

# Cornerstone Church Community

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## Statement of Faith

### The Holy Scriptures

We teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7–14; 2 Peter 1:20–21). We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed.

We teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17), describe the special creation of man and woman (Genesis 1:26–28; 2:5–25), and define marriage as between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5). Scripture elsewhere dictates that any sexual activity outside of marriage is an abomination before the Lord (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:1–30; Matthew 5:27–32; 19:1–9; 1 Corinthians 5:1–5; 6:9–10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–7).

We teach that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12–13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20–21).

We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship: the Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20–21) without error in whole or part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found

as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12–15; 1 Corinthians 2:7–15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

## **God**

We teach that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5–7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

## **God the Father**

We teach that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8–9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1–31; Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither the author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38–47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4–6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him;

and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5–9).

## **God the Son**

We teach that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9).

We teach that God the Father created according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and operation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15–17; Hebrews 1:2).

We teach that in the incarnation the eternal Son, without altering His divine nature or surrendering any divine attributes, took on a full human nature consubstantial with our own, yet without sin (Philippians 2:5–8; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26).

We teach that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) and born of a woman (Galatians 4:4–5), so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the divine and the human, were joined together in one Person, without confusion, change, division, or separation. He is very God and very man, the only mediator between God and man.

We teach that in His incarnation, Christ fully possessed His divine nature, attributes, and prerogatives. In the state of His humiliation, He veiled the full expression of His majesty, acting according to His human nature in submission to the Father (John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 6:38) by the power of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 12:28; Luke 4:1, 14), while according to His divine nature He acted by His authority and power as the eternal Son (John 1:14; cf. 2:11; 10:37–38; 14:10–11).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive.

We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of Christ's death, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, penalty, power, and one day the very presence of sin; is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into God's family.

We teach that our justification is secured by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead; He ascended to the right hand of the Father and now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest.

We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God accepted Christ's atoning work. Jesus' bodily resurrection guarantees a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26–29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5–10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church (His Body) to Himself at the rapture and, returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9–11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Revelation 20).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind: believers (1 Corinthians 3:10–15; 2 Corinthians 5:10); living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31–46); and the unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11–15). As Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5), Head of the church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and coming universal King who will reign on David's throne (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31–33), He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him (Matthew 25:14–46; Acts 17:30–31).

## **God the Holy Spirit**

We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal and underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity—intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10–13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternality (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7–10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13–14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13)—coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3–4; 28:25–26; 1 Corinthians 12:4–6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jeremiah 31:31–34 with Hebrews 10:15–17).

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind—His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), written revelation (2 Peter 1:20–21), and salvation (John 3:5–7).

We teach that the Spirit's work in this age began at Pentecost (John 14:16–17; 15:26;

Acts 1:5; 2:4) to form the Body of Christ (the church; 1 Corinthians 12:13). His activity includes convicting the world, glorifying Christ, and transforming believers into Christ's image (John 16:7–9; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22). We teach that the Holy Spirit regenerates, indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers for service, and seals believers unto the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13). He guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they wrote Scripture (2 Peter 1:19–21). Every believer has the Spirit from the moment of salvation and is called to be filled with the Spirit (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church (John 16:13–14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; 2 Corinthians 3:18). He glorifies Christ by redeeming the lost and edifying believers.

## **Man**

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness—free of sin, with rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7, 15–25; James 3:9). Man was created as either male or female, biologically defined and distinct sexes (Genesis 1:27; 2:5–23; 1 Corinthians 11:11–15; Romans 1:26–27) set by God for each individual (Psalm 119:13–14). Confusion between the two is an abomination to Him (Leviticus 18:22; Deuteronomy 22:5; Romans 1:26–27; 1 Corinthians 6:9).

We teach that God's intention in creating man was that he glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live in God's will, and accomplish God's purpose in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

We teach that in Adam's sin, man lost innocence, incurred spiritual and physical death, became subject to God's wrath, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing what is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. Man is hopelessly lost; salvation is wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16–17; 3:1–19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1

Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1–3; 1 Timothy 2:13–14; 1 John 1:8).

We teach that because all were in Adam, a nature corrupted by his sin has been transmitted to all people, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All are sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1–3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9–18, 23; 5:10–12).

## **Salvation**

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ and the merit of His shed blood, not human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8–10; 1 Peter 1:18–19).

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit imparting divine nature and life (John 3:3–7; Titus 3:5), accomplished solely by the Spirit through the Word (John 5:24) when the repentant sinner responds in faith. Genuine regeneration bears fruit in righteous attitudes and conduct (1 Corinthians 6:19–20; Ephesians 2:10) to the extent the believer submits to the Spirit by obedience to the Word (Ephesians 5:17–21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4–10), increasingly conforming to Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18), culminating in glorification (Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2–3).

