

Grace Brethren people are united by their love for Christ, a belief in His Word and a commitment to serve.

The Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches includes more than 40,000 members in over 300 churches across the United States. Grace Brethren churches are related through a fellowship, rather than a denominational structure. Each church is an autonomous organization and is free to make its own decisions and govern itself. Yet, these churches voluntarily choose to be accountable to one another and work together in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Through the years, three commitments have characterized Grace Brethren people.

Committed to the Bible

This commitment to the Bible can be traced back to 1708 when Alexander Mack and a small group of Christians committed themselves to the Bible, instead of the traditions of the State Church in Germany. Their motto, "the Bible, the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible," has been perpetuated by the Grace Brethren.

We make this commitment to the Bible because every word of it is inspired by God. It is exactly what He wanted to communicate to man and was recorded without error. This confidence gives our lives firm direction and hope. We also discover in the Bible how to have a personal relationship with God and receive forgiveness of sin. Through God's Word we can know for certain that we will spend eternity in heaven.

The Bible is the most important book we'll ever read!

## Grace Brethren Statement of Faith

We of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, in harmony with our historic position, believing the Bible, the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible to be our infallible rule of faith and of practice, and feelin our responsibility, to make known the divine message of the Bible, present the following articles as a statement of those basic truths taught in the Bible which are common to our Christian faith and practice.

**1. The Bible:** the Word of God, the sixty-six Books of the Old and New Testaments, verbally inspired in all parts and wholly without error as originally given of God (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

**2. The One True God:** existing eternally as three persons - the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

**3. The Lord Jesus Christ:** His preexistence and deity (John 1:1-3), incarnation by the virgin birth (John 1:14; Matthew 1:18-23), sinless life (Hebrews 4:15), substitutionary death (2 Corinthians 5:21), bodily resurrection (Luke 24:36-43), ascension into heaven and present ministry (Hebrews 4:14-16) and coming again (Acts 1:11).

**4. The Holy Spirit:** His personality (John 16:7-15), deity (Acts 5:3-4) and His work in each believer, baptism and indwelling at the moment of regeneration (1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 8:9) and filling (Ephesians 5:18) to empower for Christian life and service (Ephesians 3:16; Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:22-23).

**5. Man:** his direct creation in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-28), his subsequent fall into sin resulting in spiritual death (Genesis 3:1-24; Romans 5:12) and the necessity of the new birth for his salvation (John 3:3-5).

**6. Salvation:** a complete and eternal salvation by God's grace alone, received as the gift of God through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

**7. The Church:** one true Church, the body and bride of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:25-32), composed of all true believers of the present age (1 Corinthians 12:12-13) and the organization of its members in local churches for worship, for edification of believers and for worldwide gospel witness,

each local church being autonomous but cooperating in fellowship and work (Ephesians 4:11-16).

**8. Christian Life:** a life of righteousness, good works and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world (Romans 12:1-2), manifested by speaking the truth (James 5:12), maintaining the sanctity of the home (Ephesians 5:22-6:4), settling differences between Christians in accordance with the Word of God (1 Corinthians 6:1-8), not engaging in carnal strife but showing a Christ-like attitude toward all men (Romans 12:17-21), exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) and maintaining a life of prayer (Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6), including the privilege, when sick, of calling for the elders of the church to pray and to anoint with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5:13-18).

**9. Ordinances:** the Christian should observe the ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ which are: (1) baptism of believers by triune immersion (Matthew 28:19) and (2) the threefold communion service, consisting of the washing of the saints' feet (John 13:1-17), the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20-22, 33:34; Jude 12) and the communion of the bread and the cup (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

**10. Satan:** his existence and personality as the great adversary of God and His people (Revelation 12:1-10), his judgment (John 12:31) and final doom (Revelation 20:10).

**11. Second Coming:** the personal, visible and imminent return of Christ to remove His Church from the earth (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17) before the tribulation (1 Thessalonians 1:10; Revelation 3:10) and afterward to descend with the Church to establish His millennial kingdom upon the earth (Revelation 19:11-20:6).

**12. Future Life:** the conscious existence of the dead (Philippians 1:21-23; Luke 16:19-31), the resurrection of the body (John 5:28-29), the judgment and reward of believers (Romans 14:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:10), the judgment and condemnation of unbelievers (Revelation 20:11-15), the eternal life of the saved (John 3:16) and the eternal punishment of the lost (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:15).

## Committed to the Great Commission

When Jesus rose from the dead, He called all of His disciples together and issued this edict: *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."* Matthew 28:19-20a

Grace Brethren believe this task is yet to be accomplished. We believe Christ expects us to be involved in its fulfillment.

So we have committed ourselves not only to evangelism, but to establish churches where discipleship and leadership development will provide a positive setting for individuals to mature in Christ. God's program for this age centers on local churches - churches which are committed to reproducing themselves.

This emphasis has led to the establishment of Grace Brethren churches in the United States. Through Encompass World Partners we have three times as many members of Grace Brethren churches in countries abroad than we have in the United States. More than 1,000 people have participated in CE National's TIME program, allowing them to receive training in ministry experience.

Grace Brethren are active in fulfilling the Great Commission.

## Biblical Teaching on Eternal Life

Jesus considered love essential to His Church. He said it would distinguish His followers from the world. *"All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another."* John 13:35.

In following our Lord, Grace Brethren consider love for one another essential on both a local and national level. Although all Grace Brethren hold to a common set of beliefs, there is still a great variety of churches and individuals within our movement. We are held together by our love for the Lord and our love for each other as brothers. We know we will accomplish the most for Christ when we bond and work together.

Neighboring churches pray for each other and give encouragement. Districts cooperate in girls' and boys' programs, youth ministries and church planting. Our commitment to one another also enables our members to help each other grow in Christ. Members care and pray for each other, help each other and share the treasures of God's truth.

The Grace Brethren are united in belief and purpose, a growing association of believers, and bonded together in their love for God and for one another... why not become a part of this family?

## The Readable Series

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Scripture quoted from the New International Version Bible

# Who Are Grace Brethren People?

