

What We Teach at Desert Hills Bible Church

I. Preamble

We recognize that any statement of faith is a human attempt to systematize the teachings of an infinitely rich, infallible, divine revelation. Since it is a human endeavor, a statement of faith itself is not infallible. Nevertheless, we feel that it is important to protect the church from theological and doctrinal error. One safeguard against such error is a statement of faith. The statement which follows outlines the positions of Desert Hills Bible Church on the major biblical doctrines and provides a framework for all that we teach.

II. The Scriptures

We teach that the Bible in its 66 books is God's infallible, inerrant, and sufficient Word (Ps 119:128, 160; 2 Pet 1:20-21). We teach that the Bible is inspired in all its parts equally, and verbally inspired in every word (2 Tim 3:16). We teach that, although there may be many applications of any one passage, there is only one true interpretation of any one passage, and the Holy Spirit will guide the believer who diligently seeks to know the truth into the truth (John 16:12-15). We teach that the Scripture is sufficient for everything a person will encounter in this life (2 Tim 3:17). We teach that the Word of God is the means the Holy Spirit uses to cause a person to be born again (1 Pet 1:23).

III. God

We teach that there is only one living and true God (Deut 6:4; Isa 45:5 7; 1 Cor 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 (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

A. God the Father

1. We teach that God the Father, the first Person in the Trinity, is the absolute sovereign ruler of the universe (Ps 115:3). God the Father has decreed all things that come to pass according to His own will and purpose, for the praise of His glory (Rom 11:36; Eph 1:11). While God the Father is absolutely sovereign and has decreed all that comes to pass, He is neither the author nor the approver of sin (Hab 1:13; James 1:13; 1 John 1:5). His sovereignty does not abridge the moral accountability of His intelligent creatures (1 Pet 1:17; Rev 20:13-14). God the Father has graciously chosen all those whom He would have as His own (Eph 1:4-6). All who come to Jesus, He saves from sin and takes as His own, adopting them as beloved children (John 1:12; 6:36-40)
2. We teach that God the Father is Father within the Trinity (Heb 1:5). He is also the Father of all mankind by creation (Eph 4:6), but He is only the spiritual Father of those who believe in Christ for salvation (John 8:34-47).
3. We teach that God the Father is the Creator of all things (Gen 1:1-31; Eph 3:9). He is head over all, with dominion over all things (1 Chr 29:11).

B. God the Son

1. We teach that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, is God the Son (Lk 22:70). As the Son of God He is co-eternal and co-equal with the Father, possessing all the divine excellencies, and being in very nature God (John 10:30; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:2).
2. We teach that God the Father created the world through His Son, Jesus Christ (Col 1:16). We teach that Jesus Christ sustains the world by the word of His power (Col 1:17; Heb 1:3).
3. We teach that God the Son became a human being at the incarnation. God the Son became a man (John 1:1, 14). He laid aside His divine prerogatives (Phil 2:6-8), but maintained all the fullness of deity in bodily form (Col 2:9). He accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity (Phil 2:6-8), and so became the God-man.
4. We teach that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin (Matt 1:23, 25). He came into the world to reveal God (John 1:18), redeem men (John 1:29), and to rule God's kingdom (Isa 9:6; 1 Cor 15:24-25; Phil 2:9-11).
5. We teach that Jesus lived a sinless life (Heb 7:26), and that He offered Himself as a sacrifice for sins (Heb 10:10, 12), securing salvation for all who would believe (John 1:12). His death was a substitutionary atonement for sinners (2 Cor 5:21). The redemption of believers was accomplished through the shedding of His blood (Rom 5:9), His death (2 Cor 5:14-15), and His bodily resurrection (1 Cor 15:14, 20). It is only through faith in the Person and work of Jesus Christ that anyone will be saved (John 14:6; Ac 4:12).
6. We teach that Jesus' physical, bodily resurrection assures believers that His sacrifice was accepted by God, and this makes the justification of believers certain (Acts 2:24-36; 3:14-16; 1 Cor 15:14, 20).
7. We teach that Jesus is now at the right hand of the Father (Heb 1:3).
8. We teach that Jesus is coming again and will return bodily to the earth to judge those who have not believed in Him and to be glorified in His saints (2 Thess 1:9-10). All Christians should eagerly await His second coming and be ready lest they be found idle when their Master comes (Matt 24:42-25:13).
9. We teach that Jesus Christ is the One who will judge all of humanity, both believers and unbelievers (Matt 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 20:11-15).
10. We teach that Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5), and the Head of His body, the church (Eph 1:22; 5:23; Col 1:18).

