

## ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF FAITH

- 3.1 THE TRINITY:** The Godhead consists of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; three Persons but one God (Deut. 6:4; Mat. 28:19; Mt. 3:16-17). These three are co-equal and co-eternal (Ps. 90:2; Jn 1:1; Heb. 9:14).
- 3.2 GOD THE FATHER:** God is a Person, i.e. He exists as a rational, self-conscious, self-determining, moral Being. He is immutable (James 1:17), omniscient (1 John 3:20), omnipotent (Gen. 1:3), omnipresent (Jer. 23:23-24), eternal (Ps. 90:1-2), absolutely sovereign (Rom. 11:36), and holy (Is. 6:3). He is full of love, justice, mercy, goodness, and truth.
- 3.3 GOD THE SON:** Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God, by whom all things were made (John 1:1-3). He is the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15-17), and possesses the attributes of God the Father. In the fullness of time (Gal. 4:4), the eternal Son took upon Himself our nature and, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (Mt. 1:18-20), was made in the likeness of men (Phil. 2:7). While in the flesh, Jesus Christ is true God and true man, one Person with a two-fold nature.
- 3.4 GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT:** The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, co-eternal with the Father and the Son (Heb. 9:14), whom the Father sent into the world to reprove it of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to testify of Jesus Christ (Jn. 16:8-14).
- 3.5 INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES:** The Scriptures, including both the Old and New Testaments, are a divine revelation and, as originally written, are verbally inspired by God. They were written by the Holy Spirit and are final in authority in all matters pertaining to conduct and doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21).
- 3.6 SIN:** Man was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), but, through disobedience to God, fell into sin, thus alienating himself and the entire human race from God (Gen. 3:1-7; Rom. 5:12). Through sin, man became devoid of all spiritual life (Rom. 6:23), and, in this condition, is dead in trespasses and sins, is subject to the power of the devil (Eph. 2:1-3), and is totally incapable of pleasing God (Rom. 8:7-8), or doing anything to remedy his condition (Titus 3:5).

**3.7 THE NEW BIRTH:** Because of this universal depravity and death in sin, it is impossible for anyone to enter the kingdom of God or take one step toward heaven without experiencing the new birth. To be born again is to partake of a new nature, a nature which is from above and which is implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, entirely apart from works, ordinances, or human attainment (John 3:1-5; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23).

**3.8 SALVATION:** Salvation, or the new birth, has been made possible by the vicarious death of Jesus Christ on the cross, dying in the sinner's stead. Christ was made to be sin and a curse and shed His blood for the remission of sin (1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rom 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21). Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried, and on the third day He arose in the body in which He was crucified (1 Cor. 15:3-4). This salvation is appropriated solely by an act of faith. The moment we repent and receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we pass immediately from a state of spiritual death into everlasting life (Jn. 3:16; Jn. 5:24; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:8).

We believe in unlimited atonement. That is to say, we believe that Jesus Christ came into the world to die as a substitute and sacrifice for the sins of all people without exception (John 3:15-17; Titus 2:11; Heb. 2:9), that all people are the objects of God's impartial love, and that it is His desire that all people repent and believe in Jesus to receive the forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life (1 Tim. 2:4, 6; 2 Pet 3:9).

**3.9 ASSURANCE:** It is the privilege of all who are united to Christ through faith to be assured of their salvation. This assurance cannot, in any sense of the word, be considered presumption, as it is founded, not on one's feelings or one's own worthiness, but wholly upon the revealed Word of God (Luke 10:20; Jn. 6:47; Jn. 10:28; 2 Cor. 5:1-2; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Jn. 5:13).

**3.10 PERMANENCE OF SALVATION (ETERNAL SECURITY):**

All who are saved are kept by God's power and are safe and secure in Christ forever (Jn. 5:24; Jn. 6:37-40, 47; Jn. 10:27-30; Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 1:12-14; Eph. 4:30; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Heb. 13:5). Therefore, it is impossible for a redeemed child of God to lose his or her salvation (John 10:28). One mark of a true believer is a desire to live a life characterized by holiness. Those who live a continual lifestyle of wanton sin or who lack Christian character should examine themselves to determine if they are true believers and have ever really received the grace of God for salvation. The

question is not whether a saved person can be lost (which is impossible), but whether one who professes belief is truly saved (1 Jn. 2:4, 6, 9).

