



Midland Bible Church Doctrinal Statement

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to love God and love others, subsequently demonstrating to others how to do the same. We seek to accomplish this by:

- growing in the maturity of Christ
- caring for the community
- making disciples
- equipping and encouraging believers to minister
- using our gifts and resources
- passing on our legacy to our children

The basis for our mission is found in Ephesians 4:11–16:

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Our doctrinal statement is divided into three tiers, which do not reflect so much our conviction of the truth of the statements found in each, but rather the emphasis and importance of these truths as found in the Bible. Teaching at Midland Bible Church will be consistent with this doctrinal statement: however, it is not our conviction that everyone who fellowships with us must adhere to every detail of doctrine.

TIER 1 - FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

THE SCRIPTURES:

- We believe that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole Bible is Inspired in the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings- historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic-as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the original text is, therefore, without error.
- We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read or understood unless and until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction. Mark 12:26, 36, 13:11; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; Acts 18:28, 26:22-23; 28:23; Romans 15:4; I Corinthians 2:13; 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:11; 2 Peter 1:21

THE FIRST ADVENT:

- We believe that, as provided and purposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin and received a human body and a sinless human nature. Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18; 3:16; Hebrews 4:15
- We believe that on the human side He became and remained a perfect man, but sinless throughout His life, yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man, and that His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine. Luke 2:40; John 1:1-2; Philippians 2:5-8
- We believe that on departing from the earth He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. Hebrews 10:1-13
- We believe that He became head over all things to the church which is His body, and in this ministry He does not cease to intercede and advocate for each member of that body. Ephesians 1:22-23; Hebrews 7:25; I John 2:1

SALVATION ONLY THROUGH CHRIST:

- We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one belongs to the everlasting family of God unless he or she is born again; and that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help a sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are sons of God.
- We believe also that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our place and stead; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity.
Leviticus 17:11; Isaiah 64:6; Matthew 26:28; John 3:7-18; Romans 5:6-9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; Philippians 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:18-19, 23
- We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ and that repentance, as a change of mind, may be an important part of believing, is in no way in and of itself a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts, works, or deeds such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation. We further believe that the submission of an individual to the Lordship of Christ is not a condition of receiving the free gift of salvation by grace through faith alone; but rather, that "Lordship" is a concern for the already saved as he grows in Christ. John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; 8:30-32; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 1:16-17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; 11:6; 12:1-2; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:8-9

TIER 2 - TRUTHS OF IMPORTANCE

MAN CREATED AND FALLEN:

- We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin, and as a consequence of his sin lost his spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted, and hence that every child of

Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably dead apart from divine grace. Genesis 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Psalms 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Romans 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:1-3; I Timothy 5:6; I John 3:8

THE EXTENT OF SALVATION:

- We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises that faith in Christ which is illustrated and described in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is therefore in no way required by God to seek a so-called "second blessing" or a "second work of grace."
John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; I Corinthians 3:21-23; Ephesians 1:3; Col 2:10; I John 4:17; 5:11-12

SANCTIFICATION:

- We believe that sanctification, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold: (I) positional sanctification is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ's position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, the possibility of (II) progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to "grow in grace" and to "be changed" by the unhindered power of the Spirit; and (III) complete sanctification that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be "like Him." John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 5:25-27; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 12:10; I John 3:2

ETERNAL SECURITY:

- We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the

ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the eternal covenants of God, and because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever.

- We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, Jesus, who cannot fail will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son. John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Romans 8:29; I Corinthians 6:19; Hebrews 7:25; I John 2:1-2; 5:13; Jude 24

ASSURANCE:

- We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior; and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience. Luke 10:20; 22:32; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 10:22; I John 5:13

THE HOLY SPIRIT:

- We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise, dwells in every believer, and by His baptism unites all believers to Christ in one body, and that He, as the indwelling One, is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. We believe that He never takes His departure from the church, nor from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ; seeking to obsess believers with Him and not with themselves nor with their experiences. We believe that His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church age. We believe that God, through the Spirit, heals in answer to believing prayer with or without some means in accord with His sovereign discretion and will, and that healing cannot be claimed on the same unconditional basis of faith as salvation is claimed. The fact that God does not heal is not necessarily an indication of

unbelief or of sin in a believer's life. John 14:16-17; 16: 7-15; I Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:22; 2 Thessalonians 2:7

- We believe that in this age of certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit, and that it is the duty of every Christian to understand them and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience. These ministries are the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the convicting of the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgement; the regenerating of all believers; the indwelling and anointing of all who are saved, thereby sealing them unto the day of redemption; the baptizing into the one body of Christ of all who are saved; and the continued filling for power, teaching and service of those among the saved who are yielding to Him and who are subject to His will. John 3:6; 16:7-11; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7; I John 2:20-27

THE CHURCH - A UNITY OF BELIEVERS:

- We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church which is the body and bride of Christ, which began at Pentecost and is completely distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such regardless of their membership or non-membership in the organized churches of earth. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age are baptized into, and thus become, one body that is Christ's, whether Jews or Gentiles, and having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all partisan or sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently. Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15

THE CHRISTIAN'S WALK

- We believe that we are called with a holy calling to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh, with its fallen Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord. We further believe that reckoning on the cross of Christ is central to the breaking of sin's owner and a life led by the Spirit of God. Romans 6:1-14; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Galatians 2:20; 5:16-24; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 2:1-10; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 1:4-7; 3:5-9

THE GREAT COMMISSION:

- We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that after they are saved they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the world with the aim of bringing others to Christ and growth in Him.

