

# ***A Statement of Faith***

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## **The Basis of our Faith**

The Holy Bible is our only standard. All that we do and all that we teach is examined to see that it holds to the standard of scripture.

## **Why is the Bible our Standard?**

The Bible has proven itself to be a book with a supernatural vitality. This power is exhibited in two ways: 1. It's unique impact on human history 2. It's unique impact in the lives of people.

The Bible stands apart from all other books. It is a record of the interaction between God and Man. The Bible is a book of many books. History, poetry, law and prophecy are all found within its pages. Although many attempts have been made to discredit it, archaeological and literary analysis have shown it to be an unchanging and accurate record of history. Sadly, those who are most critical of the Bible and its teachings have, in many cases, never read it. Since its completion, the societies, governments and organizations that have practiced its standards have gone on to revolutionize the world.

The Bible has also revolutionized people. By applying Biblical truth to daily situations, real people have tasted the Bible's life-changing power. These people have experienced the power of the God who has revealed Himself in its pages. Forgiveness, strength, patience and perseverance in the face of tough circumstances have been exhibited in the lives of those who have sought Biblical lifestyle.

## **God**

Many people around the world have created their own conceptions about God. Despite the variety of their descriptions of God they do have one thing in common - they all have a desire to seek God. An atheist sociologist once remarked, "Man is a god intoxicated ape". Man is born with a desire to seek out water and food and these things do exist. Isn't it equally reasonable to believe that God must exist because of mankind's desire to seek Him out.

God has revealed Himself to us. He is evident in nature (Psalm 19 & Romans 1:20). He has chosen to show Himself and His attributes through His interactions with the people. He has also inspired those whose lives He has touched to record their experiences. This is how the Bible came into being.

Through these interactions God has shown Himself to be the Creator (Genesis 1:1). He has also exhibited His all-powerful, all-knowing and all-present nature. God is also righteous - that means there is no sin in Him at all. In fact sin can not enter into His presence (Isaiah 59:2). God is also loving (Psalm 103: 11). But how can a loving God shut out sinful people from His presence? If He loves us wouldn't He provide some way that we might be able to draw close to Him?

## **Mankind**

People were created to have a full meaningful and abundant life (John 10:10). They were created to have a vital personal relationship with God. However, all of us are born separated from God. This is because of our desire to live a life that is indifferent to the things of God or a life of rebellion against God. This is the essence of what the Bible calls sin.

Sin is the force that separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2). Without a remedy for sin, we will remain eternally separated from God (2 Thessalonians 1:8,9).

In spite of sin, all people are also born with a desire to seek after God (Ecclesiastes 3:11). They experience a sense of emptiness, a sense that something is missing. As the French philosopher and scientist Blaise Pascal said, *"There is within the heart of every man a God-shaped vacuum which can not be filled by any created thing only by God the Creator, made known by Jesus Christ"*.

People desire to get to God. They desire to have a relationship Him. Mankind created religion and philosophy as a means to try to meet these needs. Good deeds, ritual and religious activity are all part of our God-seeking desire. However, these things do not help us to find God or to know Him (Isaiah 64:6).

## **Christ**

God has shown His great love toward us through Jesus Christ. God did not want us to remain separated from Him. His desire has always been to draw us closer to Himself (John 3:16). The barrier of sin separated us from God. Jesus Christ offered Himself on the Cross as the perfect sacrifice for sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). As a result all of our sins - past, present and future are taken away from us through what Christ has done (Hebrews 10:14-17).

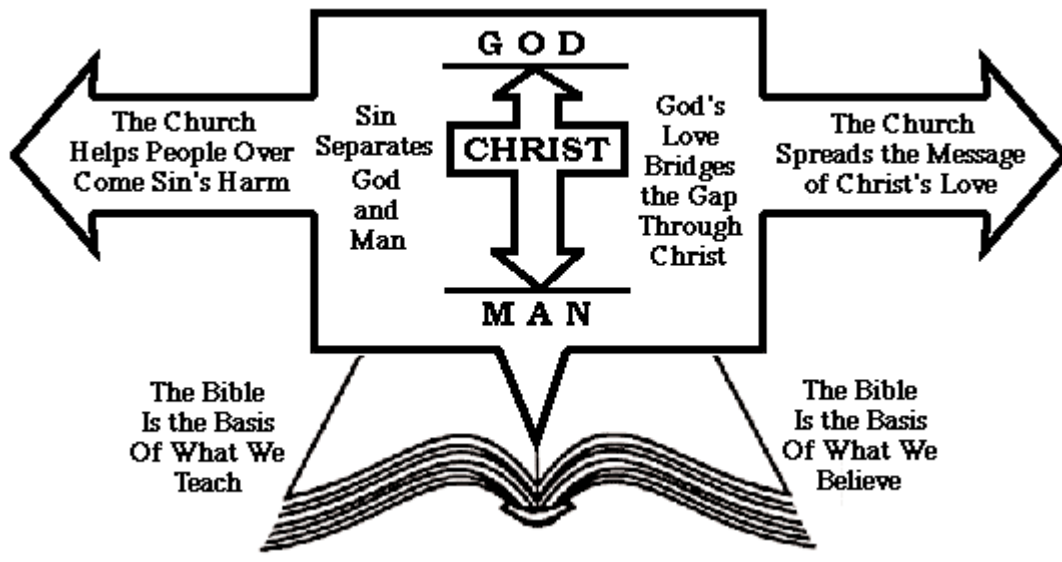
God offers to all a real, personal and eternal relationship with Him as a free gift (Ephesians 2:8,9 & Romans 6:23). All that is needed is for us to individually receive this free gift (John 1:12). When we do, Jesus Christ Himself, in the form of the Holy Spirit, comes into your life and helps us to know God personally (Ephesians 1:13). By receiving this gift you can know that you have eternal life! 1 John 5:11,12 tells us, "He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have eternal life".

***Not Just Eternal Life Some Day,  
But Abundant Life Right Now!***

Through Jesus Christ living in us we can experience the full and meaningful life that we were meant to have (John 10:10). By Christ working in us, we have the full power of God to help us to know how to live (1 Corinthians 2:15,16).

## Christ (Continued)

Often past experiences, hurts, sorrows and the distractions of this world can be barriers to the abundant life God wants us to have. Christ's death on the cross also provides us with the resources to eliminate these barriers from our lives. It is a life long process called sanctification. A vital relationship with Christ is a necessity. That is why the Apostle Paul wrote, "For I resolved to know nothing while I was among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2).



## The Church

God has established the Church as His instrument in today's world. The church is His body - all who have received God's gift of eternal life (1 Corinthians 12:12,13) working together. Jesus Christ is the Head of His Body. His church is to help bring people to Christ and to help them to grow in their faith.

Like the first church in Jerusalem it is to help believers to grow in their faith. It is to be devoted to prayer and caring for the needs of its members (Acts 2:42). The church should encourage its members toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24). The church is to help each of its members to grow to serve others. God has given each of us spiritual gifts.

God has called all who have accepted Christ to be a part of His body (Ephesians 4) and to have Fellowship with other believers (Hebrews 10:25). We need each other. We are to grow close to each other as we grow close to Christ.

The Bible contains *no* clear commands about when and where to meet. We have examples of large and small gatherings in the Bible and we know we are called to meet together (Hebrews 10:25). What Christ does command for His church is that we love and care for "one another". In fact, all of the commands regarding the church take the form of an "one another" statement (See Document: "One Another's" in Context).