

Statement of Faith – Suzhou International Fellowship

We accept the Scriptures as the authority in matters of faith and practice and adopt the following confession of faith as our interpretation of Bible doctrine:

The Scriptures: We believe the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, without error and infallible in the original manuscripts. We believe the Bible is the final authority in faith and life. (*2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20; Psalm 19:7-9*)

God: We believe there is one God, existing eternally in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; three in one, co-equal which is the Trinity. (*Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 10:30; 2 Corinthians 13:14*)

Jesus Christ: We believe that Jesus Christ is God. (*John 10:33*) We believe in: His virgin birth (*Isaiah 7:17; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:34-35*); His sinless life (*Hebrews 4:15, 7:26*); His miracles (*John 2:11*); His vicarious and atoning death (*1 Corinthians 15:3; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 2:9*); His resurrection (*John 11:25; 1 Corinthians 15:4*); His ascension to the right hand of the Father (*Mark 16:19*); His present life there as High Priest and Advocate of all believers (*Hebrews 7:24-26; 1 John 2:1*); His personal and visible return to earth in power and glory. (*Acts 1:11; Revelation 19:11-16*)

The Holy Spirit: We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, dwells in every true believer. (*1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16-17*) We believe that the Holy Spirit seals and indwells every believer, spiritually uniting them with one another. (*Ephesians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 8:9; Galatians 3:26-28*)

We believe the Holy Spirit enables the trusting, obedient believer to live a godly life (*Romans 8:13-14; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18*) and continues to endow believers with gifts for the purpose of building up the body, for the common good, just as He wills. (*1 Corinthians 12: 4-11*)

The Condition of Humanity: We believe that mankind was created in the image and likeness of God, in innocence, and without sin. In Adam's sin humanity fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became spiritually dead and alienated from God. We believe that, within ourselves, we are incapable of redeeming ourselves from our lost and depraved condition. (*Genesis 1:26; 3:1-24; Romans 3:10-18, 5:12, Ephesians 2:1-3*)

The Work of Christ: We believe that God's eternal Son, Jesus Christ, became man, without ceasing to be God, in order to reveal God and redeem sinful humanity. We believe Christ voluntarily offered Himself as our sacrificial substitute on the cross, satisfying God's righteous judgment against sin. We believe God's only provision for our sin is Christ's death on our behalf, once for

all, through which God reconciles us to Himself. (*John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 2 Corinthians 5:21*)

Salvation: We believe that salvation is the gift of God, offered to mankind by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of sins. All who repent and receive Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior are born again of the Holy Spirit and become children of God and heirs of eternal life. (*John 3:16-19; Romans 3:23; 5:1-9; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5*)

The Church: We believe that the Church is the Body of Christ, with Christ as its head, and that every person who has received salvation is a member of His Body. We also believe that Scripture affirms the establishment and continuation of groups of Christian believers in local churches, called together for worship, instruction, fellowship and service. (*Ephesians 1:22, 23; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:42, 13:1; Hebrews 10:25*)

Eternal State: We believe that at the moment of death, the souls of all who trust in Christ for salvation immediately enter Christ's presence, awaiting the bodily resurrection to eternal life. We believe that at death the souls of all who do not trust Christ for salvation immediately enter into conscious separation from God, awaiting the bodily resurrection to judgment and condemnation, which is the eternal consequence of not trusting Christ. (*Luke 16:19-26; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:11-15*)

Version 1: 4/2/2005

Revised May 2017: The statements on the condition of humanity, the work of Christ and salvation were adjusted be more inclusive of all humanity. The statement on the eternal state was elaborated to clarify the bodily resurrection.

Revised May 2018: An error was corrected by deleting the paragraph on the Condition of Man, which had been superseded by the paragraph on the Condition of Humanity in 2017. The paragraph on Salvation was updated to specify repentance and the Lordship of Jesus in the life of the believer. Finally, the paragraph on the Church was reworded for clarity, and a reference to Hebrews 10:25 added.