

# Bethany Baptist Church

112-17 148<sup>th</sup> Street † Jamaica, NY † 11435  
718-529-5842

## What We Believe Statement of Faith

**The Bible** – We believe in the verbal, plenary, infallible, inerrant inspiration of the Bible. We believe in the unlimited inerrancy of the Bible. That is to say, we believe all historic facts, genealogies, account of creation and etc. to be true and without error as they appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe the Bible supersedes all other writings or books in revealing God and His plan of salvation for mankind (Koran, Book of Mormon and etc.) and is God's love letter to mankind. We believe the Bible is human in its penmanship but divine in authorship (**2 Peter 1:21**).

**The Triune God** – We believe that there is only one true and living God revealed in three separate, distinct, co-existent, co-equal and co-eternal personalities (**Matthew 3:16-17**). That is to say, we believe God is composed of three united persons without separate existence – so completely united as to form one God. We believe the three united persons exist as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (**John 1:1, Acts 5:3-4 and John 10:30-35**).

**God The Father** – We believe God, as Father, reigns over His entire universe with providential care. He is omnipotent (all powerful) and able to do anything consistent with His own nature (**Genesis 17:1, Exodus 6:3 and 2 Corinthians 6:18**). He is omnipresent (everywhere present at all times) and there is nowhere mankind can go to escape His presence (**Psalms 139:7-11**). He is omniscient (all knowing) and knows all things actual and possible, past, present and future, in one eternal act (**Psalms 139:1-4 and Hebrews 4:13**). We believe God to be Father of all through creation, but Father spiritually only to those who have become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ (**Romans 4:10-11**).

**God The Son** – We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, pre-existed prior to His incarnation as God, was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (**John 1:1; 1:14**). We believe in the vicarious death of Jesus Christ on the cross. That is to say, He died in the place of sinners, representatively, bearing the punishment they deserved, thereby satisfying God's righteous judgment against sin. We believe that after Jesus' bodily resurrection from the grave, He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father where He intercedes on behalf of all believers (**1 John 2:1, Colossians 3:1 and Hebrews 12:2**).

**God The Holy Spirit** – We believe the Holy Spirit is the third person within the godhead. As such, He has intelligence (**1 Corinthians 2:10-11**), He possesses a mind (**Romans 8:27**), He is able to teach (**1 Corinthians 2:13**), He directs the activities of Christians (**Acts 16:6-11**), He is to be obeyed (**Acts 10:19-21**), He can be lied to (**Acts 5:3**) and He can be insulted (**Hebrews 10:29**). We believe all believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit as a gift at the moment of conversion (**John 7:37-39; Acts 11:16-17; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 5:5**). We believe that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is permanent and can not be lost. We believe that because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, every believer has his or her own unique gift(s) for the edification of the body of Christ, which is the Church (**1 Peter 4:10, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and Ephesians 4:11-12**). We believe that it is the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit that places those who believe into the body of Christ (**1 Corinthians 12:13**). We believe that there are many fillings of the Holy Spirit throughout the believer's life, but one baptism of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the filling, not the baptism, is lost when believers sin.

**Creation** – We believe that man, the earth, the heavens and all life was created by God (**Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 44:24 and Colossians 1:16-17**). We believe micro evolution is provable and observable while macro evolution is completely false. That is to say, micro evolution describes changes within a species over time while the species remains distinct and never evolves into something completely different. So, a cat will always be a cat although there may be observable changes in cats over years. Macro evolution, which we believe to be completely false, says one species can and does become a completely different species over lengthy periods of time. Furthermore, the fossil record proves macro evolution to be incorrect.

**The Fall of Man** – We believe that Genesis Chapter 3 describes the historical event of sins entrance into the realm of humanity. We believe Adam and Eve were historical people who sinned against God in time and space. If Adam and Eve were not literal people who brought sin into the human race at one point in history, then there was no point in Jesus dying on the cross. We believe that as a result of Adam and Eve's sin, all are sinners from birth/conception (**Psalms 51:5, Genesis 8:21 and John 9:34**) and stand in need of a savior from birth.

**Salvation** – We believe that salvation is the free gift of God that can not be earned through any works of righteousness (**Romans 3:23-24; Ephesians 2:8-9**). We believe God's gift of salvation is bestowed upon all who put their faith in the finished work of Jesus on Calvary's cross. We believe that at the moment one puts their faith in the finished work of Jesus, they are indwelt with the Holy Spirit and thereby placed/baptized into the body of Christ

permanently. We believe that there is no salvation in any of the world's religions nor do they provide access to the true and living God. That is to say, we stand on the words of Jesus found in **John 14:6** "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.*" (**1 Timothy 2:5** and **Acts 4:12**)

**The Great Commission** – We believe it is every Christian's duty, Minister and Laity, to seek the fulfillment of Christ's great commission. That is to say, every believer should be active in some form of evangelism to the lost; there are no exceptions (**Matthew 28:18-20**).