C. God the Holy Spirit

1. We teach that the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, is co-eternal and co-equal in all of His divine attributes and being with the Father and the Son (Matt 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Cor 12:4-6; 2 Cor 13:14), and He is a person with all of the characteristics of personhood, including intellect (1 Cor 2:10-11), emotions (Eph 4:30), and will (1 Cor 12:11).

2. We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind, including the Spirit's sovereign activity in creation (Gen 1:2), the incarnation (Matt 1:18), the written Word of God (2 Pet 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).
3. We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in the church was promised by Jesus before Jesus' death and resurrection (John 14:26; 16:7) and began at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), the Spirit being sent by Jesus from the Father (John 15:26). The Holy Spirit came to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11), to give life to those who are in Christ (Rom 8:10-11), to conform them to the image of Christ (2 Cor 3:18), and to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:14).
4. We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural Agent who brings about the new birth (John 3:5-8; 1 Cor 2:10; 2 Cor 3:6), baptizes all believers into the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13), indwells believers (Rom 8:9), sanctifies believers (2 Cor 3:17-18), empowers believers for service (1 Pet 4:11), intercedes for believers (Rom 8:26-27), and seals them until the day of redemption (Eph 1:13).
5. We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine author of Scripture, and that He moved in the prophets and apostles to give the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20-21).
6. We teach that the Holy Spirit indwells all believers from the moment of salvation (Rom 8:9). We teach that it is the duty of all those who are indwelt by the Spirit to be constantly filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (Eph 5:18).
7. We teach that the Holy Spirit has given a variety of gifts, service, and activities to the church for the common good (1 Cor 12:4-7). All gifts, acts of service, and activities which the Spirit gives are to be used for the common good and ruled by the law of love, which is a more excellent way (1 Cor 13; 14:12).
8. We teach that the spiritual gifts given to the early church during the lives of the Apostles and New Testament prophets were gifts given as signs to authenticate the early church as the people of God (Heb 2:1-4), and were never intended to be characteristic of the church throughout history (1 Cor 13:8). While the Spirit empowers, enables, and gifts men and women to glorify Christ in the church (Eph 4:11-14; 1 Pet 4:11), He no longer gifts any individual to do supernatural acts (1 Cor 13:8). The Holy Spirit, however, is not limited by men and has the power to act supernaturally of His own will today in any way He may so desire (Ps 115:3; 1 Cor 12:11).

IV. Creation

We teach that the account of creation in Genesis is a literal, historical account of the creation of the heavens and the earth. We teach that God created the heavens and the earth in six, literal, 24-hour days (Gen 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; Ex 20:11). We teach that God directly created all animals and man without any evolutionary process. He created each tree, plant, and animal after its own kind, and He created man in the image of God (Gen 1:12, 21-22, 24-27). We teach that Adam and Eve were literal, historical people (Gen 5:3-5; Rom 5:12-21; 1 Tim 2:13-14).

V. Man

- A. We teach that man was created on the sixth day of creation in the image and likeness of God, not from any evolutionary process but as an immediate creative act (Gen 1:26-27; 2:7; James 3:9). Man was created free from sin, and he was created with a rational nature, intelligence, a will, and moral responsibility to God (Gen 2:15-25).
- B. We teach that man's responsibility to God was to bring God glory (1 Cor 10:31), obey God's commands (Gen 2:16-17), enjoy God's fellowship (Gen 3:8), be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:28), and to tend the Paradise God had created for man (Gen 2:15).
- C. We teach that Adam's sin against the commandment of God brought the penalty of spiritual and physical death to the human race (Gen 2:17; 3:1-19; 5:1-31; Rom 6:23; Eph 2:1-3). Mankind thus became by nature children of wrath (Eph 2:3). All men have sinned (Rom 3:23) and apart from Christ are slaves of sin (Rom 6:17), dead in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1), and unable to please God (Rom 8:7-8). Man apart from salvation is unable to understand the things of God (1 Cor 2:14), and his will is bound and held captive by the devil and sin (2 Tim 2:26), making it impossible for a man to ever choose Christ by his own will (Rom 3:9-18; 1 Cor 2:14). Man's salvation is thus wholly by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and even man's faith is none of his own doing, but it is the gift of God so that no one can boast (Eph 2:8-9).
- D. We teach that because Adam was the head of the physical human race, all men were in Adam when Adam sinned and were condemned in Adam and made sinners (Rom 5:14, 18-19). All men are thus sinners by nature and under the power of sin (Eph 2:3; Rom 3:9).

