

# Statement of Faith

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At Palominas Chapel, we teach what Scripture reveals under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as interpreted through the ministry of Pastor Nathan Harding.

This summary represents our core doctrines. We teach them clearly to our members while recognizing that sincere believers may differ on some points. When we fellowship elsewhere, we focus on Christ, His Church, and the fundamentals of the faith.

## Our Foundation

### The Bible is Our Authority

We base everything on the King James Version Bible, complemented by The Matthew Bible.

### We Fellowship with All Believers

We welcome fellowship with anyone who accepts Jesus as the Son of God, has received the Holy Spirit, and seeks to obey Scripture.

## Who God Is

### One God: The Father Alone

Only the Father (Jehovah) is God. Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God—separate from the Father, not God Himself, but holding all the authority the Father has given Him and perfectly representing God to humanity. The Holy Spirit is a distinct spirit sent by God. They work together in spiritual unity of purpose, but only the Father is God.

### Salvation Through Jesus Christ

Grace isn't just a concept—it's Jesus Christ Himself, God's love made real. Salvation comes when we genuinely believe in Jesus as the Son of God, turn away from sin, forgive others as God forgives us, receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, publicly declare our faith through water baptism, and continue walking in obedience throughout our lives. Water baptism is our public signature on the salvation document—the outward declaration of the inward spiritual work already accomplished through Christ's blood and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. True faith naturally produces a changed life. True saving faith naturally includes both belief and obedience—Scripture teaches "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

### Complete at Salvation

Salvation happens when you believe, repent, are forgiven, and receive the Holy Spirit upon entering the Kingdom of God: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9). When you're saved, you're completely cleansed in that moment by the blood of Jesus. You don't become progressively less

sinful after salvation; the cleansing is complete because you accepted and received the full pardon, "for the remission of sins that are past", from Jesus (Romans 3:25).

Christ is able to save and keep us going forward: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him" (Hebrews 7:25), and He is "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless" (Jude 1:24). His blood covers all past sin completely at salvation, and He empowers us through the Holy Spirit to live without falling back into sin going forward.

What grows is your knowledge of God's Word and your maturity in living it out. The Holy Spirit guides you away from what displeases God as you walk in obedience. We're accountable to walk in all the knowledge we have.

## **Assurance of Salvation**

We know we're saved by the present evidence in our lives: the fruit of the Holy Spirit, love for other believers, and ongoing obedience to God's Word. When we meet the conditions of salvation people have the assurance that God upholds his end of the bargain. Our assurance isn't based on a past event separated from our present reality, but on the present evidence that Christ dwells in us through the Holy Spirit's guidance.

## **How We Live**

### **Holy Living**

God calls us to be pure, set apart, and different from the world. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we're equipped to live without disobeying God. Complete dedication to God and walking in blamelessness is what Scripture calls us to.

### **Sin**

Sin is willful disobedience to God's known will and commandments—the knowing, intentional, presumptive, transgression of God's law. Scripture teaches: "To him that knows to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin", "All unrighteousness is sin," and "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." That means that Sin is a conscious choice, not something you inherit. Temptation itself is not sin. Unwanted thoughts and mental battles are not sin. Sin is a choice to disobey God.

### **Forgiveness**

Forgiveness means releasing others from what they owe us and trusting God's perfect justice. When we forgive, we let go and place the matter entirely in God's hands. This is essential—Jesus says we must forgive others for God to forgive us. Only Christ's blood can truly cleanse sin, so when we forgive someone, we release them from their debt to us so they can seek God's forgiveness through Christ.

### **Modesty in Appearance**

We honor God in how we present ourselves. Women wear dresses or skirts and keep their hair long. Men wear trousers and keep their hair short. We don't wear jewelry, elaborate hairstyles, or cosmetics—these produce pride among humble people. Our clothing is modest, extends to the foot (following

Jesus's example in Revelation 1:13), and makes gender distinction immediately clear from any distance. Everything we do reflects humility, not pride, and we conduct ourselves with discretion.

## **Biblical Gender and Marriage**

God creates each person male or female at conception—this is His design and cannot be changed. Marriage is a sacred covenant between one biological man and one biological woman who meet biblical standards. Men and women have different but equally important roles that complement each other according to God's plan.

