

Statement of Faith

At Integrity Church we think what you believe about God is the most important thing about you. Consequently, we want to explain what we at Integrity Church believe about God, His creation, and His plan to redeem a people to call His own.

Gospel Centered

The most important quality of Integrity Church is that we are a gospel-centered church. Because we believe the gospel is our epicenter, it is important for you to understand what we mean by the gospel.

Simply put, the gospel is the announcement that God has reconciled us to Himself by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to live a perfect life, die as a substitute for our sins, and that everyone who repents and believes has eternal life in Him.

The gospel is the hope of the world. As we read the Scriptures, we see the overarching themes of God's providence, power and provision to reconcile mankind and the created world to himself through the person and work of Jesus Christ. In light of this, we aim to be explicitly gospel-centered in all that we preach, teach and practice.

However, in order to really understand the what and why of the gospel we need to understand some crucial truths:

1. The one and only God, who is holy, made us in His image to know Him. (Genesis 1:26-28)
2. However, we have all sinned, thus separating ourselves from God and becoming His enemy. (Genesis 3; Romans 3:23; 5:6-11)
3. Because of the effects of the fall, there is nothing we can or would want to do on our own to bridge that gap and be reconciled to God. (Ephesians 2:1-9)
4. In His great love, God sent his Son Jesus to rescue His people from the penalty for their sin which is physical and spiritual death. (Ps. 2; Luke 1:67-79; Rm 6:23)
5. Jesus lived a perfect life and died on the cross, thus fulfilling the law Himself qualifying as the perfect sacrifice. He took on Himself the punishment for the sins of those who believe (Mark 10:45; John 1:14; Hebrews 7:26; Romans 3:21-26, 5:12-21); then He rose from the dead, showing that God accepted His sacrifice and that God's wrath against those who believe has been satisfied. (Acts 2:24, Romans 4:25)

6. He now calls us to repent of our sins and trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness. (Acts 17:30, John 1:12) If we repent of our sins and trust in Christ, we are born again into a new life, an eternal life with God. (John 3:16)

7. When we believe, we become new creations now desiring to please God. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

From its inception, the Church has always found it helpful to summarize its core convictions in rather short and succinct statements such as hymns, creeds and confessions to impart truth, clarify and prevent confusion, protect from false teaching and otherwise hold fast to the historic landmarks of our heritage.

Christians universally claim to believe the Bible, but creeds, confessions and statements help to clarify what it is we believe about the Bible. At Integrity Church, our Statement of Faith is comprised of three sections summarizing our beliefs with varying degrees of comprehensiveness. This Statement of Faith is designed to help you better understand who Integrity Church is and the beliefs for which we stand.

Basic Beliefs

This section includes the most basic and foundational beliefs of the Christian faith from a biblical and historical perspective. It captures the essential concepts of Christian theology. Anyone pursuing membership and/or baptism at Integrity Church must agree with this section. We consider these to be close-handed issues.

Theological Distinctives

This section captures our convictions on areas that are debated even among Bible-believing, gospel-centered churches. Though agreement with this section is not necessary for membership, we will preach, teach and counsel on the basis of these distinctives.

Biblical Doctrine

This section represents a more complete explanation of the various theological convictions we hold to be true.

Together, these three sections communicate what we believe as a church and will therefore be foundational for our teaching, preaching, praying, instructing, church discipline and counseling.

Our Basic Beliefs

Our basic beliefs are the truths you must affirm in order to be a member at Integrity Church.

The Scriptures

The Scriptures are true, authoritative, sufficient and the normative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice and doctrine. (Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20- 21)

Trinity

There is only one true God, Creator of heaven and earth, who eternally exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6; Isaiah 46:9-10; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5; Genesis 1:26; Psalm 45:6-7; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:17-20; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

Glory of God

All things exist for the glory of God. (Psalm 148; Proverbs 16:4; Isaiah 61:3; Romans 11:33-36; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Ephesians 1:3-14)

Man

All humanity, Christ excluded, is sinful by both birth and action. (Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 5:8, 12-21; 7:18; Ephesians 2:1-3)

Penalty for Sin

The deserved penalty for sin is physical and spiritual death. (Genesis 2:15-17; Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12; 6:23; James 1:14-15)

Jesus – Fully God, Fully Man

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He was born of a virgin and was both fully God and fully human. (Matthew 1:20; Luke 2:52; John 1:1-4, 14; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3)

Jesus Our Savior

Jesus Christ died as the sacrificial substitute to pay the penalty for the sins of those who believe. (John 1:29; 10:1-18; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18)

Victory over Death

Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and will one day return in glory. (Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; John 1:20-21:25; 1 Corinthians 15:12-34; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 9:28; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:7)

Restoration

There will be a future resurrection of the dead. Only those who turn from sin and to Jesus in faith and repentance will be raised to eternal reward. Those who do not turn from sin and to Jesus will be subject to eternal punishment. (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15)

Faith Alone

Only through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ alone can one be reconciled to God and experience true life and joy. (John 3:18, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 1 Timothy 2:5-6)

While the doctrines expressed in the Basic Beliefs section are recognized to be universal and primary within the Church, there are a number of secondary beliefs that we are passionate to proclaim. Not all Christians hold these beliefs, but they are nonetheless important and true as we understand the Scriptures. Complete agreement with these distinctives is not required for membership, but it should be understood that we will preach, teach and counsel in accordance with these convictions.