VI. Salvation

We teach that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone (Eph 2:8-9) in the person and work of Jesus Christ (John 20:30-31), and that no one is or can be justified by works of any kind (Rom 3:20).

A. Election

- 1. We teach that election is the sovereign act by which God chose certain individuals for salvation in Jesus before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:3-4).
- 2. We teach that God elected all those whom He foreknew (Rom 8:29; 1 Pet 1:2). We teach that God's foreknowledge was a willful, sovereign act on the part of God to set His love on certain individuals for salvation (Rom 9:13). We teach that foreknowledge does not mean or imply that God passively knew who would be saved as He looked into the future, but the foreknowledge of God in relation to a person is God's determined act to have an intimate, loving, personal relationship with a person and to know him in a special, electing way (Gen 18:19; Amos 3:2; Matt 7:23; Rom 8:29).
- 3. We teach that God's election of His people was unconditional, meaning that it was not based on their works or any future thing they might or might not do (Rom 9:11-13), but was based solely on God's purposes to the praise of His glory (Eph 1:5-6, 11-14; 2 Tim 1:9).

4. We teach that God, before the foundation of the world, predestined all those whom He foreknew to be conformed to the image of Jesus (Eph 1:4-5) so that His purposes might stand (Rom 9:11).
5. We teach that God's act of election does not abridge man's moral accountability for sin (Rom 3:19). All those who refuse Christ as Savior will be judged and held accountable for the works they have done (Rev 20:11-15), and no one will be justified by his own works (Rom 3:20).
6. We teach that God's act of election does not remove the responsibility of believers to obey the Great Commission and to serve with the strength that God supplies to make disciples (1 Pet 4:11; Matt 28:18-20).
7. We teach that all those whom God has elected will come to faith in Jesus, and all who come to faith in Jesus the Father will receive (John 6:37-40; Acts 13:48). All those who are predestined are called, and all those who are called are justified. No one who is predestined to salvation in Jesus ultimately resists God's call to salvation because God's calling is irresistible (Rom 8:29-30).
8. We teach that God did not elect people apart from His other attributes, including His love, mercy, grace, justice, holiness, and wisdom, but that God's election of those whom He saves is consistent with all of His divine attributes and character (Deut 6:4; Rom 9:14-25; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Phil 2:11; 2 Tim 1:9).

B. Regeneration

1. We teach that regeneration is the sovereign act of the Spirit of God by which He imparts spiritual life to a person (Ezek 36:26-27; John 1:13; 3:3-8; Tit 3:5; Jas 1:18) through the Word of God (James 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23).
2. We teach that regeneration (which is synonymous with being born again) is a one-time event that is instantaneous (John 1:13; Col 2:13; James 1:18). We teach that regeneration enables the sinner to respond in faith and ensures the sinner's response of faith (Acts 13:48; 16:14). We teach that regeneration necessarily precedes saving faith because regeneration is necessary to enable saving faith (John 3:3; Acts 16:14).
3. We teach that regeneration will produce obedience to God's Word, beginning immediately with faith in Jesus (Acts 16:14; 1 John 5:1). Regeneration will be seen in a person's life by the faith that is the immediate response of regeneration and the works that faith produces (Gal 5:6; James 2:14-26).

C. Justification

1. We teach that justification is God's act of declaring a sinner righteous through the sinner's faith in Jesus (Rom 3:28).
2. We teach that justification is by faith alone apart from any works (Rom 3:28). We teach that justification is a gift of God's grace (Rom 3:24; Eph 2:8), so that no one may boast before God for contributing anything to his own salvation (Rom 3:27; Eph 2:9).

3. We teach that God justifies His elect not on account of anything wrought in them or done by them (1 Cor 1:30-31); not by infusing righteousness into them, imparting righteousness to them, or in any other way sanctifying them or making them righteous (Rom 4:5); nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them as their righteousness; but by imputing (i.e. counting, charging, or crediting) that person's sins to Jesus Christ on the cross (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:24) and by imputing Jesus Christ's perfect righteousness, which He performed in His life and in His death, as a foreign righteousness to the sinner who believes (1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9). This act of justification allows God to "be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Rom 3:26 NASB).

