

# Statement of Faith

We believe that everybody matters to God. No matter who you are, no matter what you have done, no matter what has been done to you, God loves you just as you are. Not as you should be. God has demonstrated this love by meeting us right where we are at through the person of Jesus and giving His life on the cross to pay the debt of sin that we couldn't pay ourselves.

When we couldn't work our way to God, God worked His way to us through the person of Jesus. This is great news for all of us. In light of this incredible gift, Sun Valley exists to help people meet, know and follow Jesus. If you want to know our "official" stance on more specific topics, you can read through our Statement of Faith below. We would love to meet you at one of our campuses soon!

## The Bible

The Bible is God's primary way of speaking to us today, and it's unlike any other religious writing in the world. It contains 66 books produced by more than 40 writers (including shepherds, kings, fishermen, doctors, prophets, etc.), over the span of more than 1,500 years, across three continents, in three languages. Yet, it contains one cohesive message of the creation, fall, and redemption of humanity through Jesus Christ. God has clearly guided the process of writing, gathering, and preserving His words through humanity and throughout history. The Bible is a message from God that is powerful and eternally life-changing.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 119:105; Hebrews 4:12; John 5:39; Psalm 19:7-14*

## Trinity

God has existed in relationship with Himself for all eternity. The Bible clearly teaches that there is only one God, but states that the one God is manifested in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). In other words, He is one divine essence but exists as three persons. Our best attempts to explain this reality fall short, but the clearest example is a mathematical analogy that God is described better through multiplication than through addition. Rather than thinking of each person of the Trinity as  $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$ , we can better understand Him as  $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$ . God has chosen to reveal this reality that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all fully and equally God, yet God is one.

*Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:18-20; Deuteronomy 6:4; John 1:1; Genesis 1:26; John 14; Colossians 1:15*

## The Father

The Father is good. Our very definitions of what is "good" and what is "evil" are born out of the nature of God the Father. At the very core of who The Father is, He is love. He is holy, perfect and righteous. The Father is all-powerful, all-knowing and ever-present. Simply by the power of His Word, He spoke the universe into existence. From creation to redemption, The Father has completed and is completing His work through The Son and The Holy Spirit.

*Genesis 1:1; 1 John 4:7-12; 1 Timothy 6:15-16; Job 38-39; Exodus 3*

## The Son

Jesus is what makes Christianity different from all other religions. Every other religion in the world is about requirements and expectations for what we must do to work our way to God. The good news of Christianity is something completely different: God, in His love, in His grace, and in His mercy, has reached out to us in and through the person of Jesus Christ. Rather than waiting for us to attempt the impossible mission of earning our way to Him, God Himself took on the form of a human to reach us right where we are. Jesus is God in the flesh; if you want to know who God is like, look at Jesus. Jesus lived a perfect life, and it is through Jesus' sacrifice alone that the penalty we deserve for our sin can be paid. Jesus willingly went to the cross and three days later rose from the dead, showing us that He has conquered even sin and death. If He has conquered death, it means He holds the keys to life—and He offers this life to anyone who will trust in Him.

*Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-23; John 1:14; Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 53*

## The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit guides us to Jesus and His presence reassures us of our relationship with God. Everything the Holy Spirit does points people to Jesus. The Holy Spirit was sent to serve as a guide for those who will follow Jesus after Jesus rose from the dead and returned to heaven. The Holy Spirit leads our hearts and minds to the truth that we wouldn't be able to see without Him. He convicts us of our sin, He comforts us with truth, He gives us understanding when reading the Bible, He empowers those who follow Jesus to serve and accomplish God's purposes, and He ultimately makes us more like Christ.

*John 14:26,16:7-11; Genesis 1:2; Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 2:12-15*

## Humanity

The bad news about humanity is that we are all broken. The good news is that God specializes in redeeming what's broken. God spoke all things into existence by the power of His Word, but when it came time to make man, He did things completely differently. God uniquely created man from the dust of the ground and intimately breathed life into his body. God made man special in His image, and He is crazy about us. Every single person on earth is someone God absolutely loves and values. The reality is that everyone spends eternity somewhere and the things we do in this life matter. Because of our sin, all of humanity has been separated from a relationship with God, but He is on a mission to restore that broken relationship and to transform our broken lives from the inside out through the work of the Holy Spirit.

*Genesis 1:26-27; Ephesians 2:10; Romans 3:23*

## Salvation

God hates sin because it destroys our relationship with Him and distorts everything He loves. God, because He is God, must judge sin and make right everything that sin destroys. This includes defeating death so that it doesn't have final power or the last word. Out of love and to conquer the eternal consequences of sin, God stepped into our place through Jesus Christ and endured His own judgment for sin on our behalf. Only God could do that in a way that is adequate for all humanity. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, sin was exposed and defeated once and for all. Justice has been done, and when we trust what God did through Jesus as being the only sufficient solution to our sin, we are set free by this pure act of grace. Through faith, we are reconciled to God, and He begins the process of transforming our lives into what He meant for us all along. We are saved by God's grace through our faith. Salvation is about being rescued from the eternal consequences of our sin in addition to being transformed in the here and now. This is not something we must earn; it is a free gift of God for those who will trust in Him.

*John 14:6; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:29; Genesis 3:15; Genesis 22:13-14*

## The Church

After He rose from the dead, Jesus appeared to His disciples and commissioned them to share with the world the Good News that Jesus saves. For 2,000 years, followers of Jesus have been doing just that. We call this group of people "The Church." The Church is not a building you sit in; it is a movement that you are part of. Sun Valley is just one very small piece of this larger movement of Jesus followers, empowered and led by the Holy Spirit to help people meet, know and follow Jesus. Those who say "yes" to following Jesus are the true family of God. The number one thing Jesus said He wants his followers to be known for is our love; the kind of love that cares more for others than for ourselves; the kind of love that sacrifices, gives and serves; the kind of love that Jesus modeled. We want to reflect Jesus to the world and we are never more like Jesus than when we give and when we serve.

*Matthew 28:18-20; John 13:34-35; Philippians 2:1-4; Ephesians 5:25-32; Hebrews 10:23-25*

### Marriage and Sexuality

We are all loved by God, broken by sin, and in need of the grace of Jesus in our lives. We believe that God has a design for our sexuality. Made in the image of God, people were created with equal intrinsic value and two distinct biological sexes, male and female. God designed marriage to be a union between one male and one female, and sex is to take place within the context of marriage. Even if our personal desires may differ, we choose to submit to the wisdom of God's design.

Genesis 1:26, 2:25; Psalms 139:13-14; Matthew 19:4-5; Ephesians 5:21-33

### The End

The end is just the beginning. The story of the Bible is presented as a beginning, middle, new beginning narrative. This life is all about preparing for the next. One day, whenever God sees fit, Jesus will return, permanently end sin and death, and usher in an eternal existence for He and His church to live together. Although nobody knows when this end will come, we do know that life is short and our end is coming soon. In the end, those who trusted in the sacrifice of Jesus to pay the penalty for their sins will spend eternity with Him; those who trusted in their own efforts will spend eternity separated from God in punishment for their sins. Until that day comes, our primary mission is to help people meet, know and follow Jesus.

*Matthew 24:36-44; Revelation 21-22; James 4:13-14; Isaiah 65:17-18; Matthew 25:31-46*