THE ETERNAL STATE:

- We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgement of the Great White Throne at the close of the millennium when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15

TIER 3 - TRUTHS OF VALUE

ANGELS: FALLEN & UNFALLEN:

- We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings known as angels; that one, "Lucifer, son of the morning" - the highest in rank - sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan; that a great company of the angels followed him in his moral fall, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day." Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6
- We believe that Satan is the originator of sin, and that under the permission of God he through subtlety led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power; that he is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; and that he

who in the beginning said, "I will be like the most High," in his warfare appears as an angel of light, even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine, which systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ and of salvation by grace through faith alone. Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-14; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 4:1-3

- We believe that Satan was judged at the cross, though not then executed, and that he, a usurper, now rules as the "god of this world," that at the second coming of Christ Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, and after the thousand years he will be loosed for a little season and then "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," where he "shall be tormented - day and night for ever and ever."
- We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God, from whence they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. Luke 15:10; Ephesians 1:21; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:12
- We believe that man was made lower than the angels; and that in His incarnation Christ took for a little time this lower place that He might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels. Hebrews 2:6-10

THE DISPENSATIONS:

- We believe that the dispensations are different stewardships or economies by which God administers His purposes on the earth through man under which man has varying responsibilities. We believe that the changes in the dispensational dealings of God with man depend upon changed conditions or situations in which man is successively found with relation to God, and that these changes are the result of the failure of man and the judgments of God. We believe that different administrative responsibilities of this character are manifest in biblical record, that they span the entire history of mankind, and that each ends in the failure of man under each respective test and in an ensuing judgment from God. We believe that three of these dispensations or rules of life are the subject of extended revelation in the Scriptures, the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of grace, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom. We believe that each of the dispensations is distinct and is not to be intermingled or confused, as each is chronologically successive.
- We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation nor different methods of administering the so-called Covenant of Grace. They are not in themselves dependent on covenant relationships but are ways of life and responsibility to God which test the submission of man to His revealed will

during a particular time. We believe that when man trusts in his own efforts to gain the favor of God or salvation under any dispensational test, because of inherent sin, his failure to satisfy fully the just requirements of God is inevitable and his condemnation sure.

- We believe that according to the “eternal purpose” of God salvation in the divine reckoning is always ‘by grace through faith,’ and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation. Ephesians 3:11; I Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 3:2-9 ASV; Col 1:25; I Tim 1:4 ASV
- We believe that it has always been true that “without faith it is impossible to please God”, and that the principle of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints. However, we believe that it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God, and that it is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ. We believe also that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ, therefore, we believe that their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in Hebrews 11:1-40. We believe further that their faith thus manifested was counted unto them for righteousness. Hebrews 11:6; John 1:29; I Peter 1:10-12; Romans 4:3 w/ Genesis 15:1; Romans 4:5-8; Hebrews 11:7

SIGN GIFTS:

- We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues in known languages and miraculous healings were signs to unbelievers used in the initial establishment of the church. The use of these gifts or a special enablement in the ongoing establishment of the Church is subject to God’s prerogative. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Spirit, and that the ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection. We further believe that the supreme manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is the fruit of the Spirit. Acts 4:8; 31; Romans 8:23; I Corinthians 13:8; Galatians 5:22-23

THE ORDINANCES:

- We believe that water baptism and the Lord’s Supper are the only two ordinances of the church given by Jesus, and that they are the scriptural means

of testimony for the church in this age. Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 10:47-48; 16:32-33; 18:7-8; I Corinthians 11:26

THE CHRISTIAN'S SERVICE:

- We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the early church there were certain gifted men - apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers - who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some individuals are especially called of God to be evangelists, pastors, and teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in the service for God. Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11
- We believe that, wholly apart from the benefits of salvation which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgement seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself. I Corinthians 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Corinthians 5:10

THE BLESSED HOPE:

- We believe that according to the Word of God the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both the church who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and that this event is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking. John 14:1-3; I Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:20; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14

THE TRIBULATION:

- We believe that the blessed hope, the translation of the church, will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel's seventieth week during which the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. The whole period of Israel's seventieth week will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. The latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob's trouble, which our Lord called the great tribulation. We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the age

will end with a fearful apostasy. Daniel 9:27; Revelation 6:1-19:21; Jeremiah 30:7; Matthew 24:15-21

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST:

- We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God. Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:15-25:46; Acts 15:16-17; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; I Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Revelation 20:1-3

INTERPRETATION:

- We believe that the normative authority of Holy Scripture is the authority of God Himself and is attested by Jesus Christ, the Lord of the church. We believe that Christ is God and man in one Person, so Scripture is indivisibly God's Word in human language. We affirm that the meaning expressed in each biblical text is single, definite, and fixed. We believe the necessity of interpreting the Bible according to its literal or normal sense. The literal sense is the grammatical-historical sense. That is, the meaning which the writer expressed. Interpretation, according to the literal sense, will take account of all figures of speech and literary forms found in the text. We further believe the unity, harmony, and consistency of Scripture and declare that it is its own best interpreter.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT:

- We believe that God's ideal church government is found in the mutually submissive operation of a plurality of qualified men (Elders) in an autonomous local church. Moreover, we believe that God works His will and unity in the local church in proportion to the godly submission of individuals to the God-ordained authorities over them and in proportion to the loving service of these qualified men (Elders) as those who will give an account to the living God. Additionally, we believe that the biblical emphasis is not on the separation of "clerics" or "laymen," but rather the emphasis is that all Christians are ministers in Christ though there are some given and gifted especially to lead and equip the saints for ministry. Acts 14:23; 20:28-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; I Timothy 3:1-7; I Thessalonians 5:12-13; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:9; 4:10, 11; 5:2-4