Theological Distinctives

These distinctives represent six areas of doctrine and practice:

- Divine Sovereignty
- The New Heart
- Believer Baptism
- The Complementarian Roles of Men and Women
- Elder-Ruled Church Government
- Progressive Revelation

Divine Sovereignty

God is sovereign over all things such that there is no aspect of reality outside of His ultimate control. Though God's rule extends to all things, it is particularly His sovereignty over the work of salvation that is a theological distinctive. We believe that it is exceedingly good and glorious news that salvation is not dependent on the desires or deeds of man, but is grounded instead in God's grace, mercy, and eternal decree of election. Though man is responsible for his sin, God is ultimately and entirely responsible for drawing those He would save unto Himself and overcoming their natural resistance to the gospel by giving the gift of faith. (Psalm 115:3, 135:6; Ephesians 1:3-14, Romans 8:26-9:23; Philippians 1:29; 1 Thessalonians 2:13)

The New Heart

Before someone becomes a believer he is an enemy of God. He is in bondage to his sin. This means that he is unable to do, and doesn't want to do, anything that pleases the true God. Those who have received Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord have been regenerated and have received a new heart. This new heart consists of a new desire created by the Holy Spirit to make Jesus Christ the Lord of their life. As a result of one's conversion, this new heart causes

him to now love God and desire to please the God of Scripture. (Romans 6, Hebrews 8:7-13, Romans 8:1-17, Ephesians 2:1-10, Romans 1:30)

Believer Baptism

Water baptism is only intended for the individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ's atoning work and has become His disciple. In obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, the Church, oneself and the world, a believer should be baptized with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Water baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection. It signifies that a former way of life has been put to death and vividly depicts a person's release from the mastery of sin.

The Complementary Roles of Men and Women

Men and women are absolutely equal in essence, dignity and value. However, they are different by divine design. As part of God's good created order, men and women are to have different yet complementary roles and responsibilities in the home and church, especially as it comes to teaching and authority. These role distinctions are God's grace to man and woman and are to be protected, preserved and practiced for His glory and for our joy. (1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 14:33-35; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

Elder-Ruled Church Government

God has given two positions of leadership in the local church: elders and deacons. Elders are responsible to shepherd and teach the local church. The elders are the final authority in the church. They are to be qualified according to the qualifications of 1 Timothy chapter three and Titus chapter one. All elders have equal authority and are the pastors of the church. Women are not allowed to be elders (Titus 1:5-16, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Ephesians 4:9-16, Philippians 1:1-2, Acts 14:21-25, Hebrews 13:17, Matthew 20:20-28). Deacons assist the elders. They are called upon to serve at the discretion of the elders and their duties are determined by the elders. Deacons are to meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy chapter three. (1 Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-6, 1 Timothy 2:11-15)

Progressive Revelation

We learn how to interpret the Old Testament from Jesus and His Apostles. God has revealed Himself and His will progressively over time and with increasing clarity. His revelation has come to a climax in Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 3:3-11; Colossians 1:26-28) All revelation prior to Christ must be interpreted in light of His centrality. Because of progressive revelation we interpret the Old Testament in light of the New Testament. (Hebrews 1:1-2; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39) The Old Testament revelation, though accurate, is incomplete because God chose to reveal His will incrementally over time. The later revelation does not contradict previous revelation, but rather clarifies and further develops ideas previously revealed. (Matthew 13:35; Matthew 13:17; John 5:39; Romans 16:25-26; 1 Corinthians 2:7-8; Hebrews 1:1-2; 1 Peter 1:10-12) Thus, we have an advantage over those who lived prior to the completion of Scripture. We have the ability to

look back from this side of the cross and see how God's plan has been executed throughout history. In a sense it is like being able to read the end of a mystery first. When we interpret the Bible, we look from the back to the front to better understand the flow of God's plan. If the Bible is interpreted from the front to the back, we obtain a first impression as to what a passage means. Then when we look at the later revelation which refers back to the earlier passage, we are tempted to reconcile the latter to our initial understanding of the first. But when the Old Testament is interpreted through the lens of the New, we allow the new to clarify, modify, and correct our first impression, because we know the more recent revelation states God's plan more completely than does the older revelation.

