

Excelsior Springs Church Statement of Faith

This is by no means an exhaustive statement of all the beliefs of the Excelsior Springs Church, but rather a short list of beliefs that we hold which are commonly discussed among Christians and which visitors may find helpful to get a basic understanding of our faith and practice.

1. **The nature of God.** We believe that there is only one God (1Ti 2:5; 1Co 8:6; Isa 44:6) who is a trinity consisting of the Father, the Word (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Ghost (1Jo 5:7). The Father (1Co 8:6), Jesus Christ the Word (Joh 1:1,14), and the Holy Ghost (Act 5:3-4) are all three fully and equally God.
2. **The person of Jesus Christ.** We believe that Jesus Christ existed from all eternity as the Word, the second person of the Trinity (1Jo 5:7; Joh 1:1) and as such created all things (Joh 1:3). We believe that in time, the Word was joined with a human body and became flesh (Joh 1:14) in the womb of the virgin Mary, being conceived by the power of God the Father and the Holy Ghost, and it was at that time, and not before, that Jesus became the Son of God (Luk 1:35). In other words, we believe that the human nature, not the divine nature, of Christ was begotten of God. We do not believe that Jesus Christ was "eternally begotten" or "eternally generated", or any such thing. We believe that Jesus Christ is both fully God (1Jo 5:20) and fully man (1Ti 2:5).
3. **The scriptures.** We acknowledge the word of God, the Holy Scriptures, as our only rule of faith and practice (Psa 119:105; Isa 8:20). We believe the Scriptures are given by the inspiration of God (2Ti 3:15-17; 2Pe 1:21) and are without error (Psa 119:128). God has promised to preserve His pure words (Psa 12:6-7) and this process of preservation necessarily includes copies of the text and translations of the text (Deu 17:18-19; Pro 25:1; Mat 24:14; 1Co 14:11; Mar 5:41). We believe the pure words of God have been preserved and transmitted to our generation in the Authorized or King James Version of 1611. The fruits (Mat 7:15-20) of this Bible in evangelism (Col 1:5-6), social reform, liberty, material prosperity (Pro 8:6-21), and in glorifying Jesus Christ (Joh 16:14) attest to this fact. The modern English versions do not bear these fruits. Rather, they manifest their corruption (2Co 2:17) in adding to, deleting from (Deu 4:2), changing (Rom 1:25), and questioning (Gen 3:1-4) the authorized text of God's word.
4. **Creation.** We believe that God created the universe and everything therein out of nothing in six literal 24 hour days and rested on the seventh day (Gen 1:1-31; Gen 2:1-3; Exo 20:11). We deny any theory which inserts large periods of time between or during the six days of creation and we also deny the theory of macroevolution. We believe that everything God created was "very good" (Gen 1:31) and death entered the creation when the first man Adam sinned, and not before (Gen 2:17; Gen 3:6; Rom 5:12).

5. **The natural state of man.** We believe that the first man Adam was created sinless and very good (Gen 1:31) and was given a law to keep, which when he broke it caused him to die spiritually that day (Gen 2:15-17 c/w Gen 3:6). When Adam, who was the federal head and progenitor of the human race, sinned, he plunged all of his posterity into sin and spiritual death (Rom 5:12). All men are thus born in a condition of spiritual death in trespasses and sins and are "by nature the children of wrath" (Eph 2:1-3). The scripture declares that men are sinners from youth (Gen 8:21), birth (Psa 58:3), and conception (Psa 51:5). In this condition of spiritual death, men by nature: are not righteous (Rom 3:9-10), don't understand or seek God (Rom 3:11), are unprofitable and do no good (Rom 3:12), don't fear God (Rom 3:18), have a carnal mind that is at enmity with God and is not, neither can be, subject to the law of God (Rom 8:7), cannot please God (Rom 8:8), cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God which are foolishness to them, neither can they know them because they are spiritually discerned (1Co 2:14), cannot hear God's words with understanding (Joh 8:43,47), and cannot believe the gospel (Joh 10:26) which is foolishness to them (1Co 1:18). Simply put, we believe that in this natural condition of spiritual death which all men are in by nature, they can do nothing to get themselves out of it, including believing the gospel or any other condition that might be offered to them to fulfill.

