



The SCC Standard

A monthly journal covering the Shuswap Community Church Statement of Faith as found on our website.



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Each month here on The SCC Standard we are going to be looking at the individual statements found in the Shuswap Community Church Statement of Faith. This statement as a whole can be found on our website at aplacetobelong.ca and either downloaded, read or printed from there. Each month an assortment of pastors, elders, staff and lay people will share their answer to the simple question, “Why does this matter to me?”. We hope that this will be a helpful and learning experience as we all look a little closer and dig a little deeper into our commonly held theological belief standards.

This month we are looking at the very first statement which reads as follows:

I. OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe the Holy Bible to be that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation which, as originally written, was objectively the very Word of God; that it was written by men supernaturally moved; that it is verbally and plenary inspired; that it is truth without any admixture of error; and therefore is and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to men; the

true centre of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.



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Growing up my family had a church background but I didn't grow up "in the church," as some may say. From the little exposure I had, I, like many who went to church sporadically with their parents or grandparents heard the stories. You know the ones, the stories of Noah and his boat, David fighting Goliath, Jonah being swallowed by a whale and Jesus being born in a manger. As a kid these stories grabbed hold of my imagination, and all of these stories came from a book, The Bible. This book and its stories fascinated me as a child. As an adult to this day, it still does

How could one book, that somehow seems so simple and yet at the same time so complex, be so readily available and yet somehow still be so out-of-reach be so regarded and disregarded at the same time. Yet since its' beginning the Bible has been the most printed, most translated, most revered and best selling book of all time. However you have perceived this book in the past these facts alone should peak your interest. What is so special about the Bible?

In the first point of our Statement of Faith we see the answer, The Bible "as originally written, was objectively the very Word of God ... the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to men." The Bible, 66 individual books, a compilation of letters, poetry, prophecy and history, together are the Words of God spoken to mankind to show us his will! It was God speaking, telling us who He is and what His plan and will for all people for all time was and will be. The Bible is where we must begin because without it we would have no knowledge of the beginning! There would be no starting point, no understanding of God and His nature, no wisdom, no knowledge of objective morality, or salvation.

Without the Bible we would be a lost people wandering in the darkness searching for something but not knowing what it was or where to find it. God, in His grace, gave us the Bible to reveal Himself to us, to speak to us, to guide us and to give us hope. Imagine being in a pitch black room, being told to find "it" (not know what "it" was), then being told that if you failed you would be spend eternity in condemnation. Sounds like fun? I don't think so. Without the Bible that is where we would stand, hoping and praying for a miracle (though it is hard, if not impossible, to understand prayer and miracles without the Bible itself). The Bible is that miracle. The light shining in the darkness giving us the hope of an eternal relationship with the One who lovingly made us.

Years after my first encounters with the Bible in Sunday school God used the power of His word to not just grab hold of my imagination, but my heart. A couple powerful words Jesus spoke to a crowd of people over two thousand years ago, on a hill beside a lake, were the words my heart needed to hear. Words I only had because of the Bible. God used His Word, the Bible,

to reveal to me His love for me, and now I don't have to walk through this world blind and alone.

The Bible gives the same message of hope to you too. As a kid while I was learning the stories, I also learned a little song; maybe you know it: "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so." The Bible reveals to us: God, and His nature, and His love. We need the love of God each and every single day, which means we need the Bible. And God, in His grace, has given it to us! All praise and glory to HIM!



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It is in the
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The Bible is important. The Bible is important to me. One memory from my childhood that has stuck with me and will stick with me forever has to do with the Bible. Every day my mom would wake me up for school from kindergarten all the way through grade twelve. And every morning as I drug myself out of my bed to the breakfast table, my mom would read the Bible to me as I ate my Cinnamon Toast Crunch (or whatever the sugar cereal of choice was that morning!). Nothing monumental or extraordinary. But now as a grown man I look back and see the faithfulness of my mom being devoted to the Scriptures and seeking to pass that on to me.

Maybe you have similar memories from your childhood. Maybe you wish you did. Maybe you want to do this in your own family or personal devotional life today. The Apostle Paul wrote these words concerning the Bible:

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Here Paul directs and instructs Timothy on the importance of the Scriptures. He says that through them one can be made "wise for salvation through faith" in Jesus. It is in the Bible that we encounter the story of humanity where we see the diagnosis (Gen. 3; Rom. 3:23), our need to be saved and our inadequacy in following the law or saving ourselves (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom. 4:1-12). It is in the Bible where we see the story of redemption unfold and we see our Saviour come (Matt. 1:21; Luke 2:11; 1 Tim. 1:15).

Our statement of faith as a Fellowship Pacific church affirms this as it states that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, that it is complete, and that it is "the true centre of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried."