**3.11 THE BELIEVER'S WALK:** The child of God has been called with a holy calling to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, so as not to fulfill the lust of the flesh (Rom. 8:12-13; Gal. 5:16-25), being a new creature in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17), and thus possessing a new nature. He, nevertheless, has within him the old nature and, throughout his lifetime, these two natures strive with each other (Rom. 7:15-25). In view of this, the Christian is exhorted to seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God (Col. 3:1), and to walk in the Spirit. The believer is called to live a life of consecration, to present his entire being to God, and not to be conformed to the things of the world (Rom. 12:1-2). He is not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, and is to separate from that which dishonors the Lord (2 Cor. 6:14-17; Eph. 5:11).

**3.12 STATEMENT ON LIFE:** We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139:13-16)

**3.13 STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY:** We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex (as genetically defined) is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1Cor 6:18, 7:2-5; Heb 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt 15:18-20; I Cor 6:9-10).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom

10:9-10; 1Cor 6:9-11). We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed towards any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of East Bay Calvary Church.

**3.14 THE CHURCH:** The Church is an elect company of believers, baptized by the Holy Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13). It is known as the body of Christ, and is to witness concerning its Head, Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:15).

**3.15 THE MINISTRY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS:** We believe that the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts on all believers for Christian service and for the edification of the Church. These spiritual gifts are to be exercised according to biblical guidelines (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

We believe that the church age was initiated through the ministry of the apostles and prophets, and was accompanied by apostolic sign-gifts (healing, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophesying, words of knowledge, and miracles) to confirm their message. These sign-gifts ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established. We do not practice, teach, encourage, or endorse sign-gifts for this present age (1 Cor. 12:28-31; 13:8-10; 14:1-28; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:19-22; Heb.2:3-4).

We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith in accord with His own will for the sick and afflicted (Jn. 15:7; 1 Jn. 5:14-15).

**3.16 THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST:** The Second Advent of Christ will be in two phases:

Phase One: Christ will descend from heaven in the air, at which time the dead in Christ will be raised, the bodies of the living saints will be changed, and together shall be caught up to be with Christ (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-54). This catching up of the saints is known as the Rapture, and is an imminent, personal, premillennial, dateless, signless event; the blessed hope for which the Christian is looking (Titus 2:11-14; 1 Thess. 1:10).

Coming in between the two phases of the Second Advent is a period of seven years known as the Tribulation Period. This is Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week; the last half of it is known as the Great Tribulation, which culminates in the Battle of Armageddon (Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:8-26; Rev. 7:14; Rev. 11:2-3; Rev. 19:19-21).

Phase Two: Subsequent to "the tribulation of those days", Christ will return to the earth with His saints in power and great glory. This return of Christ will be personal, bodily, and actual. He will judge the nations and introduce the millennial age (Mt. 25:31-34; Mt. 24:27-31; Rev. 20:6).

**3.17 HEAVEN AND HELL:** There is a literal Hell: a place of torment and anguish, prepared for the Devil and his angels (Mt. 25:21; Luke 16:23-26), in which those who reject the Son of God as their personal Savior shall be tormented forever (Rev. 20:10; Rev. 20:13-15).

There is an eternal Heaven where all who are saved shall live in perfect peace and bliss forever in the presence of God and His Christ (Rev. 22:1-5).

**3.18 ORDINANCES:** We recognize two church ordinances: water baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are not to be regarded as a means of salvation, nor as means of grace by which special merit is obtained.

#### **3.18.1 WATER BAPTISM**

Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is symbolic of the beginning of the Christian life and is the testimony of a believer affirming personal faith in the crucified, buried, resurrected, and ascended Lord, Jesus Christ. Spiritual union with Christ in death to the old life in Adam and resurrection to a new life in Christ is illustrated by water baptism (Rom. 6:1-11; Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:11-12).

It is also a sign of identification with the Body of Christ, the Church (Acts

2:41-42).

### **3.18.2 THE LORD'S SUPPER**

The Lord's Supper is the ordinance given by our Lord to commemorate and proclaim His death until He comes. It should always be preceded by worshipful self-examination for sin in the worshiper's life (1 Cor. 11:23-32). We also believe that even though the elements of communion are only symbolic of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is to be a blessed time of fellowship with the risen Christ.

**3.19 FINAL AUTHORITY:** This Doctrinal Statement does not present the extent of our beliefs exhaustively. The Bible itself, as the Church's final and sufficient authority for all life, is the sole and final source of all that the Church believes, and will be interpreted and applied to matters not expressly covered herein by the Church's Board of Elders.