## **Separation from the World**

### **Different from the Culture**

We live set apart from worldly practices that draw our hearts away from God: We don't celebrate holidays with pagan origins. We avoid entertainment media like movies, TV shows, streaming services (Netflix, TikTok, etc.), and social media used for entertainment—these steal time belonging to God, pollute our minds with worldly thinking, and create affection for the world rather than the Father. We don't participate in organized competitive sports. Instead, we focus on what truly matters: Seeking righteousness, communion with God, enjoying God's creation, gathering together for fellowship and worship, meeting in person for hospitality, and investing our time in eternal things.

## **Our Worship and Practice**

### **Spiritual Gifts and Tongues**

The gift of tongues is when God interprets, or speaks language through the ears of hearers to reflect His message. At Pentecost, the apostles spoke in their own language, but listeners heard them in over 15 different languages—God translated through their ears. Speaking in unknown languages that no one understands is out of order and confusing; during those times, people should pray in silence. The evidence of the Holy Spirit in our lives shows through our obedience to God, our love for one another, and the fruit of the Spirit—not through ecstatic utterances.

### **What Happens After Death**

When we die, our souls await God's final judgment—the righteous in Abraham's bosom (also called paradise), the unrighteous in hell. When Christ returns to meet His people in the sky, everyone will stand before God's final judgment. The righteous will be invited to "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." They will be raised with spiritual bodies yet remain known as they are. Those who reject Him will be cast into the lake of fire along with hell itself—this is the final and eternal destination of the damned. The opposite of eternal life is perishing—God can destroy the soul, and John 3:16 invites us to eternal life so we do not perish in the second death, a judgment that is final, eternal, and irreversible.

### **About Satan and Heaven**

Satan was not a fallen angel. Scripture teaches he "was a murderer from the beginning" and "sinneth from the beginning," and was placed in Eden to give mankind the choice to love and obey God freely.

He was created as an adversary of the saints and has been a liar from the beginning. When Jesus said He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven, He spoke of Satan's instant fall from the elevated place in people's hearts that rightfully belongs to Christ. Satan fell when Christ conquered him at the cross. Heaven has always been and will always be absolutely pure—nothing unclean has ever entered or will ever enter God's presence. The Bible speaks of three heavens: the atmosphere where birds fly, outer space where the stars are, and the third heaven (paradise) where God dwells.

## **Christ's Victory and Return**

Christ's victory over Satan was won at the cross—all enemies were conquered there, and the final enemy, death, was conquered through Christ's resurrection. When Christ returns, He will meet His people in the sky: "We shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Christ takes us to heaven where we'll be with Him forever.

## **Meeting Together**

We teach that core ministry practices require physical presence—baptism by immersion, the Lord's Supper, foot washing, laying on of hands, anointing the sick with oil, and corporate assembly. Technology may supplement ministry when physical presence is temporarily impossible, but active membership requires regular physical attendance. Pastoral discretion permits exceptions for legitimate cause.

# **Congregational Leadership**

## **Pastoral Authority**

The Bible establishes that each congregation has one pastor who serves as shepherd under God's authority. Our pastor is individually accountable to God for the spiritual welfare of every person in this congregation—he must give account for every soul. We honor and obey pastoral authority as part of God's design for protecting and guiding His people. God holds individual shepherds accountable, not committees or boards.

## **Men and Women in Ministry**

Both men and women serve vital roles in God's work. The offices of pastor, elder, and deacon are reserved for qualified men, while women teach, serve, and minister within the biblical framework God has established—maintaining proper position, feminine demeanor, and not usurping authority over qualified men in congregational assembly.

## **Our Heart for Ministry**

Everything we do in service to God should be done with joy and genuine love for others—never harsh or negative. We serve willingly, not for money but with a ready mind, not as lords over God's people but as examples for the flock to follow.

## **The Five-Fold Ministry**

Christ gave the church apostles, evangelists, teachers, pastors, and prophets to perfect the saints, build up the body of Christ, and bring believers into unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God. While no individual can reach the complete fullness of Christ, the church collectively provides access to that fullness through these ministry gifts working together.