Our Biblical Doctrine

This section provides a summary of the biblical doctrines we view as of utmost importance in the Christian faith. All three sections of this document combine to communicate what we believe as a church and will therefore be foundational for our teaching, preaching, praying, instructing, church discipline and counseling.

The Scriptures

We accept the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of the New Testament, as the written Word of God. The Bible is an essential and infallible record of God revealing Himself to mankind. It leads us to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Given by God, the Scriptures are both fully and verbally inspired by God and are, thus, free of error. Each book is to be interpreted according to its context and purpose. All believers are exhorted to study the Scriptures and diligently apply them to their lives. The Scriptures are the authoritative and normative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice and doctrine. They are totally sufficient and must not be added to, superseded or changed by later tradition, extra-biblical revelation or worldly wisdom. Every doctrinal formulation, whether in a creed, confession or theological system, must be tested by the full counsel of God in Holy Scripture.

The Triune God

There is one God: infinite, eternal, almighty and perfect in holiness, truth and love. In the unity of the Godhead, there are three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit who are co-existent, co-equal and co-eternal. The Father is not the Son. The Son is not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not the Father. Yet each is truly Deity, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. One God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is the foundation of Christian faith and life.

God the Father

God is a Spirit who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. God is fully omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, not given to learning or "openness." God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth. By His word and for His glory, He freely and supernaturally created the world out of nothing. Through the same

word, He daily sustains all creation. He rules over all and, together with the Son and the Spirit, is the only Sovereign. His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. He is faithful to every promise. He works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. In His unfathomable grace, he gave His Son, Jesus Christ, for mankind's redemption. He made all things for the praise of His glory and intends for man to live in fellowship with Himself.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the eternal Word made flesh. He was supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and was fully God and fully man. Through Him, all things were created. He was before all things, and in Him, all things hold together by the word of His power. He is perfect in nature, teaching and obedience. He is the only Savior for the sins of the world, having shed His blood and died on the cross in our place. This sacrificial death revealed divine love, upheld divine justice, removed our guilt and reconciled us to God. Redeeming us from sin, He rose bodily from the grave on the third day, victorious over death and the powers of darkness and performed many convincing proofs of His resurrection. He ascended into heaven where, at God's right hand, He intercedes for His people and rules as Lord over all, awaiting His return. He is the only mediator between God and man. He is the Head of His body, the Church, and should be adored, loved, served and obeyed by all.

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. Through the proclamation of the gospel, He acts independently of the human will to persuade men to repent of their sins and confess Jesus as Lord. By the same Spirit, a person is led to trust in divine mercy. The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about the new birth, and dwells within the regenerate. Indwelling the hearts of believers, the Holy Spirit operates synergistically, or in cooperation with, the believer to affect their sanctification. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son who, in turn, came to glorify the Father. He will lead the Church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God's Word. The Holy Spirit is to be respected, honored and worshiped as God, the Third Person of the Trinity.

Man

God made man, both male and female, in His own image as the crown of creation so that man might glorify Him by enjoying fellowship with Him. Tempted by Satan, man rebelled against God, his Creator, becoming inwardly depraved, separated from God and subject to divine wrath. Apart from a special work of grace, man is utterly incapable of returning to God. This depravity is radical and pervasive. It extends to his mind, will and affections. Unregenerate man lives under the dominion of sin and Satan. No matter how man appears to the world, he does not and cannot love the God of the Bible who demands total obedience. He is at enmity with God, hostile toward God and hateful of God. Fallen, sinful people, whatever their character or attainments, are lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ alone.

The Gospel

There is no greater message to be heard than that which we call the gospel. But as important as it is, the gospel is often given to massive distortions or over-simplifications. People think they are preaching the gospel to you when they tell you “you can have a purpose or meaning to your life,” or “you can have a personal relationship with Jesus.” All of those things are true, and they are all important, but they do not get to the heart of the gospel.

The gospel is called the “good news” because it addresses the most serious problem that you and I have as human beings: God is holy and just, and I am not. And at the end of my life, I am going to stand before a just and holy God, and I will be judged. I will be judged either on the basis of my own righteousness—or lack of it—or on the righteousness of another. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus lived a life of perfect righteousness, of perfect obedience to God, not for His own well-being but for His people. He has done for me what I could not possibly do for myself. But not only has He lived that life of perfect obedience, He has offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice to satisfy the justice and the righteousness of God. This gospel of grace is to be sincerely preached to all men in all nations where it is only effectual to those who genuinely repent of their sins and, by God’s grace, put saving faith in Christ.