**The Resurrection** – We believe the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the very nucleus of our Christian faith as it validates the claims of Jesus Christ while setting our Christian faith apart from any other religion. Because of the resurrection of Jesus, Christianity and other religions become like oil and water, they will never mix. We believe that Jesus rose from the dead in the same body that was nailed to the cross. That is to say, Jesus' resurrection was literal and physical, not spiritual (**John 20:26-27; Luke 24:39**).

**The Second Coming of Jesus Christ** – We believe in the literal, physical advent of Jesus, to the earth to establish His kingdom on earth and to reign in righteousness (**2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, Zechariah 14:4**). We believe in the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to rapture His church (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**).

**The Sovereignty of God** – We believe that God is sovereign and He does as He pleases. God is not governed by any circumstances outside of Himself, but only by His own good pleasure. God thereby determines the result of all people, events and things. We believe that the result of God's sovereignty is that His purpose will be achieved no matter what. Nothing can thwart God's plan: history will be worked out according to the pre-determined will of God regardless to what we believe, think or feel.

**Tongues** – We believe that the tongues from **Acts** and **1 Corinthians** were for the infancy stage of the church and are not normative in the current church. That is to say, that one may or may not speak in tongues at conversion or at anytime in their Christian walk (**1 Corinthians 12:30**). We believe that tongues is an evidence that one has been indwelt by the Holy Spirit but tongues are not the only evidence that one has been indwelt by the Holy Spirit. We believe that the manifestation of any spiritual gift is an evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 4:11** and **1 Corinthians 12:1-30**). We believe in the Bible order given for tongues in the church. That is to say, when someone is speaking in tongues there should be an interpreter and the number of those speaking should be limited

to two or three at one time. If there is no interpreter, the one speaking in tongues should keep quiet in the church (**1 Corinthians 14:26-28**).

**Homosexuality** – We believe homosexuality is a sin and carries the same penalty as any other sin (**Romans 1:26 and Leviticus 18:22**). That is to say, homosexuality is not singled out a sin greater than another sin. We believe same sex marriages are unbiblical and should not be performed by the church. That is to say, same sex marriages go against God’s design for life long partnerships between one man and one woman (**Genesis 2:18-25**). We believe it is un-Christ like, un-loving and un-biblical to exclude or in any way deter any homosexual that has acknowledged their behavior as sin, from their God-given right to be a member of any church. That is to say, homosexuals must acknowledge the fact that their lifestyle is sin and come to any church looking for help and not think it is the church’s responsibility to change their biblical position on homosexuality.

**Political Correctness** – We believe the church should avoid political correctness whenever biblical teachings/principles would be compromised to be considered politically correct. That is to say, the church will obey God and not man (**Acts 5:29**).

**Healing** – We believe that the context of **Isaiah 53:5** (“*He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.*”) is emphatically clear and refers to spiritual healing, not physical. That is to say, “**transgressions**” and “**iniquities**” are not physical illnesses but spiritual. We believe that **Isaiah 53:4** (“*Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.*”) does refer to physical healing. However, the physical healing Isaiah is speaking of is a reference to Jesus’ healing ministry (**Matthew 8:16-17**). We believe that God is still healing the sick and Jesus’ death on the cross made provision for physical healing. That is to say, although provision has been made for physical healing through the finished work of Jesus on the cross, God does not heal everybody (**2 Timothy 4:20 and 1 Timothy 5:23**). We believe that God is sovereign and may choose not to heal or He may choose to heal, there is nothing we can do to change the will of God for our lives.

**Prophecy** – We believe that God still speaks through prophets as He has done in the past. However, there are many charlatans that claim to be prophets but are not. We believe that true prophets of God prophecy in the name of Jesus Christ and what they say come to pass, there are no exceptions. We believe false prophets, those whose prophecies do not come to pass or are untrue, should be openly rebuked for the sake of the church. We believe the gift

of prophecy is serious and not to be taken lightly. We believe that God is against those that prophecy falsely and speak lies in His name (**Ezekiel 13:6-9 and Deuteronomy 18:20**).

**Prosperity/Word Faith Movement** – We believe that the current word faith/prosperity movement is preaching/teaching another gospel that is not taught in the Bible. That is to say, for example, the Bible does not teach the idea that we are little gods with the power to create our own reality by speaking words of faith over our lives. Nor does the Bible teach the idea that we have the power, with our words, *“To call things that are not as if they already were.”* According to the Bible, it is God who calls things that are not as though they were (**Romans 4:17**). We believe that a large number of preachers/teachers have crept into the church and are preaching/teaching another gospel that is harmful to the body of Christ. For example, one famous preacher/teacher denies the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, while another denies the trinity. Still another preacher/teacher predicted Jesus would appear physically in one of his crusades. We believe the church needs to develop a Berean attitude towards all preachers/teachers and search the scriptures to see if what they are saying is correct/true.

**Physical Death** – We believe physical death can best be described as the separation of the soul/spirit from the body. We believe that reincarnation is not taught in the Bible. That is to say, we die one time and after that there is judgment (**Hebrews 9:27**). We believe the soul/spirit is eternal and never dies nor sleeps after separating from the physical body (**Revelation 6:9-10; Luke 16:22-24**). We believe that every believer goes immediately to be with the Lord when physical death occurs (**2 Corinthians 5:8**).