## **Living Out Our Faith**

### **Biblical Counsel and Mental Health**

We believe many struggles that modern culture treats as psychological problems are actually spiritual matters. Depression, anxiety, anger, bitterness, fear, guilt, shame, relational struggles, addiction, and similar challenges often have spiritual roots—unconfessed sin, demonic oppression, unforgiveness, unbelief, or distance from God. Secular therapy is often built on humanistic foundations that contradict Scripture, encouraging self-reliance instead of God-reliance and redefining sin as illness. Pastoral counsel, prayer, and biblical guidance should be our first response to these struggles. God's Word addresses the deepest needs of the human heart. The process for counsel always begins with pastoral oversight, and to reject that is to reject the position of accountability and guidance that God has provided.

### **Eastern Practices**

We do not endorse Eastern practices that are infiltrating our culture—they are not biblical. These include yoga (poses that honor false gods), mindfulness techniques (emptying the mind to reach altered states), chakras and energy work, mantras and repetitive sayings, crystals claimed to have spiritual power, Zen practices, meditation apps, and phrases like "namaste" (a greeting acknowledging the divine in another person) or "karma" (a concept of cosmic justice through reincarnation).

### **Meditation**

The word meditate in the Bible means actively thinking about and considering God's Word, His works, His character, and His commands. This is thoughtful engagement with truth, not the emptying of the mind or techniques to reach altered spiritual states.

### **Divine Healing**

God can heal any sickness, injury, or situation without exception. When we pray, we're seeking His will—He may choose to heal directly through His power, or He may choose to work through doctors and medicine. Both are expressions of His care and provision for us. When it comes to our children's health, we trust God while also ensuring they receive necessary medical care—parents are legally and morally responsible for their children's welfare. God can heal despite the presence and work of medical personnel and often uses their intervention to His glory and as a testimony of His provision.

### **God's Unchanging Standards**

God's moral law—what He says is right—is eternal and never changes, no matter what society or government says. The Old Testament's civil penalties like stoning and execution were part of ancient Israel's national law, not what we practice or advocate today. But God's moral standards themselves

remain absolute. What God calls sin is still sin regardless of whether civil government permits or celebrates it, and it requires genuine repentance and turning back to Him.

## **Our Commitment to Truth**

### **Funerals and Ceremonies**

Funerals and memorial services are religious functions conducted according to biblical standards, with church leadership retaining full authority over all aspects including content, format, participants, and speakers. We will not include eulogies or readings that contradict Scripture or affirm conduct that the Bible calls sin.

### **Marriage Ceremonies**

We may perform marriage ceremonies based on pastoral counseling and discernment for couples who meet our biblical standards: one biological man and one biological woman, both in good standing or approved by pastoral leadership. Divorced individuals cannot remarry through our congregation unless the divorce resulted from the other spouse's serious biblical violation and the full circumstances are known to pastoral leadership, demonstrating the innocent party's biblical grounds for remarriage. We generally do not perform, host, or facilitate ceremonies for non-members unless special circumstances exist, such as people from within our broader fellowship of believers who are known to us and adhere to the same standards of holiness and biblical conduct.

### **Public Teaching and Cultural Issues**

We speak openly about what the Bible teaches on moral and cultural issues, always pointing people back to Scripture. Our teaching may address the public actions and statements of politicians, celebrities, and cultural movements as they intersect with biblical truth. We don't engage in political campaigns or endorse candidates, but we do address how current events and cultural trends line up with God's Word.

### **Counseling is Religious Ministry**

Pastoral counsel provided here is religious discipleship under Scripture, not psychological therapy, licensed counseling, psychiatric treatment, or medical care. Our pastor and those he authorizes to provide spiritual counsel are acting as ministers of the gospel, not mental health professionals.

### **Our Approach to Violence and Justice**

We do not endorse, advocate, incite, or condone violence, vigilantism, threats, harassment, or unlawful action against any person for any reason. While we teach that certain conduct is sin under God's moral law, judgment belongs to God and to lawful civil authority—not to individual believers acting outside the law.

## **Ready to Learn More?**

The complete Statement of Faith is in our church bylaws and taught through Pastor Nathan Harding's preaching, writings, and recorded messages under Holy Spirit guidance.

Membership requires affirming these truths as congregational doctrine and committing to live by them. You must accept and apply these teachings without opposing them, though you need not articulate or defend every point.

**Questions?** Contact Pastor Nathan Harding—we'd love to talk with you.

Learn, Live, Lead: Learn God's Word, Live in obedience, Lead others to Christ.