11, Isa 44:6,8,24, 1 Tim 3:16, 2 Cor 5:19, John 17:6, Acts 4:12, Lu 1:25, Col 2:9, Isa 9:6, 2 John 9, 1 Cor 15:1-21, John 4:24, Heb 1:3, Heb 10:5)

Repentance - is the next step after you have come to faith in God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Repentance means a complete forsaking of our way of living (particularly away from sin) towards a pursuit of God and His Word. Repentance is a genuine change of mind and comes with evidence in our lives. Repentance is described as a death to yourself which identifies you with the death of Christ on the cross. Christ gave up His life in obedience to God signalling that we are to do the same if we are to be reconciled to God. Do you want to be a true follower and disciple of Christ?

(Acts 2:28, Mar 6:12, Lu 13:3, Acts 3:19, Acts 17:30, Acts 26:20, Matt 9:13, Lu 24:47, Acts 26:20, Acts 20:21)

Baptism in water - identifies you with the burial of Jesus Christ. We call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in baptism in obedience to scripture. This is consistent with the practice of the Apostles and early Church fathers in the years, decades and centuries following the time of Christ's early ministry. Everyone baptised in the bible is baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Water baptism (full immersion) in Jesus' name, applies the blood of

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His sacrifice, remits sins and puts you into His death and burial. Like repentance, it is an act of true faith and obedience. Have your sins been washed away with guilt being removed also?

(Acts 2:38, John 3:5, Matt 28:19, Acts 8:12, Acts 10:48, Mar 16:16, Rom 6:3-4, Gal 3:27, Acts 19:1-6, Acts 22:16, 1 Pet 3:21)

Baptism in the Spirit - identifies you with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the one that baptises in His Spirit when we believe. The bible also refers to this experience as being "born of the Spirit". Jesus said that being born of the water and spirit is essential to entering into the Kingdom of God. He also said that there is a sound that is associated with everyone that is born of the Spirit. There are 5 incidences spread over 20 years in the book of Acts where people were baptised in the Holy Spirit. The bible records that observers knew that they had been baptised in the Spirit. As the bible promises, this experience is available for everyone. Do you want to experience this too? God's Spirit gives us power to overcome sin and live a holy life without which no man can see God. Holiness is both inward and outward (conduct, conversation and dress) and also means a separation of sin and from wrongful practices of the world. The fruit of the Spirit are also manifest as enduring evidence of this new birth.

(Acts 2:38-39, Acts 8:17, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:1-4, John 3:3-8, Acts 10:44-47, John 7:37-39, Eph 1:13, 1 John 4:13, 1 Cor 2:12, Gal 5:22-23)

The book of Acts is the only place in the bible which records the appropriate response to the great Commission and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We stand on the bible, the inspired Word of God, which is also supported by the testimony of history. By grace we are saved through faith and not ourselves; it is the gift of God. Therefore, we obey the gospel by faith unto salvation by His grace. As Jesus affirms: "You must be born again...born of the water and of the Spirit". Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, no man can come to the Heavenly Father but by Him.

Laying on of hands - a practise done in faith which leads to the manifestation of God's power. We lay hands on the sick and those that are oppressed and we see them recover by the power of God. Authority is given to the followers of Christ to walk as He walked. His death and resurrection has removed the power of sickness and death and has given Christians access to healing and deliverance. Do you believe that signs and wonders should be a normal part of a Christian's life?

(Mark 16:17, Acts 8:17, 1 Tim 4:14, Mar 6:5, Lu 4:40, Lu 13:13, Acts 28:8)

Resurrection of the dead – the Bible teaches that we will all physically meet our Creator one day. This will be on the day of judgement where we will have to give an account for the life we have lived. The Resurrection of the dead is a fundamental doctrine of the bible. When we die, we do not simply fade into oblivion. There is more to this life than what we sense in the natural and it really does matter how we live it. Are you ready to face your Creator?

(Matt 22:30, Lu 14:14, Lu 20:35-36, John 5:29, John 11:24-25, Acts 23:6, Acts 24:15, 1 Cor 15:12-13, Phil 3:11, Rev 20:5-6, Job, Dan 12:2, Isa 26:19, Ps 71:25, Job 19:25-27, Rev 20:12)

Eternal judgement - fundamental doctrine of the New Covenant. God is not willing that any should perish. Eternal judgement was originally meant for the devil and his angels. However, this is also the destiny for those that practise evil and wickedness. God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. Thank God that He has provided a way out.

