

CHARLES RIVER CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Section I: THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible is the written Word of God, that it is divinely inspired and inerrant throughout, infallible and God-breathed, that it is the supreme authority in all matters of which it speaks, that it is totally sufficient and must therefore not be added to, superseded, or changed by later tradition, extra-biblical revelation, or worldly wisdom (II Timothy 3:6, 17, II Peter 1:19-21, Matthew 5:18, John 17:17).

Section II: GOD

We believe in one triune God, existing in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, Who possesses the same attributes and perfections yet carry out distinct roles (Deuteronomy 6:4, II Corinthians 13:14, I Peter 1:2, Matthew 28:19).

- A. We believe that God the Father is the absolute omnipotent ruler of the universe, sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption, a perfect Spirit in Whom is perfect holiness, and infinite wisdom (Psalm 99:6; 103:19, 139:7-12, 147:5, Isaiah 44:24, Malachi 3:6, Matthew 7:7-8, John 4:24, I John 4:8, Romans 11:36).
- B. We believe that Jesus Christ is the divine (John 1:1, 10:30, 38, Colossians 2:9), eternal (John 1:2), Son of God (Matthew 3:17, 8:29, 11:27, 16:16, 17:5, Mark 1:1, I John 5:9-12), that He was miraculously conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-23, Luke 11:34-35, Galatians 4:4), that He perfectly revealed and accomplished the will of God, taking upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature (Philippians 2:5-8); that He identified Himself completely with mankind (John 1:14, Romans 1:3-4) yet was and remains without sin (I Peter 2:21-23, Hebrews 4:15), that He literally and vicariously died, was buried and raised from the dead (Romans 6:4, 9, I Corinthians 15:4, 20, I Thessalonians 1:10), and that He ascended to heaven (Acts 1:9), and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 9:24, I John 2:1-2).
- C. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, that He convicts the world of sin (John 16:8-11), helps (John 14:16-17, 26) and baptizes all believers into the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:12-14). We believe that He is the divine Teacher (John 14:26, I John 2:27) who guides believers into truth (John 16:13), and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled and controlled by the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18, I John 2:20).

Section III: MAN

We believe in the unique creation of Adam, as one man, and Eve, as one woman (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:20-23) and that they were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27, James 3:9), innocent under

the law of their Maker (Genesis 2:25), but by voluntary transgression fell from their sinless, perfect state (Genesis 3:1-7), that this fall is the basis for the necessity of redemption of mankind (I Corinthians 15:21-22) and therefore all of mankind are sinners, inherently from Adam and individually (by choice), and are therefore subject to God's wrath and condemnation (Romans 3:23, 5:17-19).

Section IV: SALVATION

We believe that salvation is wholly of God's grace and not by man's works (Ephesians 2:8-9), and is received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and none other (Acts 4:12), whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that man must repent of his sins (Luke 13:2-5, Acts 3:19, 20:21, 26:20) and accept Christ as his Lord and Savior to receive eternal life (Romans 10:9-10). When he does this, he is secure in Christ forever (John 10:28-29, Romans 8:38-39, Hebrews 7:25); he becomes a child of God; he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit; and has power over sin. We do not believe, however, that his old nature of sin is completely eradicated, but that he has the provisions for victory since he has received his new nature when he accepted Christ as Savior (I Corinthians 1:4-8) see also (John 1:12, 5:24, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 10:10, Romans 3:24-25, 5:9, 8:1, I Peter 1:18-19).

Section V: SEPARATION

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God. Although we believe that absolute immunity to sin takes place only when believers are taken to be with the Lord, we do realize the necessity of forsaking a habitual walk in sin (II Timothy 3:1-5, Romans 12:1-2, Romans 14:13, I John 2:15-17, II John 9-11, II Corinthians 6:14-7:1, James 2:1-26, II Peter 3:18).

Section VI: THE CHURCH

- A. Invisible:** We believe that the true Church is the invisible, living, spiritual body of which Christ is the Head and all regenerated persons are members (I Corinthians 12:4-31, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 1:18).
- B. Visible:** We believe that the local church is a congregation of believers, governed by the Word of God, baptized and associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship, organized to be built up in the faith (Ephesians 3:11-16), by instruction in the Word of God (II Timothy 2:2, 15, 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47, I John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19, Acts 2:38-42) and by faithful witnessing, through personal holiness and the proclamation of Christ to all men (Matthew 28:19, I Peter 3:15, Acts 1:8, 2:42).