Another great misconception in our day is this: that God is not concerned to protect His own integrity. That He is a kind of wishy-washy deity, who just waves a wand of forgiveness over everybody. No. For God to forgive you is a very costly matter. It cost the sacrifice of His own Son. So valuable was that sacrifice that God pronounced it valuable by raising Him from the dead—so that Christ died for us, He was raised for our justification. So the gospel is something objective. It is the message of who Jesus is and what He did. And it also has a subjective dimension. How are the benefits of Jesus subjectively appropriated to us? How do I get it? The Bible makes it clear that we are justified not by our works, not by our efforts, not by our deeds, but by faith—and by faith alone. The only way you can receive the benefit of Christ’s life and death is by putting your trust in Him— and in Him alone. When you do that, you are declared just by God, you are adopted into His family, you are forgiven of all of your sins, and you have begun your pilgrimage for eternity.

Man’s Response to the Gospel

The proper response to the gospel is faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ which is naturally accompanied by repentance, a turning from sin to faithful obedience to God. Biblical repentance is characterized by a changed life, and saving faith is evidenced by love for your neighbor which is seen in kingdom service and good works. While neither repentance nor works save, unless a person desires to deny himself, pick up his cross and follow Christ, he has not become His disciple.

Man’s Inheritance Through the Gospel

Salvation, the free gift of God, is provided by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. Anyone repenting of sin by the miracle of regeneration and looking to Christ and His substitutionary death is declared righteous by God

and receives the free gift of eternal life. He is justified and fully accepted by God. Through Christ's atonement for sin, an individual is reconciled to God as Father and becomes His child. The believer is forgiven the debt of his sin and liberated from the law of sin and death by the power of the life-giving Spirit of God.

Sanctification

The Holy Spirit is the active agent in our sanctification, seeking to produce His fruit in us. Our minds are renewed and we are conformed to the image of Christ. Though indwelling sin remains a reality, the Spirit leads us to grow in the knowledge of the Lord, freely keeping His commandments and endeavoring to live in a world where all people may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. All believers are exhorted to persevere in the faith, knowing they will have to give an account to God for their every thought, word and deed. The spiritual disciplines, especially Bible study, prayer, worship, confession and repentance are a vital means of grace in this regard. Nevertheless, the believer's ultimate confidence to persevere is based on the sure promise of God to preserve His people until the certain end.

Empowered by the Spirit

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to exemplify Christian witness and perform good works of service. The motivation and ability to do good works does not come from the believer, but from the work of the Holy Spirit who is working in him and with him. While the believer does perform the good works, all credit for good works must go to God alone. The promise of the Father is freely available to all who believe in Jesus Christ, enabling them to exercise the gifts He sovereignly bestows for ministry and mission. The Holy Spirit indwells each believer and empowers him with power to bear witness to the gospel and imparts His gifts for the edification of the body and the work of ministry in the world. The healthy exercising of diverse gifts within a unified body is essential to the mission of the Church in the world today.

The Church

God, by His Word and Spirit, creates the Church, calling sinful men out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ's body. By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves this newly redeemed humanity. The Church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the Church is made up of all those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ by personally repenting of their sins, trusting in Christ's sacrifice for forgiveness of their sins, and acknowledging that Christ is Lord of their lives. The Church exists to worship and glorify God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It also exists to serve Him by faithfully doing His will on earth. This service involves a commitment to see the gospel preached and churches planted throughout the entire world. The ultimate mission of the Church is to bring glory to God by living for Him, loving others, and making disciples.

Upon conversion, newly redeemed men and women are to be added to a local church in which they devote themselves to worship, teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer. All members of the Church are to be a vital and committed part of a local church. In this context, they are called to live out the implications of the gospel as the people of God and demonstrate the reality of the kingdom of God. The ascended Christ has appointed and gifted some within

the Church to be prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc. Those in the local church are to use these gifts to guide the members of their church toward maturity, growing in their love for the Lord so that they are ready for all good works.

Ordinances of the Church

Water Baptism: Water baptism is limited to those individuals who have repented of their sins and believed in Christ's saving work on the cross for their salvation. In obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, the Church, oneself and the world, a believer should be baptized with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. While most baptisms are performed in a public service, they may be performed in private. Water baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection. Although Scripture does not require one particular mode of baptism, Integrity Church practices immersion baptism. Immersion provides a picture of being washed clean of one's sins and being born again as the person arises out of the water to a new life of obedience. This signifies that a former way of life has been put to death and vividly depicts a person's release from the mastery of sin.

Lord's Supper: As with water baptism, the Lord's Supper is to be observed only by those who have become genuine followers of Christ. This ordinance includes the breaking of bread symbolizing Christ's body which was cursed on our behalf and the drinking of wine representing the shedding of His blood on our behalf and is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian life as a sign of continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death. As we come to the table with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls and signify our unity with other members of Christ's body.

The Lord's Return

The culmination of God's plan includes the future, visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the transformation of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. When this judgment occurs, Satan, with his hosts and all those who have not believed in Christ, are finally separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment. But the righteous, in glorious bodies, will live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory.