

Mathetai Statement of Faith

1. **God:** We believe that there is one living and true GOD, eternally existing in three persons (Trinity, or Tri-unity): The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, co-equal in power and glory. God is one in essence, but eternally existent in these three persons, with the three persons having precisely the same attributes and perfections, and each worthy of precisely the same obedience and worship. This God is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. He is absolutely separate from His creation, yet everywhere present and the sustainer of all things. (Genesis 1:1, 26; Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalms 139:8; Isaiah 44:8 and 48:16; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 10:18; John 4:24 and 10:30; Acts 17:24-29; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:6; Hebrews 1:3)

2. **God the Father (Theology Proper):** We believe in the person of God the Father, an infinite, eternal, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love; that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men; that He hears and answers prayer; and that He saves from sin and death all those who come to Him through Jesus Christ. He (through the agency of Jesus Christ) created the universe apart from pre-existing materials and without means, and is sovereign in His providence and redemption of all creation. He has graciously chosen from all eternity those whom He would have as His own, and saves them from sin and its consequences as through Jesus Christ. (Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalms 90:2; Psalms 102:27; John 1:18 and 3:16 and 4:24; Romans 11:33; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 1:3-6; 1 Timothy 1:17; Titus 1:3; Hebrews 4:13; 1 Peter 1:17)

3. **God the Son (Christology):** We believe in the person of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, of one substance, equal with the Father. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings, through which He revealed God and redeemed sinful people. At the incarnation, Jesus took on the full nature of a man, without ceasing to be God. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death and bodily resurrection, accomplishing the redemption of all who would believe in Him. After His resurrection, He ascended into heaven, where He makes perpetual intercession for His people as our Advocate, Intercessor and High Priest. We believe in His personal, visible return to earth. (Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:23; Mark 16:19; Luke 1:34-35; John 1:1-2, 8:58 and 11:25; Acts 1:9-10; Romans 3:24-25 and 8:34; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:8, 2:9, 7:25 and 9:24; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 John 1:2 and 2:1-2; Revelation 1:8)

4. **God the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology):** We believe in the person of the Holy Spirit, who is of the same essence as the Father and Son, and is therefore full God. We believe He came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, seal and empower for ministry all who believe in Christ. (John 15:26-27 and 16:8-11; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9, 26 and 15:13, 16; 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; Hebrews 9:14)

We believe the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Jesus Christ and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide. We believe that every believer has the obligation to be filled by the Spirit (under His control and direction, and to walk in the Spirit. (John 14:16-17 and 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit and in the exercise of all Biblical gifts of the Spirit according to the instructions given to us in 1 Corinthians 12-14.

5. **Man (Anthropology):** We believe that mankind was created in the image of God, but at the disobedience of Adam fell and inherited a sinful nature, becoming alienated from God. From this point on, all people are sinners by nature and, therefore, are under condemnation. Humanity is totally depraved and unable to save or remedy their lost condition. In this lost condition, apart from God, it is impossible for man to please God. However, God saves and regenerates based upon faith by the Holy Spirit, those who repent of their sins and confess Jesus Christ as Lord. (Genesis 1:26-27; Acts 8:15-17; Romans 3:10-18, 22-23 and 5:8; Ephesians 2:1-3 and 8-9; Titus 3:5).

6. **Sin (Hamartiology):** We believe in original sin, that through the rebellion of Adam in the Garden of Eden, all mankind is subject to a fallen nature. Sin entered the human race through one man, and all humans possess a sinful nature causing separation from God, being born children of wrath. Through this original sin, physical, spiritual and eternal death entered the human race (Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Ephesians 2:1-3)

In addition to possessing a sin nature, each individual has committed specific acts in moral defiance against to commands of God. Sin is the failure to conduct oneself in accordance with the standards of God as presented in His law, the Bible. (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8)

7. **Salvation (Soteriology):** We believe that due to the total depravity of mankind, it is necessary for God to take the initiative in salvation. Therefore, God has called out for Himself a people from before the foundation of the earth. God chooses those who will be saved, based upon His grace and mercy alone; not on the merits (or potential merits) of the individual. If the Father does not draw an individual to Christ, then that individual would never come to Him. However, all that the Father draws (or elects) will inevitably come to Him. (John 6:37,44; Romans 8:28-30; Romans 9; Ephesians 1:4-6) And yet, the sovereign

choosing of the Father in no way negates the free will of the individual. (Romans 10:13)