D. Sanctification

1. We teach that sanctification is the process by which the believer is conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29). We teach that, while the believer is declared righteous in Christ (justification), he still battles temptation, sin, and the flesh (Rom 7:25; 1 Cor 10:12-13). We teach that every believer is in the process of sanctification, which is learning to overcome temptation, sin, and the flesh by faith, and being transformed into the image of the Lord (2 Cor 3:18).
2. We teach that sanctification is a work performed in the believer by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9-13; 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 2:13). We teach that the Spirit works sanctification in believers by faith and not by works (Gal 3:1-5).
3. We teach that sanctification will result in practical holiness in the believer. All believers are being sanctified, and therefore they increasingly are putting to death the flesh and its deeds (immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, &c.) and manifesting the fruit of the Spirit in their daily lives (Gal 5:16-25).
4. We teach that all believers who are living in their mortal bodies will constantly be engaged in the process of sanctification until death or the coming of Jesus. No one reaches a state of perfection in this life in which sin is impossible (Rom 7:21-25; 2 Cor 3:18; Gal 5:17). We teach that when we see the Lord we will reach perfect sanctification and will no longer be able to sin (1 John 3:2). We teach that this hope of future, complete sanctification causes every believer to purify himself before the coming of Jesus (1 John 3:3).

E. Glorification

1. We teach that all believers will someday be glorified with Christ (Rom 8:30). This glorification will result in receiving a new body which is imperishable, glorified, and spiritual (1 Cor 15:42-44). We teach that glorification is a future act of God, which He will perform to make us able to inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 15:50-57).
2. We teach that everyone who has been elected, foreknown, predestined, called, and justified will be glorified (Rom 8:29-30). God will complete the work of salvation in those who are His own (Phil 1:6). We teach that all believers are eternally secure because they have been sealed by the Holy Spirit for this day of redemption at which all believers will be glorified (Eph 1:13-14). No one will be lost who has believed on Jesus for salvation, and God's work of redemption in

believers will be complete at glorification (Rom 8:29-30; 9:14-25; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 4:17-18; 5:2-10; Eph 1:14; Phil 1:6; 1 John 3:2).

VII. The Church

- A. We teach that the church is the body of Christ (Col 1:24), a “chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession” (1 Pet 2:9), a kingdom of people released from their sins by the blood of Christ (Rev 1:5-6), composed of Jews and Gentiles who have been reconciled to God (Eph 2:15-16), the true circumcision made without hands (Phil 3:3), the bride of Christ (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:23-32), which is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ being the Cornerstone (Eph 2:20), the Head of the church (Eph 5:23-32; Col 1:18).
- B. We teach that Jesus Christ is the Head of the church with all authority, power, sovereignty, and supremacy over it (Eph 5:23-32; Col 1:18).
- C. We teach that the members of the body of Christ, the church, are all of those who have received Jesus by faith (Eph 2:11-3:6).
- D. We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Eph 3:21; Rev 1:6) through worship (Rom 12:1), fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8), keeping the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor 11:23-26), and building itself up in the faith in love (Eph 4:11-16).
- E. We teach that the members of the church are to gather together regularly in local assemblies for the purpose of worship, edification, and stirring one another up to love and good works (1 Cor 11:18-20; Heb 10:23-25). We teach that this assembly is the local church as described throughout the New Testament (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:7; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:2; Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1; 1 Tim 3:14; Tit 1:5; Rev 2-3).
- F. We teach that the local church has two offices – elders (also called pastors, overseers, and bishops) and deacons (Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11; 1 Tim 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9; 1 Pet 5:1-4). Elders and deacons are to lead the church as servants of Christ (1 Tim 5:17-22) and examples to the church (1 Pet 5:1-5). We teach that elders and deacons must meet biblical qualifications (1 Tim 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9; 1 Pet 5:1-4). We teach that the congregation is to willingly follow and submit to the leadership of the church as the leadership follows Christ (Heb 13:7, 17; 1 Pet 5:5).
- G. We teach that the church is to discipline its members who refuse to repent of sin or heresy to preserve the purity of the church and to encourage its members to holiness (Matt 18:15-22; 1 Cor 5:1-13; 2 Thess 3:14; 1 Tim 5:20).
- H. We teach that Jesus Christ will build His church and that even the gates of Hades will not destroy it (Matt 16:18).
- I. We teach that the church has two ordinances – baptism and the Lord’s Supper. We teach that baptism was commanded by Jesus, and that Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize all new converts (Matt 28:18-20). We teach that baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is an outward sign of faith in Christ and of belonging to the church (Acts 2:38-42). Thus, only those who have

entered into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ should be baptized (Rom 6:3; Col 2:12; 1 Pet 3:21).