(2 Pet 3:9, Matt 25:41, Rev 20:9-15, Isa 33:14, Matt 13:40-42, Mark 9:43-48, Rev 14:11, Rev 21:8)

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Our Christian duties...

As stated, Hebrews 6 lists the above as 7 foundational principles of the doctrine of Christ. However, it does say to go on to perfection from this foundation. The following are other beliefs and practices which result of living on this foundation:

The Church – Jesus Christ has established His Church and is coming back for His Bride (which is the Church) having no spot or blemish. His Church is universal and has all peoples of all nations and languages represented. Ultimately, the universal Church is made up saints which attend local church fellowships. The local church fellowships are established as unique communities for all those that believe. It is the spiritual community ordained for worship, stewardship, and service to God and people, of which every believer must become a part, for it is the body of Christ in the world today, displaying the same miraculous power and gifts experienced by the early church. The manifestation of spiritual gifts edifies the Church with some being a sign to the unbeliever. It is a place where saints can both minister and receive ministry growing to spiritual maturity and bearing much fruit. Disciples of Christ are called to not forsake the gathering together of the saints. Saints can also gather to unify their efforts in fulfilling God’s call to teach people and the community as a whole. Prayer and corporate fasting are also key ministries for the Church as prayer and fasting connects the saints with Christ and His will. It also causes spiritual change which manifests physically as saints stand in the gap for our families, work places, schools and communities. Churches also gather together for ancient church traditions such as “the Lord’s supper” and “foot washing”.

Ultimately, our duty to God and the Church does start at home. We need a genuine experience and relationship with God. We cannot live a Christian life through the experience of others (even our family). Regular church attendance should accompany private devotions, fasting, prayer and bible study. This can be extended out to family devotions, prayer and bible study and small cell groups gathering in homes.

(Eph 5:26-27, Rev 7:9-10, Mark 16:17, 1 Cor 12, 1 Cor 14, Eph 4:8-12, Heb 10:25)

Evangelism – The word “Gospel” means “good news”. The good news is that God so loved the world that He provided a way for us to be saved. This represents the only hope for all humanity. Therefore, those that respond to the Gospel message in faith are commanded to share this message with the world. God is merciful and will forgive anyone who comes to Him in repentance. During His time on earth, Jesus Christ was known for reaching out to everyone; many were considered “undesirable” e.g. adulteresses, tax collectors, rebels/criminals, drinkers and those with chronic illnesses. Therefore, as disciples of Christ, His followers should reach out to people in love and patience bringing comfort and relief for those that suffer and preach the Gospel to everyone.

(Matt 28:18-19, Mark 16:15, John 4, 2 Tim 4:5)

Giving – The very first believers in Christ on the day of Pentecost felt compelled to sell everything so that they could have everything in common in serving God and reaching the lost. Although this is not a common practice in today’s Church, the principle of giving and sacrifice for things which pertain to the Kingdom and its growth is still well established in the Church. Under the old covenant, Israel was required to tithe (as a minimum) and give free-will and feast offerings to support the ministry of the priests. In the new covenant, there is now a need to support the expansion of the Kingdom and those that minister in the Gospel. The law of liberty in Christ working in a Believer should yield better fruit of giving than the obligations of the law of Moses. The free will giving of the Saints is the model for how God financially supports His ministers, however, He is clearly not limited to only using charity to provide. Despite this, Believers are responsible for giving to support God’s work. Every true disciple of Christ should give what they have decided in their hearts to give, not reluctantly nor under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

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As a Church, Apostolic Faith Church of Oxford encourages the practise of giving tithes and offering. The Church makes itself accountable to the saints for the funds received through setting goals, seeking God's will and measuring success against those objectives.

(Lu 6:38, Matt 19:29, 2 Cor 9:6-15, 2 Cor 8-15, Acts 2:44-45, Matt 19:21)

Societal duties – In practicing genuine Christianity, through love for God and people, we pursue peace with all people and uphold the moral standards of society. This is done through prayer and fasting, obedience to the Word of God, heartfelt worship and expressive praise, sharing our faith, commitment to our marriage companions and families, availability to help one another in time of need, honesty and diligence in our employment, honour and respect of our government as it submits to the divine plan for human society, and the dedication of our time, talent, and treasure to advance the kingdom of God on earth.

(Heb 12:14, Rom 12:18, 1 Cor 7:10-11, Rom 13:1-10, Jam 1:27, Jam 2:15-16, Matt 22:35-40, Matt 25:36-40)