This is imperative for all Christians to grasp. The Bible must be foundational in my personal life and in my ministry because it is there that everything is laid out for us - mainly where we come from (Creation), what we have done (Fall), what and who we need (Redemption/Jesus), and what will happen in the

end (Restoration). As Paul says, the Bible is profitable for us and equips us as we live to share the gospel with a world that needs to hear it.

As a young man I preached my first sermon at my home church from Ecclesiastes chapter 12. After the service a man who used to take care of me in the church nursery walked up to me, shook my hand, and said, “thank you for preaching the Bible this morning.” All I could say in response was, “that’s all I have to preach.” That has been my aim ever since and I pray that would be my aim until my last days not only as a pastor, but also as a husband, father, friend, and neighbour. Soli Deo Gloria!



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**The Bible is
 what God
 said, is saying,
 and will
 continue to
 say to His
 people.**

Why does Article I of our Statement of Faith matter?

This article matters because it establishes at least three essential features about the Bible: that it is the very word of God, that it is truth without error, and that it is the supreme standard for life. These are bold claims!

We believe that the Bible is not simply a collection of some words, but that “[t]he words of the Bible are God’s words” (Grudem 1999, 40). This means that the source of the Bible is God himself. When someone recommends a book, usually the first question asked about it is, “Who wrote it?” because the source of information matters. Without a credible source, the content of the information may not carry the appropriate authority. The Bible is about what God says about Himself; it is in essence His autobiography. 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that “[a]ll Scripture is breathed out by God.” Yes, the words were written down by people, but by people that were “supernaturally moved” by a source of inspiration outside of themselves. Frankly, the people who wrote these things down would have to have been “supernaturally moved” otherwise many things might not have ever been written down! So, we embrace the belief that “God has spoken to man, and the Bible is his Word, given to us to make us wise unto salvation” (Packer 1973, 20).

Living in the Internet age makes for interesting conversation when discussing truth. We often now hear the phrase, “I’ve done the research.” Unfortunately, more often than not, “doing the research” means reading a few articles from unknown or questionable sources. Considering the source is absolutely vital to the research process. When we consider that the source of the Bible is God himself we can be assured of its truthfulness and authority. The Bible is what God said, is saying, and will continue to say to His people.

We also believe that the Bible is truth without error. During the trial of Jesus, Pontius Pilate asked the simple yet profound question, “What is truth?” (John 18:38). Packer offers this answer:

Truth in the Bible is a quality of persons primarily, and of propositions only secondarily. It means stability, reliability, firmness, trustworthiness, the quality of a person who is entirely self-consistent, sincere, realistic, undecieved. God is such a person: truth, in this sense, is his nature, and he has not got in him to be anything else. (1973, 113)

So, because God's very nature is truth, we know that his word given to us in the Bible is also truth. Every one of God's commands and promises contained in the Bible are true. It would be impossible for God to produce anything other than truth.

Specifically, we believe that the Bible is truth without error or as the Statement of Faith says, "truth without any admixture of error." Why say it that way? Is it not implicit that truth is inherently without error? The culture we live in would advocate for a relativistic approach to truth. That is to say that "knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute" (Oxford Languages). In this way of thinking, because truth is not absolute, what is deemed truth at a given time in a given place, can effectively be seen as with error from the perspective of another time and place. So, to say that the Bible is absolute truth is to say that it is objectively without error; it stands the test of time and place. Furthermore, including the word "admixture" enforces the fact that the Bible is entirely truth without error. There is not even a little bit of error mixed in. This is important because we so desperately need this kind of reliability. The Bible provides what nothing else can.

Finally, we believe that the Bible is the supreme standard for life. A question that has burned on the hearts of Christians for millennia is, "How then shall we live?" In Acts 2 when those who heard the word preached and the good news of the gospel for the first time, they asked, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (vs. 37). 2 Timothy 3:16 and 17 tells us that "[a]ll Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." In other words, the Bible is useful for life. But not only is it useful, it is the supreme standard by which our conduct, beliefs, and opinions must be measured. Activities and ways of thinking that do not line up with scripture must be stopped. Conversely, those that do agree with scripture should continue and perhaps even increase.

In light of this God-breathed, absolute, inerrant truth that is revealed to us in the Bible, how should we go about living our lives? The obvious and simple answer is, "according to the Bible." However, it may not be as simple as that since the Bible doesn't directly speak to many things we encounter today. For example, the Bible does not address sports, smartphones, masks, cars, school, musical styles, and many other modern issues. Therefore, it is imperative that we study and know the Bible well enough in order to ask critical questions and apply appropriate Biblical principles to guide our decisions on a case by case basis. God's word is sufficient to guide us in every circumstance of life.

Article I of our Statement of Faith is absolutely packed with theological goodness and we have briefly touched on just three important points. May we be reminded of the Bible's source, inerrancy, and ability to guide us in life as we are transformed day by day.

-Andy deHoog

It would be impossible for God to produce anything other than truth.

- Grudem, Wayne. Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.
- Packer, J.I. Knowing God. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1973.