- J. We teach that the Lord's Supper is to be done by partaking of the bread and the cup of the New Covenant (1 Cor 11:24-25). The Lord's Supper is an ordinance which proclaims the Lord's death until He comes again (1 Cor 11:26). We teach that a person should examine himself before partaking of the Lord's Supper so that he does not partake in an unworthy manner, which would make him guilty of the body and blood of the Lord (1 Cor 11:27-28). We teach that the bread and the cup are symbolic elements of the body and blood of the Lord, but they are not themselves the actual body and blood of the Lord, nor do they become the actual body and blood of the Lord as they are used in the Lord's Supper.

VIII. Angels

A. Holy Angels

We teach that holy angels are created beings and therefore not to be worshiped. They were created by God to serve and worship Him (Lk 2:9-14; Heb 1:6-7, 14; Rev 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:8-9).

B. Fallen Angels (Satan and Demons)

1. We teach that Satan is a created angel who brought sin into existence by rebelling against his Creator (Isa 14:12-17; Ezek 28:11-19). We teach that some angels followed Satan in his rebellion and also fell into sin (Matt 25:41; Rev 12:1-12). We teach that Satan introduced sin into the human race by tempting and deceiving Eve (Gen 3:1-15).
2. We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isa 14:13-14; Matt 4:1-11; Rev 12:9-10) who will ultimately be crushed by God and eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Matt 25:41; Rev 20:10).

IX. Last Things

A. Death

1. We teach that when a believer dies, his soul passes immediately into the presence of Christ without loss of immaterial consciousness (Lk 23:43; Phil 1:23; 2 Cor 5:8; Rev 6:9-11). We teach that when a believer dies, his soul and body are separated until his body is resurrected and glorified (1 Cor 15:35-44, 50-54; 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 3:21; 1 Thess 4:13-17).
2. We teach that when an unbeliever dies, his soul is kept under punishment until the final judgment (Lk 16:19-31). At the final judgment all unbelievers shall be resurrected, condemned, and cast into the Lake of Fire where they will be tormented under the just wrath of God forever (Dan 12:2; Matt 25:41-46; John 5:28-29; 2 Thess 1:7-9; Rev 20:11-15).

B. The Coming of Christ

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to the earth personally and physically, with great power and glory (Matt 24:27-31; 25:31; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess 3:13; 5:23; 2 Thess 1:6-10; 2:8). We teach that the coming of

Christ will be unexpected, and no one knows the day nor the hour of His coming (Matt 24:36-42). We teach that believers are to live in expectation of His coming and be ready for His coming (Matt 24:42-25:30) so that the day will not overtake them like a thief (1 Thess 5:4-6), and so that they may have confidence and not be ashamed at His coming (1 John 2:28).

C. The Eternal State

We teach that the present heavens and earth will be destroyed with intense heat and pass away (2 Pet 3:10). Following the destruction of the heavens and the earth, a new heavens and a new earth will be created in their place (2 Pet 3:13). The new heavens and the new earth will be the place where righteousness dwells (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:27). We teach that the new heavens and the new earth will be the eternal dwelling place of the people of God, where they will never die or have any pain or sadness (Rev 21:4). God will dwell with His people in the new Jerusalem, in which there will no longer be any curse (Rev 21:22; 22:3). The servants of the Lamb will see His face and will reign with God forever and ever (Rev 22:3-5).

Abbreviations of the Books of the Bible Used in this Statement of Faith

Genesis	Gen	Romans	Rom	Titus	Tit
Exodus	Ex	1 Corinthians	1 Cor	Hebrews	Heb
Deuteronomy	Deut	2 Corinthians	2 Cor	1 Peter	1 Pet
1 Chronicles	1 Chr	Galatians	Gal	2 Peter	2 Pet
Psalms	Ps	Ephesians	Eph	Revelation	Rev
Isaiah	Isa	Philippians	Phil		
Ezekiel	Ezek	Colossians	Col		
Daniel	Dan	1	1 Thess		
		Thessalonians			
Habakkuk	Hab	2	2 Thess		
		Thessalonians			
Matthew	Matt	1 Timothy	1 Tim		
Luke	Lk	2 Timothy	2 Tim		

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