We believe salvation is a gift of God, brought to the world by grace and received by the repentant sinner through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. (Ephesians 1:7 and 2:8-10; John 1:12; I Peter 1:18,19)

We believe that when an unsaved person exercises faith in Christ in the manner described in the New Testament, that person passes from spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new. Immediately upon being saved that one is justified from all sin and is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his/her portion and place as linked to Him and one with Him forever. And though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of personal blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through yielding of his/her life more fully to God, that one is, as soon as he/she is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ. (John 5:24 and 17:23; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; I Corinthians 3:21; Colossians 2:10; I John 4:17 and 5:11,12)

We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40 and 10:27-30; Romans 5-11 and 8:1:39; I Corinthians 1:4-8; I Peter 1:5)

We believe that all true saints will ultimately persevere, that is though they may sin grievously thus incurring the displeasure of God resulting in His discipline upon their lives, they will not completely apostatize, but will be kept through faith by the power of God (Hebrews 12:5-11).

8. The Church (Ecclesiology): We believe in the universal church, the living spiritual body, of which Christ is the head and all who are born again are a part of the Body of Christ. The church was birthed according to Acts 2, and remains until the rapture and is considered the complete body of Christ, made up of local congregations. (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 4:15-16; 5:22-33)

The local church operates under the direction of Biblical leadership as described in 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:5 and 1 Peter 5:1-3.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted two ordinances for the church: (a) full immersion water baptism of believers, and (b) the Lord's Supper. (Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26) We also believe that the Lord Jesus Christ validated the ordinance of marriage. (Matthew 19:4-5 and John 2:1-11)

9. The Bible (Bibliology/Hermeneutics): We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired, inerrant, authoritative and sufficient Word of God.

In regard to inspiration, we believe in the plenary (full or complete)/verbal (words) inspiration of the Scriptures in which the divine inspiration extends to the very words used.

In regard to the inerrancy, we believe the Bible is inerrant (infallible, without error) in the original autographs. The Scriptures are fully inerrant, extending even to scientific and historic statements.

In regard to authority, we believe the Bible serves as the authoritative rule of faith and practice, able to supremely define what we are to believe and how we are to conduct ourselves.

In regard to sufficiency, we believe that the Scriptures contain the total revelation of God, in which all things pertaining to the Christian faith are contained. The Word of God is the foundation upon which the church is to operate and is the basis for which the church is to be governed. We believe that the Word of God supersedes any earthly law that is contrary to the Holy Scriptures.

(Isaiah 28:13; Nehemiah 8:8; John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23-25; 2 Peter 1:3-4 and 1:21).

10. The Future (Eschatology): We believe in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ which is His personal, visible return to earth and the establishment of His millennial kingdom, in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment and eternal blessing of the righteous and endless separation of the wicked. (Matthew 16:27; Acts 1:11; Revelation 19:11-16, 20:11-15)

We believe in a literal Heaven and a literal Hell and that all those who place their faith, hope and trust in Jesus Christ will spend eternity in Heaven with the Lord, while those who reject Jesus' free gift of salvation will spend eternity separated from the Lord. (Psalm 9:17; Matthew 5:3, 5:22, 18:9 and 25:31-34; Mark 9:42-49; Luke 12:5; John 3:18; Hebrews 12:23; 1 Peter 1:4; Revelation 14:10-11 and 20:11-15)

We believe in the Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church where all believers will meet the Lord in the air and be taken out of this world prior to the Tribulation that will come upon the earth. (Isaiah 26:20; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 21:36; Romans 1:18, 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-16 and 5:9; 2 Peter 2:7-9; Revelation 3:10, 5:7-10 and 7:13-14)

We believe the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations which define man's responsibility in successive ages. A dispensation is not a way of salvation, but a divinely ordered stewardship by which

God directs man according to His purpose. These periods are marked off in Scripture by some change in God's method of dealing with mankind, or a portion of mankind, in respect of the two questions of sin and of man's responsibility. Each dispensation may be regarded as a new test of the natural man, and each ends in judgment -- marking mankind's utter failure. (John 1:17; I Corinthians 9:17; II Corinthians 3:9--18; Galatians 3:13-25; Ephesians 1:10 & 3:2-10; Colossians 1:24,25; Hebrews 7:19; Revelation 20:2-6)

We believe salvation is always by grace through faith regardless of the dispensation in which the believer may have lived. God's purpose of salvation by grace through faith alone has always been based upon the substitutionary atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross (Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 11:6; I Peter 1:10-12)