



Declaration of Faith and Practice

PURPOSE:

To record in simple, relevant, and purposeful terms, the guiding principles within which the Sovereign Grace Bible Church (of the Rockies) (or “SGBC”) family functions. This document and SGBC operate under the singular assumption that the Scriptures found in the Protestant Christian Bible, are our sole authority in all things pertaining to life, faith and practice.

DECLARATION:

SGBC is a thoroughly Christian church believing that according to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ is man’s only hope for the forgiveness of sin, justification before the throne of God, and eternal life in heaven (Act 4:12; Joh 14:6). Further, we believe that (according to the Scriptures) that if we, by the grace of God, have truly received Jesus for those benefits, we will repent of our sins, and give our lives completely to Him in faith, obediently submitting to Him as our First Love, our only Savior and our Sovereign Master for life (Mar 1:15, 8:34-35; Luk 6:46-48; Luk 14:25-26; Joh 14:15). Jesus Christ becomes the Christian’s all-consuming influence, example, priority and purpose for living (Rom 13:14; Phi 1:21, 2:5; Col 2:6, 3:4,17; 1Pe 2:21; 1Jo 2:3-6). And because that is true, we at SGBC strive to serve Christ and His Church in the following 3 ways.

1. Practicing Christian Commands
2. Preserving Christian Freedoms
3. Proclaiming Christian Doctrine

I. PRACTICING CHRISTIAN COMMANDS

Since we are under the New Covenant, this means the Old Covenant Law (i.e. the Old Testament commands or Mosaic Law) are no longer binding but rather serve only as a guide to understanding those commands given to us by our new Lawgiver, Jesus Christ in and through the writers of the New Testament. This however, does not mean we consider such Old Testament Laws to be abolished or abrogated. Rather we understand both their prophetic and temporary nature as stated clearly in Scripture (Mat 11:13; Gal 3:17-19; Heb 10:1) to be that which always

pointed to someone (and something) greater; those two things being the Person of Christ and His Law. Hence, what we find in the New Testament, as that which the Christian is now obligated to obey is just the fulfillment and divinely anticipated outcome of the Old Testament—including its Law (Mat 5:17-18; Luk 24:27, 44). Jesus Christ has become our new Moses (Deu 18:18; Heb 3:1-6); our new covenant (Isa 42:6) and our new High Priest—which once more brings with it a change in the Law (Heb 7:11-12). That being said, the commands in the New Testament are explicit and clearly defined which further means that there is no excuse for the Christian when it comes to understanding what God desires for their life.

As an example, some of the commands given in the New Testament are:

1. Loving the brethren sacrificially (Joh 13:34-35)
2. Pursuing holiness and sanctification in our lives (1Pe 1:21; 1The 4:3)
3. Attending the local church on a regular basis (Heb 10:24-26)
4. Preaching the Gospel to the lost (Mar 16:15-16)
5. Making disciples for the Kingdom of God (Mat 28:19-20)
6. Teaching with accuracy the whole truth of God from Scripture (2Ti 2:15)
7. Exercising Christian and Church discipline (Mat 18:15-20; 1Jo 1:9-11)
8. Obeying, respecting and praying for all God-ordained authorities (Rom 13:1-5; 1Pe 2:12-3:2; Tit 3:1-2; 1Ti 2:1-4)

*Special note regarding government and the Christian's responsibility:

Nowhere in Scripture is the Christian ever commanded or given the mandate to “Christianize” the government—or see to it that Biblical principles become the laws of the state or nation. Morality cannot be legislated and the only Christian nation that will (and does) exist before the return of Christ is the Church. She is this world's only theocracy since she is the only community (and nation) in covenant with God. What this means is that the ideas and agendas of Reconstructionism or Theonomy are completely out of place with what we see in the New Testament and the mandate given by Christ and the Apostles. Our concern is to build God's spiritual kingdom by fulfilling the great commission (Mat 28:18-20). The New Testament writers saw great separation between the affairs of the church and the state and never sought to influence the latter except with the gospel (ex. 1Co 5:9-13, 6:1-7; Act 26:29).

PRESERVING CHRISTIAN FREEDOMS

Serving Jesus Christ and His church requires not only that we practice His commands but that we preserve those freedoms He has given to us as well. Without this, the church becomes no different than the world, “following as doctrine the precepts of men” (Mat 15:9).

Many of the freedoms that we in Christ enjoy have been erroneously debated through the centuries, even to the point of dividing churches, creating special movements or even shunning others.

The tendency for a person is to create a sense of self-righteousness based on certain external actions or lifestyle-choices performed or avoided. This breeds contempt of grace and develops into unhealthy-even condemning religious practice (e.g. “legalism”). Many such failures are due to the confusion between the Old and New Covenant and their binding nature upon the Christian. This was explained above, so will not be re-iterated other than to state that we as Christians are bound only to those commands given in the New Testament. Hence, here forward, the word “Scripture” shall be used in this section to refer only to the New Testament.

Christian freedoms are simply those areas of life, faith and practice which are not explicitly commanded, or given to us as a clear model from Scripture. It is those areas of the Christian life which God chooses to be silent on in order to produce the diversity necessary to the joy and beauty of the Body of Christ, the Church. These areas are of course, bound to and guided by the direct, clear and explicit commands and models given in the Scripture and never in violation. Should one of these areas---or others like it violate such a command, then it ceases to be a freedom and immediately becomes sin.

Although the following is far from exhaustive, we list these as examples of those areas of freedom given to us in Scripture.

9. Education
 - a) Public Schooling
 - b) Home/Private Schooling
10. Family / Marriage / Children
 - a) Family Size
 - b) Birth Control
11. Entertainment / Leisure / Recreation
 - a) Television
 - b) Movies
 - c) Dancing
 - d) Cards (playing)
 - e) Secular Music
 - f) Alcoholic Beverages
12. Apparel / Dress / Appearance
 - a) Pants/Jeans (for women)
 - b) Tattoos
13. Finances
 - a) Spending
 - b) Debt/Credit

II. PROCLAIMING CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

As Christians we are called to “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down by the saints” (Jud 1:3). To do this however, requires that we know what the faith (meaning the Christian faith) teaches. In other words, we must understand the main doctrines of the Bible.

Those doctrines are divided into 10 sections.

- A. Scripture (Bibliology)
- B. God, the Father (Theology Proper)
- C. God, the Son (Christology)
- D. God, the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)
- E. Angels (Angelology)
- F. Man (Anthropology)
- G. Sin (Hamartiology)
- H. Salvation (Soteriology)
- I. Church (Ecclesiology)
- J. Last Times (Eschatology)

A detailed explanation and what the Bible teaches about each can be found by referencing our Doctrinal Statement.

