

Welcome Home Part 1: “What we believe” (1-7-2018)

This series . . . For the month of January we will be reviewing who Grace Chapel is, what we believe, casting vision for 2018, and providing an opportunity for membership in the church.

Today: Part 1 – “What we believe”

Our Starting Point

Ephesians 2:19 (ESV)

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God

- *The church is a **FAMILY**.*
- *God expects you to be a **MEMBER** of a church family.*
- *A Christian without a church family is disconnected. We were made for relationship!*

Our Goal for this Series

- *That you will commit yourself to Christ and a church family.*
- *That you will have enough information to make an informed **DECISION** whether or not Grace Chapel is to be that family.*

Our Core Beliefs

- In essential beliefs — we have **UNITY**.

*“There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all...”
Ephesians 4:4-6*

- In non-essential beliefs — we have **LIBERTY**.

“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters... Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls... So then each of us will give an account of himself to God... So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.” Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22

- In all our beliefs — we show **LOVE**.

*“...If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains — but have no love, I amount to nothing at all.”
1 Corinthians 13:2*

5 essential doctrines

If these 5 essential doctrines are missing from any church's or organization's beliefs, that church or organization is not standing in agreement with historic Christianity – the Bible, apostles, and early church fathers.

Galatians 1:6-10 (ESV)

(6) I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— (7) not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. (8) But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. (9) As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. (10) For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

1) Doctrine of the TRINITY

- **Definition** – “There is one God in essence, power and authority, manifested as three distinct, non-created, co-eternal persons. Each is of the same essence or nature and the same Glory or Divinity.” There is one God, but He has revealed Himself in three distinct persons, and all three are the one God.

- **God the Father**

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1,26,27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

- **Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Romans 1:3,4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Titus 2:13

- **Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13; 14:16, 17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18

2) Doctrine of the DEITY of Christ

- Within the doctrine of the Trinity is the doctrine of deity of Christ. Jesus is God, in human flesh.
 - John 1:1, 14
 - Jesus is God in human flesh
 - Colossians 1:15-16
 - Jesus is the Creator
 - Exodus 3:14, John 8:58
 - Jesus uses same name for self that Father used for self.

3) Doctrine of the Vicarious ATONEMENT of Christ

- Vicarious – “in the place of”
- Atonement – “reconciliation of the guilty by a God-ordained sacrifice”
- Summary – Jesus was our substitute. He died in our place to reconcile us to God and acquit us of our guilt.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - the innocent for the guilty
 - the perfect for the imperfect
 - unbelievable love!
 - 1 Peter 2:24
 - Christ carried our sins
 - By His wounds we’re healed
 - God laid on Him our chastisement – Isaiah 53:4-11

4) Doctrine of the Physical RESURRECTION of Christ

- Jesus rose from grave in literal physical body
- When eyewitnesses experienced same physical body that was beaten, crucified, dead, buried, and alive again... Proof positive
 - Jesus is Resurrection and Life as He said
 - Conquered death, hell, and grave. He is Alive forever more as Reigning Son of God
- **Jesus rose in His physical body!**
 - John 2:19-22 (pre-death)
 - Jesus foretold physical, bodily resurrection
 - Other times “after three days”
 - Luke 24:36-43 (post-death)
 - Jesus fulfilled prophecy of physical resurrection
 - Not a spirit – vs. 37
 - Showed hands and feet – vs. 40
 - Ate with them – vs. 41-43

Question: What event happened that took disciples from hiding in fear to save their own lives, to boldly proclaiming and being willing to lose their lives?

Answer: Physical resurrection of Christ!

5) Doctrine of SALVATION by Grace through Faith

- Romans 3:23-28
 - All have sinned – Isaiah 59:2 – sin separates; wages of sin are death – Romans 6:23
 - Gracious kindness declares us not guilty
 - Through Christ’s sacrifice
 - Not our own good deeds
 - By grace through faith
- Ephesians 2:8-9
 - Saved by grace through faith
 - No boasting about it
 - Boasters make me wonder if they realize the depth of their sin and realize their unearned favor
- Salvation is God’s **free gift** – Romans 6:23 – to mankind that comes to us by **grace**, unearned favor, and is accessed through **faith**.

What Does God Want Me to Do?

- **CONFESS** that God has not been first place in my life and ask Him to forgive my sins.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong.” 1 John 1:9

- **BELIEVE** that Jesus died to pay for my sins and that He rose again and is alive today.

“If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

- **ACCEPT** God’s free gift of salvation on the basis of what Jesus has already done for me, not my good efforts.

“For it is by grace you are saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

- **INVITE** Jesus Christ to come into my life and be the director (“Lord”) of my life.

“To all who receive Him, He gives the right to become children of God.” John 1:12

Pray a simple prayer to God, like . . .

“Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I’ve ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I’m sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian.”

The Sacraments

1) Communion – Remember, Reveal, Rejoice

a) Remember

Matthew 26:26-30 (ESV)

(26) Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." (27) And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, (28) for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Notes: looking back . . . The Cross

b) Reveal

Luke 24:30-32 (ESV)

(30) When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. (31) And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. (32) They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

Notes: looking around . . . seeing Jesus present (Emmaus)

Then . . . inward & outward reflection . . .

1 Corinthians 11:26-28 (ESV)

(26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (27) Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. (28) Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

Notes: Recognition, Confession, & Reconciliation

c) Rejoice

Matthew 26:26-30 (ESV)

(29) I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (30) And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Notes: Rejoice (see Heaven) – looking ahead . . . a vision of what's to come!

2) Baptism

a) What it is (and isn't)

Matthew 3:13-17 (ESV)

(13) Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. (14) John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" (15) But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. (16) And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; (17) and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Romans 6:4 (ESV)

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

- **Water baptism is full immersion in water – signifying a decision to repent and follow Jesus**
- **However, the act of baptism is not what saves you – It is an outward picture of an inward change**

b) Why we do it: Obedience & Declaration (or testimony)

Jesus did, His followers did it, and we are told to!

Acts 2:41 (ESV)

So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Mark 16:15-16 (ESV)

(15) And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. (16) Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14 (ESV)

(12) For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. (13) For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (14) For the body does not consist of one member but of many.

1 Corinthians 1:12-13, 17 (ESV)

(12) What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." (13) Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? . . . (17) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

c) When we do it . . .

- Not as babies, but as understanding allows – it’s a choice following salvation
- What about Infant Baptisms?
 - Not in the Bible – However, people did bring their children to Jesus to be blessed.
 - So, we practice this and call it Baby Dedications)
- Condition of our small children’s souls?
 - They are saved until they reach an age of accountability and understanding

What we believe about The Bible

The Bible is God’s Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105, 160; 12:6; Proverbs 30:5

Therefore, the Bible as Our Sole Authority!

2 Timothy 3:15

“The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us to do what is right.”

Since God’s Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is, “What does the Bible say?” We practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

Do we take the Bible literally? The answer is we take the Bible seriously!