

STRONG TOWER RANCH STATEMENT OF FAITH

WE BELIEVE

1. **The Bible** That "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" by which we understand the whole book called The Bible; that it is inerrant in the original writing and that its teaching and authority are absolute, supreme and final. That the Holy Spirit guided the holy men of old in all that they wrote. 2 Timothy 3:16; Deuteronomy 4:2; 2 Peter 1:21

2. God

The Trinity The Godhead eternally exists in three persons; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having the same nature, attributes and perfection. Romans 1:20; Matthew 28:19; Deuteronomy 4:35; John 17:5

Jesus In the Personality and Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, truly God and truly man. John 1:1; John 1:14; John 10:30; Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:30; Philippians 2:5-7; 1 Timothy 3:16; Colossians 1:19

The Holy Spirit In the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit, the source and power of all acceptable worship and service, the infallible interpreter of the infallible Word, who indwells every true believer, and is ever present to testify of Christ, seeking to occupy us with Him and not with ourselves or our experiences. John 15:26; Acts 5:3,4; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 2:12,14; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; John 16:13,14

3. Man

His Need That man was created in the image of God, after His likeness, as stated in the Word of God, but the whole human race fell in the fall of the first Adam. Not only was his moral nature grievously injured by the fall but he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:7,8). Therefore, he cannot see nor enter the kingdom of God until he is born again by the Holy Spirit. That no degree of reformation however great, no attainment in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies however useful, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the 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 essential to salvation. Genesis 1:26, 27; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3; John 3:3,6,7; Titus 3:5

Provision for His Rescue That Jesus Christ became the sinner's substitute before God, and died as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. That no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church can add in the very least to the value of the precious blood or to the merit of that finished work wrought for us by Him who tasted death for every man. Romans 5:8; 1 John 2:2; Hebrews 2:9; Galatians 3:13; Romans 4:4,5; Romans 3:25; Colossians 1:13,14,20,21 We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of Jesus Christ. That His body was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that He ascended into Heaven and sits on the right hand of God as the believer's high priest and advocate, providing the power for the believer to be physically raised at the appointed time. Luke 24:39; Acts 1:10,11; Ephesians 4:10; Hebrews 1:3; 1 John 2:1

Reception of the Rescue That Christ, in the fullness of the blessings He has secured by His death and resurrection, is received by faith alone, and that the moment we trust in Him as our Savior and Lord we pass out of death into everlasting life, justified from all things, accepted before the Father, loved as Christ is loved and made one with Him. At the time of acceptance of Christ as Savior, He comes to dwell within the believer and to live out His life of holiness and power through him. Hebrews 9:15; John 5:24; Romans 3:28; Romans 4:3,23-25; Romans 10:9; Ephesians 1:3; John 17:23; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 4:6,7; Galatians 5:16; Acts 1:8

3. **The Church** That the Church is composed of all those who truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. It is the body and bride of Christ. That every believer, whether Jew or Gentile, is baptized into one body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, and having thus become members of one another we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry and loving one another with a pure heart fervently. Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 1:22,23; Ephesians 5:25-27,31,32; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 12:4,5; Ephesians 4:1-3; 1 Corinthians 1:10

4. Holy Living That all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ are called into a life of separation from worldly and sinful practices, and should abstain from such amusements and habits as will cause others to stumble or bring reproach upon the cross of Christ. Believers are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). 1 John 2:15,16; Romans 14:13; Romans 13:14; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 2:10

Marriage, Gender, and Sexual Behavior From the beginning, the Bible establishes the basis for sexuality by declaring that human beings are created in God's image as "male and female" (Genesis 1:26-27) and that "a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24); this gender identity is ordained by God and created by the visible, physical, biological sex at birth, rather than a mental or emotional state or orientation. Jesus answered questions about marriage by reaffirming this male/female and "one flesh" creation pattern for sexuality (Matthew 19:4-6). The attempt to change one's biological birth sex does violence to a person's God-given identity.* The enemy of our souls (Satan) aims to confuse and hurt us. We desire to love the hurting and confused and guide them to God's perfect design and blessing for life. (*This statement does not include the situation of birth defects.)

The Apostle Paul based his teaching about marriage upon God's creation order of this one man/one woman relationship and the analogy of Christ and His bride, the Church (Ephesians 5:29-31). Any sexual behavior outside of this husband/wife marriage relationship is sinful, including premarital sex, adultery, bestiality, pornography and homosexuality. Hebrews 13:4; Galatians 5:19; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Leviticus 18:22-23; Genesis 19:1-27; Romans 1:18-25.

In summary, the biblical definition of marriage is the exclusive union of a man and a woman. "Gender" is defined as the biological sex a person is born with and not a mental or emotional state or orientation.

We encourage all Christians to be "salt and light" on these issues by exemplifying sexual purity in our lifestyle, speaking truth to the culture, engaging in loving, redemptive ministry to anyone caught up in sexual sin or confusion, and proclaiming that those who practice any unbiblical sexual behavior can be forgiven and changed, as the Apostle Paul wrote, "...some of you were like this, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

5. Return of Christ In the personal return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that the coming again of Jesus Christ is the "Blessed Hope" set before us, for which we should be constantly looking. "Our citizenship is in Heaven from where we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20). Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; John 14:1-3; Titus 2:13; Philippians 3:20,21

6. Satan In the reality and personality of Satan, "that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceives the whole world" (Revelation 12:9). Ephesians 6:11,12 – 1 Peter 5:8 – Revelation 20:10

7. Heaven and Hell That the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming, when soul and body reunited shall be with Him forever in glory. Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Luke 16:22,25; Philippians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

That the souls of the lost remain after death in misery until the final judgment of the great white throne, when soul and body reunited at the resurrection shall be cast "into the lake of fire" which is "the second death" to be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9). Luke 16:22-23,27,28; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:5,11-15; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

8. Evangelism In the evangelization of the world, that the supreme mission of the people of God in this age is to preach the Gospel to every creature and invite them to receive salvation and proclaim Jesus is Lord. We feel that special emphasis should be placed upon the evangelization of children. Mark 16:15; 2 Corinthians 5:18,19; Romans 10:9; Matthew 18:14