Section VII: THE ORDINANCES

- A. Baptism:** We believe that baptism is for those who have accepted Christ as Savior and who want to give public testimony of this fact and that they also want to follow Him. It is a symbol of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and therefore of our passing from death to life. While baptism is not essential for salvation, we believe it is the expressed will of the Lord, by example (Matthew 3:13-17) and by command (Matthew 28:19). We believe that baptism by

immersion gives us the best picture of being buried with Christ and risen with Him unto life (Matthew 3:13-17, Matthew 28:29, John 5:24, Acts 2:41, 8:36-39, 9:18, 18:8, Ephesians 4:5, I Peter 3:21-22).

- B. The Lord's Supper:** We believe that the Lord's Supper is an observance commemorating the death of our Lord on Calvary; that it emphasizes the present relationship of the believer with Christ; that it is a proclamation of the fact of Christ's return; that the bread and the fruit of the vine are symbols of Christ's offered body and shed blood for the remission of sins; that the partaking is for those who know Christ as Savior; and that self-examination should precede its observance (Matthew 26:21-30, I Corinthians 11:17-34).

Section VIII: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts (I Corinthians 12:11; Hebrews 2:4). Every believer has received at least one spiritual gift (I Peter 4:10,11). Spiritual gifts are given to the Church, not for self-edification, but for the building up of the body (I Corinthians 12). No one gift is to be exalted above another. They have been graciously given for the common good (Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:8-16).

Section IX: SATAN

We believe that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17, Ezekiel 28:11-19); he took numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41, Revelation 12:1-14) and he introduced sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15). He is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14, Matthew 4:1-11, Revelation 12:9-10), the prince of this world (Ephesians 2:2) who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20) and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire (Genesis 3:4-5, Luke 4:1-13, 22:31, John 8:44, Revelation 20:10).

Section X: ETERNAL DESTINY

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to eternal judgment and everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46, John 5:28, 29, John 11:25, 26, Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13).

- A. Heaven:** We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, "absent from the body and present with the Lord" (II Corinthians 5:8), where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-6), when the body, soul, and spirit are reunited to be glorified and to remain forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43, Philippians 1:23, 3:21, I Thessalonians 4:16, 17).
- B. Hell:** We believe that rejecting Christ as Savior sentences a man to a just, eternal, conscious, literal misery - awaiting the resurrection of his body when he will be cast into the lake of fire, having been judged at the great white throne of judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). This final state is also one of literal, everlasting, and conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26; Matthew 25:41-46, II Thessalonians 1:7-9, Jude 6-7, Mark 9:43-48).

Section XI: THE RETURN OF CHRIST

We believe that at the close of this church age the Lord Jesus will descend from heaven to receive His own unto Himself; that at that time, the dead in Christ shall be raised, and living believers will be changed (I Thessalonians 4:16-17, I Corinthians 15:50-54).

WE BELIEVE IN:

1. The Bible as the inerrant and infallible Word of God (II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:21)
2. One Creator God who is sovereign over all (Genesis 1:1, Exodus 20:11, Deuteronomy 4:39)
3. The Holy Trinity (Matthew 28:19, II Corinthians 13:14)
4. Man's voluntary fall into sin from his perfect created state (Genesis 3:1-7, I Corinthians 15:21-22)
5. The Virgin Birth of Christ (Matthew 1:18-25, Isaiah 7:14)
6. The bodily resurrection of Christ from the dead (Luke 24:36-44)
7. The Atonement of Christ for our sins (I Peter 1:18-19, Isaiah 53:5)
8. Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8-9)
9. The believer's separation from worldliness and apostasy (John 2:15-16, Galatians 1:9, II Corinthians 6:14-18)
10. The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matthew 28:19, I Corinthians 11:23-30)
11. Evangelizing the lost (Acts 5:42, Romans 10:11, 15)
12. A literal heaven for the saved (John 14:2-3)
13. A literal hell for the lost (Revelation 20:14-15)
14. The literal second coming of Christ to earth (Acts 1:11, I Thessalonians 5:23, Revelation 22:20)