

ROCKHARBOR CHURCH: WHAT WE BELIEVE

THE WORD OF GOD

We believe the Bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)), without error in the original manuscripts, and the supreme and final authority in doctrine and practice. We believe the Bible, including all sixty-six books of the Old Testament and New Testament ([John 5:46-47](#)), is Holy Scripture and was written by men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit ([2 Peter 1:21](#)). It is fully authoritative and serves as the only trustworthy blueprint for life and faith.

GOD

We believe in the one, triune God who is of one substance, power, and purpose yet eternally existing in three equally divine persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ([Genesis 1:2](#), [Deuteronomy 6:4](#), [Matthew 28:19](#), [1 Corinthians 8:6](#), [2 Corinthians 13:14](#), [John 10:30](#), [John 1:1](#), [Ephesians 4:5-6](#)). He is the pre-existent, eternal creator of all things and the sovereign ruler over the heavens and the earth ([Psalms 90:2](#), [103:19](#), [Isaiah 43:13](#), [Ephesians 3:9](#), [1 Timothy 1:7](#)). He upholds, directs, and governs all things according to the infallible, unchanging counsel of His own purposes and will ([Isaiah 14:24](#), [46:9-10](#), [Malachi 3:6](#), [Numbers 23:19](#), [James 1:17](#)). He is entirely sufficient in of Himself, not dependent or in need of anything He has made. God the Father hears, answers, and intervenes prayer according to His love, wisdom, and providence ([Psalms 139:1-6](#), [Philippians 4:6-7](#), [1 Peter 5:7](#), [1 John 4:8](#)). He draws sinful, fallen man to Himself, forgiving sin and delivering from death those who come to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ, for salvation ([John 3:16](#), [1 Peter 1:3](#), [2 Peter 3:9](#)).

JESUS CHRIST

We believe in Jesus Christ, the eternal, begotten Son of God, who became man, without ceasing to be God ([John 1:1, 14](#), [John 3:16](#)). He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary and manifested in a body of flesh ([Luke 1:35](#)). He lived a perfect, sinless life and performed many signs and miracles. He accomplished our redemption through His substitutionary atonement on the cross, where He was physically crucified, suffered, bled, died, and was buried. ([1 John 2:2](#)). Through His death on the cross, He secured for us eternal redemption and made a way for life everlasting ([John 14:6](#)). We believe our redemption and salvation are guaranteed by His literal, physical resurrection on the third day from the dead and that He is the only means of salvation ([1 Corinthians 15:17](#)). We believe He then ascended into heaven where He now sits at the right hand of the Father and as High Priest, He serves as our Advocate, the only Savior and Mediator between God and man ([1 Timothy 2:5](#), [Hebrews 1:3, 3:1](#), [1 John 2:1-2](#)). He is the visible image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, the Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth, and the Head of His Body the church ([Colossians 1:15-19](#)). He will personally return for a final resurrection of His people and judge His creation to usher in the final portion of redemptive history. At His appearing, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord ([Philippians 2:5-8](#)).

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit, eternally one with the Father and Son, who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment ([Genesis 1:2](#), [John 16:7-13](#)). We believe the Holy Spirit is a person who draws the unredeemed to repentance and faith, bringing them into union with Christ and the Body of Christ ([John 14:26](#)). At the moment of salvation, the Spirit baptizes believers into the body, seals them for salvation, regenerates them to new life, empowers them for service and witness, imparts spiritual gifts, and is fully present to continually fill, guide, and equip the believer for Christ-like living ([Ezekiel 36:26-27](#), [John 3:5-8](#), [Acts 1:8](#), [Romans 8:9-11](#), [1 Corinthians 2:10-13](#), [12:4-13](#)).

THE CHURCH

We believe the Church universal is the Body of Christ, with Christ as its all-authoritative Head ([Ephesians 1:22-23](#), [Colossians 1:18](#)), and is made up of believers who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation. We believe the local church is a gathering of believers who are voluntarily joined together for the purposes of the teaching and study of the God's Word, worship, prayer ([Acts 2:42-46](#)), observance of the ordinances of communion and baptism, Christian fellowship ([Hebrews 10:24-25](#)), exercising their spiritual gifts for service within the local body ([1 Corinthians 12](#), [Romans 12:6-8](#)), and engaging in evangelism to the lost through the fulfillment of the Great Commission ([Matthew 28:18-20](#), [Acts 1:8](#), [2 Corinthians 5:19-20](#)). We believe wherever God's people meet regularly in obedience to these commands there is a local expression of leadership under a plurality of church elders ([Acts 14:23](#), [1 Peter 5:1-4](#)).

