

THE GOSPEL

The central truth of the gospel, or “good news,” is that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord over all. God offers salvation from the penalty and power of sin (which is death) by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. The call of God for salvation and forgiveness of sins is to repent (to change our mind), which results in new belief about who God is as a holy God, what he has done in saving us through Jesus, who we are as people dead in our sin without Christ, and what we need to do to be reconciled to him. In committing to membership to this local expression of Christ’s Church, we believe in:

Jesus’ Deity and Humanity:

Jesus is fully God from eternity past, co-equal with the Father and the Spirit in the Trinity. He additionally became fully man as he was miraculously born of a virgin. As the God-Man, he is both Savior and Lord. *[John 1:14; 8:58; Matt. 1:18-25; Phil. 2:6-7; Col. 1:15-19, 2:9; Rom. 8:3]*

Jesus’ Perfect Life:

He fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures, both in perfect submission to the law and in the fulfillment of prophecy as the Messiah. Jesus lived a perfect life on earth that we cannot live and was tempted in every way, yet without sin. He was attested by God as the promised Messiah through his baptism and miraculous works witnessed by the Apostles. *[Matt. 3:13-17; Acts 2:22-36; Acts 10:38-39; Luke 7:20-22; Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 4:15]*

Jesus’ Substitutionary Death:

Jesus suffered unjustly at the hands of sinful men according to the Divine Plan of God. He died on a cross as a substitute, satisfying the holy and just wrath of God toward our sin and cleansing us from all unrighteousness by his blood, paying the penalty for our sins, and was buried in a grave. *[Matt. 27; Acts 2:23, 10:39b; Rom. 3:21-25; 1 John 1:9; 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:3-4a]*

Jesus’ Powerful Resurrection:

Jesus was raised again from death by the power of God so that we could have new life in him. This fact was affirmed by more than 500 witnesses. His death and resurrection provides for our guilt to be removed, our shame to be covered and our fear to be relieved so that we can truly walk in newness of life. *[John 11:25; Matt. 28:1-10; Acts 2:24, 32; Acts 10:40-41; 1 Cor. 15:4b-8; Col. 2:9-15; 1 Pet. 1:3]*

Jesus’ Current Activity and Future Judgement:

Jesus ascended to the right hand of the father as Lord of all, and he waits until his return when he will judge the living and the dead. *[John 5:22-29; Matt. 16:27-28; Acts 2:33; 10:42; 17:31]*

Jesus’ Work Applied:

Forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God is available only as an act of God’s grace as we turn from our sin and trust in who Jesus is and what he has done. *[Mark 1:15; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 2:38-41; Acts 10:43]*

CHURCH MEMBERS DEVOTE THEMSELVES TO THE WAY OF A DISCIPLE

THE WAY OF A DISCIPLE:

Believers in the gospel need to be transformed in the way of a disciple. The grace of God that powerfully saves us is the same grace that powerfully transforms every part of who we are. The result is living like Jesus Christ really is Savior and Lord over all. Jesus told his followers that as they made disciples, they were to “teach them to obey all that [he] commanded [them].” In the New Testament letters, we have the product of that command and a clear picture of the first principles of the Christian life. While perfection in these areas is not experienced in this life, we agree that as members of Christ’s church we will strive to be established in the following principles:

Holy Spirit Empowerment:

Disciples of Jesus recognize that they can only live a godly life by submitting to the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit who applies the grace of the gospel and its blessings to bring heart-level transformation and complete repentance.

[Rom. 8:1-11; Eph. 1:13-14; Gal. 5:16-26; 2 Cor. 7:10-13; Col. 1:28-29]

Authority of God’s Word:

Disciples of Jesus submit themselves to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, recognizing them in their complete unity as the final authority for all matters in life and as the very words of God. *[Matt. 4:4; Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21]*

Believer’s Baptism:

Disciples of Jesus outwardly affirm their belief in the gospel, identifying with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit through water baptism. *[Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-41; Acts. 8:12; Acts 22:16]*

New Character:

Disciples of Jesus, by the power of the Spirit working through the gospel, will continually and increasingly put off the character traits of the “old self” and put on the character traits of the “new self” outlined in various virtue lists of the Bible. Putting off the “old self” and putting on the “new self” are complimentary activities of equal importance in growing as a disciple. Through this process, disciples of Jesus are being restored in every part their personhood (physical and spiritual) to reflect the unmarred image of God present in humanity in the Garden before the Fall, where he created male and female as distinct physical beings who relate with him and carry out his will on the earth. *[Gen. 1:26-31; Gal. 5:16-26; Col. 3:1-17; Eph. 4:17-5:21; Rom. 12:1-2]*

Household Order:

Disciples of Jesus seek to conform to the God-ordained pattern of the family, upholding the purity and lifelong duration of the union between one man and one woman in marriage, the proper order of the servant-leadership of the husband, the helpful support of the wife, the loving and authoritative discipline and instruction from the parents and the obedience of the children. *[Eph. 5:22-6:4; Col. 3:18-4:1; 1 Pet. 3:1-7]*

Church Commitment:

Disciples of Jesus support the fulfillment of the God-ordained plan for the church under the headship of Christ by participating in the work of the ministry through speaking the truth of the gospel in love, operating out of spiritual giftedness and empowerment for ministry, praying for and serving the needs of fellow members and leaders in the church,

cheerfully giving time talent and treasure to the body, pursuing unity and peace despite differences in age, ethnicity, matters of opinion, etc., and submitting to the elders who must give an account for the church under their care. [*1 Tim. 3:14-16; Eph. 4:1-32; Rom. 12:1-21; 14:1-15:7; 1 Pet. 5:1-11; Heb. 13:17; Titus 2:1-14*]

Mission of the Church:

Disciples of Jesus participate in the mission of the local church to make disciples in our immediate community by praying for those who do not yet know Christ, living in a transformed way among unbelievers, proclaiming the truth of the gospel to them, and committing to disciple them through the church after they believe. Every disciple also plays a role in the mission of the global Church to make disciples *of all nations* through the multiplication of local churches by fostering health in their own church, praying for and supporting global partners as one of their own, and going to the nations if called by the Lord. [*Matt. 28:18-20; Col. 4:2-6; 1 Pet. 3:13-17; Titus 3:1-10; Acts 13:1-3; Acts. 14:21-27; Phil.1:3-11*]

Interaction in the World:

Disciples of Jesus are to interact with the world in a way that exhibits “good works.” We are to be not of the world, but sent into the world. This includes loving our “neighbors” as we show kindness, mercy and compassion toward all people with whom we interact, especially those in need. This also means working hard in our workplaces under the authority of our employers and submitting to governing authorities in all ways that would not force us to contradict the Word of God. [*John 17:14-19; Titus 3:1-8; Eph. 6:5-9; Matt. 5:16; Matt. 22:36-40; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-25; Acts 5:29*]

Mutual Accountability:

Disciples of Jesus pursue accountability in all matters of the lifestyle of a believer through constant, genuine fellowship with Christ and his church, believing in the power of the gospel applied by the Holy Spirit to bring true transformation. [*Eph. 4:25-32; Matt. 18:15-20; James 5:13-20; 1 Cor. 5:9-13*]

Watch the Membership Video Series at www.oakhillfellowship.com/churchmembership for a thorough explanation of these statements.

Take the assessment at www.oakhillfellowship.com/pathway to see how you can grow in the way of a disciple.