We teach election: before the foundation of the world, God chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28–30; Ephesians 1:4–11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1–2). Sovereign election does not negate human responsibility to repent and trust Christ (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18–19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22–23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10–12; Revelation 22:17). All whom the Father calls will come, and all who come in faith He will receive (John 6:37–40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).

We teach that God's unmerited favor is not related to human initiative or foreseen merit but solely to His sovereign grace and mercy (Ephesians 1:4–7; Titus 3:4–7; 1 Peter 1:2). God's sovereignty harmonizes with all His attributes (Romans 9:11–16) and is expressed consistently with His character (Matthew 11:25–28; 2 Timothy 1:9).

We teach justification as God's act (Romans 8:33) declaring righteous those who,

through faith in Christ, repent of sin (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6–7) and confess Him as Lord (Romans 10:9–10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). Our sins are imputed to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24), and His righteousness is imputed to us (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21), so that God is “just and the justifier” of the one who has faith in Jesus (Romans 3:26).

We teach positional (instant) sanctification—believers are set apart to God and identified as saints by virtue of justification (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach progressive sanctification—by the Spirit and the Word, believers grow in holiness, increasingly conformed to Christ (John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1–22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–4; 5:23). The believer’s lifelong conflict with the flesh continues, yet the Spirit provides victory over sin; eradication of sin in this life is not taught in Scripture (Galatians 5:16–25; Ephesians 4:22–24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9–10; 1 Peter 1:14–16; 1 John 3:5–9).

We teach the eternal security of the redeemed—kept by God’s power and secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37–40; 10:27–30; Romans 5:9–10; 8:1, 31–39; 1 Corinthians 1:4–8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24).

We teach that assurance should never be used to justify sinful living; Scripture forbids using liberty for the flesh (Romans 6:15–22; 13:13–14; Galatians 5:13, 25–26; Titus 2:11–14).

We teach separation from sin is clearly commanded; apostasy and worldliness will increase in the last days (2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1–5).

We teach that, out of gratitude for grace and because God is worthy of total consecration, believers should live to honor Christ and avoid reproach (Romans 12:1–2; 1 Corinthians 5:9–13; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; 1 John 2:15–17; 2 John 9–11).

We teach separation unto Christ and a life of obedient righteousness reflecting the Beatitudes and a continual pursuit of holiness (Matthew 5:2–12; 2 Thessalonians 1:11–12; Hebrews 12:1–2, 14; Titus 2:11–14; 1 John 3:1–10).

## **The Church**

We teach that all who place faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12–13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23–32; Revelation 19:7–8), of which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We teach that the church began at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–21, 38–47) and will be completed at Christ's coming for His own at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51–52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18).

We teach that the church is a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this age (Ephesians 2:11–3:6), distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), a mystery now revealed (Ephesians 3:1–6; 5:32).

We teach the establishment and continuity of local churches (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1–2 Thessalonians 1:1) and the duty of believers to gather in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18–20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that Christ is the supreme authority for the church (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18). Under Him, elders (also called bishops, pastors, pastor-teachers; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons lead, meeting biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Peter 5:1–5). Leaders rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17–22); the congregation submits to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

We teach the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19–20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability (Matthew 18:5–14), and church discipline for sinning members (Matthew 18:15–22; Acts 5:1–11; 1 Corinthians 5:1–13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6–15; 1 Timothy 1:19–20; Titus 1:10–16).

We teach the autonomy of the local church (Titus 1:5), free from external control; churches may cooperate for the gospel, but each local church, through its elders, judges its cooperation and governs membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and other matters (Acts 15:19–31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4–7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1–4).

We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by edification (Ephesians 4:13–16), instruction in the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16–



17), fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38–42), and advancing the gospel to the world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42).

We teach the calling of all saints to service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12) and the distribution of spiritual gifts to equip the church (Ephesians 4:7–12; Romans 12:5–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–31; 1 Peter 4:10–11).

We teach that the early church received two kinds of gifts: miraculous (for confirming the apostolic message, temporary; Hebrews 2:3–4; 2 Corinthians 12:12) and ministering gifts (for edification). With the New Testament complete, Scripture is the test of a man's message; confirming miraculous gifts are no longer necessary (1 Corinthians 13:8–12) and can be counterfeited by Satan (Revelation 13:13–14). The gifts in operation today are non-revelatory equipping gifts (Romans 12:6–8).

We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today, though God answers the prayer of faith according to His will (Luke 18:1–6; John 5:7–9; 2 Corinthians 12:6–10; James 5:13–16; 1 John 5:14–15).

We teach two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38–42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36–39) testifies to faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to new life (Romans 6:1–11), and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41–42).

We teach that the Lord's Supper commemorates and proclaims His death until He comes and must be preceded by self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28–32). The elements are representative, yet participation is real communion with the risen Christ who indwells every believer (1 Corinthians 10:16).