MAN

We believe that God created mankind - male and female - in His own image as the crown of all creation ([Genesis 1:27-28](#)). Under the sovereign, redemptive plan of God, man fell into temptation, and chose to rebel against God bringing sin, death, and condemnation to all mankind ([Genesis 2:17](#), [3:1-6](#), [Romans 5:12-21](#), [James 1:13-15](#)). Through this sin, man incurred not only a physical death, but also a spiritual death and became incapable of returning to God apart from Jesus Christ ([John 6:44](#), [Romans 6:23](#), [Ephesians 2:1-5](#)). For this reason, we believe all human beings are totally depraved by nature and by choice through their mind, will, and actions ([Jeremiah 17:9](#), [Romans 1:18-32](#), [Romans 7:18](#)). Although this corruption is pardoned through Christ, it is never completely gone until our glorification with Christ, thus serving as a reminder of our desperate need of a Savior ([2 Corinthians 3:18](#), [Philippians 1:6](#)).

SALVATION

We believe salvation is a sovereign gift of God and is received through a personal faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior ([John 6:44](#)). It is only through Christ's substitutionary death on the cross in which complete payment for our sins can be made, completely satisfying the demands of God's holy justice ([Romans 3:23](#), [Colossians 2:13-15](#)). This free gift of salvation is provided by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone, for the glory of God alone ([Romans 6:23](#)). Salvation is apart from works and no man is justified in the sight of God partly by Christ and partly by works ([Ephesians 2:8-10](#)). We believe that Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation and that no one is saved apart from a conscious, personal decision to trust in Christ as their one and only Savior ([John 14:6](#), [Acts 4:12](#), [Romans 10:9-10](#)).

We believe all true believers, once saved, are made a new creation by the Holy Spirit, declared righteous before God, and are eternally secure in Christ forever ([John 10:27-30](#)). Believers may fall into sin through neglect, spiritual apathy, and temptation, whereby they grieve the Holy Spirit and degrade their God-given graces and joy. Even so, they will be kept by the power of God through faith and will never fall away because God, by His grace, preserves them ([Jude 24-25](#), [1 Peter 1:3-5](#), [Romans 8:28-30](#)).

BAPTISM AND COMMUNION

We believe the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted by Christ and are to be observed by believers, within the church, until Christ's return ([Matthew 28:18-20](#), [Acts 2:38-41](#), [1 Corinthians 11:26](#)). We believe that baptism is the water immersion of a believer in the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit ([Matthew 3:13-17](#); [Mark 1:9-11](#); [Luke 3:21-22](#); [John 1:29-34](#), [Acts 8:35-39](#)). We believe that Christian baptism is a public declaration of a believer's decision to follow Christ identifying with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection ([Romans 6:3-6](#), [Colossians 2:12](#)). We believe that infants may be dedicated to the Lord but should not participate in baptism until they can articulate their faith and the purpose of baptism. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a regular reminder of Christ's death through the sacrifice of His body and the shedding of His blood on the cross ([1 Corinthians 10:16](#), [Luke 22:19-20](#)). It is a right for every believer, in anticipation of His second coming, and should be preceded by a time of solemn self-examination ([1 Corinthians 11:23-29](#)). Baptism and the Lord's Supper are significant expressions of salvation, worship, and submission to God for the believer.

MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe God is the only authority in matters of marriage and sexuality for all people, and the term "marriage" only has one meaning: a sacred covenant between one man and one woman joining together in an exclusive, complementary, permanent union ([Genesis 2:18-24](#); [Matthew 19:1-9](#)). This bond is to represent the heavenly covenant between Christ and His Church ([Ephesians 5:31-33](#)), therefore intended not to be broken by anything but death. Jesus stated that marriage was created by God from the beginning, so no human institution has the authority to redefine marriage any more than a human institution has the authority to redefine Scripture ([Mark 10:5-9](#)). We believe sex is a gift from God to be enjoyed solely within the covenant of the marriage relationship. We believe that the exercise of sexual expression outside of this biblical definition of marriage, including but not limited to lustful thought, adultery, pornography, homosexuality, premarital sex, bisexuality, transgenderism, or polygamy does not align with God's design for sexuality and marriage ([Romans 1:18-32](#), [1 Corinthians 6:9-20](#), [1 Thessalonians 4:3-7](#), [Hebrews 13:40](#)). We believe that God created mankind in His image: male (man) and female (woman), sexually and biologically different, but with equal personal dignity ([Genesis 1:26-27](#)). We believe it is inconsistent with God's design for a follower of Christ to physically seek to change, alter, or disagree with their biological sex which has been assigned by God ([Psalm 139](#)). The fall of man has corrupted God's original intent for sexuality and all people have experienced this to some extent. We recognize that these sins are no different than others and we all need to hold fast to the grace given to us through Jesus Christ. We also believe that all forms of abuse, discrimination, slander, and oppression towards fellow humans are offensive to the sacred image of God, which is impressed upon all people.

GENDER ROLES IN THE CHURCH

We believe men and women are created in God's image, absolutely equal in essence, dignity and value but are distinct by divine design. We believe God created two distinct, yet complementary genders for our good, His glory, and to reflect His nature and character to the world. We believe that the spiritual leadership as modeled by Christ loving the church applies to the home. As part of God's created order, husbands are to love their wives unconditionally and wives are to respect their husbands, both demonstrating Biblical submission and love and sharing equal value in God's design ([Ephesians 5:22-33](#)). We believe as it relates to the church, men and women are both expected to serve and lead; however, the office of Elder/Pastor is reserved for qualified men ([1 Tim. 3](#); [Titus 1](#)). Supportive Scripture: [Genesis 1:27](#); [Genesis 2:18-25](#); [1 Corinthians 12:4-32](#); [Galatians 3:28-29](#); [1 Timothy 2:8-15](#), [Titus 2:3-5](#); [1 Peter 3:1-7](#)

HEAVEN AND HELL

We believe the souls of believers in Jesus Christ, at the moment of death, become absent from the body and present with the Lord ([Luke 23:43](#); [2 Corinthians 5:8](#); [Philippians 1:23](#)), and there remain with Him until the resurrection of our earthly bodies at His coming for the Church, when our souls and new incorruptible bodies shall be with Him forever in glory ([1 Corinthians 15:35-54](#); [Philippians 3:21](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#)). We believe the souls of unbelievers are held in Hades, in constant torment, until the Great White Throne judgement occurs at the close of the millennium when soul and body reunited will be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting punishment. ([Matthew 13:49-50](#); [25:41-46](#); [Luke 16:19-26](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:7-9](#); [Hebrews 9:27](#); [Revelation 20:11-15](#), [21:8](#)).

THINGS TO COME

We believe in the personal and imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ to collect His Church, an event commonly referred to as the rapture ([1 Corinthians 15:51-54](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#); [Titus 2:13](#); [Revelation 3:10](#)). This event will be followed by a seven-year tribulation period where God's wrath will be poured out upon the entire earth ([Jeremiah 30:7](#); [Daniel 9:27](#); [Matthew 24:21](#); [Revelation 6:17](#), [7:14](#), [12:6](#), [12:13-14](#), [13:5-9](#)). At the end of this tribulation period, Jesus Christ will return with His saints to establish the Messianic Kingdom where Christ will rule and reign for a thousand years ([Zechariah 14:4-11](#); [1Thessalonians 3:13](#); [Revelation 3:10](#), [19:11-16](#), [20:1-6](#)), ending with the Great White Throne judgement ([Revelation 20:7-15](#)) and the creation of a new heaven and earth ([Isaiah 65:17](#); [2 Peter 3:13](#); [Revelation 21:1-5](#)). We do not believe in the existence of an intermediate state in which the unsaved can atone for their sins after their physical death ([Hebrews 9:27-28](#)).