6. **Salvation by grace alone.** We believe that given the natural state of men in spiritual death, if they are ever to be saved from that condition, it must be solely and exclusively by the sovereign grace of God apart from anything they can do, will, or resolve (Rom 9:16). We believe that God, knowing before the foundation of the world that Adam would sin and plunge the human race into sin and death, chose out of that fallen lump of mankind (Rom 9:21) a portion of them, His elect, to make them holy and without blame before Him (Eph 1:4). Those whom He chose were predestinated to be His children (Eph 1:5), and to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, called, justified, and glorified (Rom 8:28-30). The eternal salvation of God's elect has nothing to do with their will (Rom 9:16; Joh 1:13) or works (good or bad), but is only according to His own mercy, grace, and purpose (Rom 9:11-15; 2Ti 1:9; Tit 3:5). The elect were given by God the Father to Jesus Christ to die for and to save, and Jesus saved and gave eternal life to each and every one of them without losing any (Joh 6:37-39; Joh 10:27-29; Joh 17:2-4).

7. **The purpose of the gospel.** We believe the purpose of preaching the gospel is to locate and educate the regenerate (God's elect who have a new spirit within), not to make unregenerate sinners into children of God. The gospel doesn't bring life and immortality to a sinner who is dead in trespasses and sins, but rather it brings life and immortality TO LIGHT (2Ti 1:10) in a child of God whom God has already saved and called by His grace (2Ti 1:9). A person's belief of the gospel is the evidence (not the cause) that he has passed from death unto life (Joh 5:24) and that he is born of God (1Jo 5:1). Simply put, the gospel is the declaration of the good news that God has saved His people from their sins by Jesus Christ (Mat 1:21), and their belief in that fact demonstrates that they are of those for whom Christ died and to whom He gave eternal life.

8. **Baptism and church membership.** We believe that those who hear and believe the gospel should repent of their sins and be baptized in water (Act 2:37-38) and that that baptism adds them to the membership of a local church (Act 2:41). We believe that while the preacher is baptizing a person in water, the Holy Spirit is baptizing them into the body of a receptive local church by which they become a member (1Co 12:13 c/w 1Co 12:27). We believe for a baptism to be valid, it must be performed by an ordained minister (Mat 28:19-20) immersing (Rom 6:4-5; Col 2:12) in water (Joh 3:23) a believer who has confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Act 8:36-38), which adds him to the membership of a local church (Act 2:41). We believe that baptism is a figure of salvation in Christ by His death, burial, and resurrection (Rom 6:4-5), and it is in no way a condition for eternal salvation, but rather is the answer of a good conscience toward God (1Pe 3:21).
9. **The perpetuity, autonomy, and independence of the church.** The Excelsior Springs Church is of the lineage of Baptist churches which dates back to Christ and the apostles, the church being that institution which Jesus said would not be destroyed (Mat 16:18) and would endure until the end of time (Mat 28:19-20; Eph 3:21). These churches throughout time have gone by different names and have had various problems in them as did the churches of Corinth (1Co 1:2 c/w 1Co 3:3 c/w 1Co 11:20-22) and Galatia (Gal 1:2 c/w Gal 3:3), but they were all baptistic in practice, baptizing believers in water upon a confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Act 8:36-38).

The Excelsior Springs Church is independent and autonomous (self-governing), with its only head being the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph 1:20-23; Eph 4:15-16; Eph 5:23), and is therefore not part of any denomination or association, but is ruled by its own pastor (Heb 13:7,17) who is its overseer (1Pe 5:2; Act 20:28), who does not rule by whim (1Pe 5:3), but merely holds the church to the commandments of God in the scripture (Heb 13:7).

The Excelsior Springs Church is an unincorporated entity which is not a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization and is in no way connected to, nor dependent on, the State. We believe that the church and the State should be separate and have no entangling alliances with each other (Mat 22:21).

10. **End times and the reign of Christ.** We believe that upon His resurrection, Jesus Christ began to reign on David's throne (Act 2:24-36) in heaven (Psa 89:35-37) as head and king of the universe (Eph 1:20-22 c/w 1Sa 15:17; 1Ti 6:14-16). We believe that Jesus bound Satan after His resurrection (Rev 20:1-3) before spoiling (Mat 12:29) him and his principalities and powers (Col 2:14-15). We believe that near the end of time Satan will be loosed for a little season to deceive the nations again (Rev 20:3,7-8), after which time Jesus will return for the second time to destroy the devil and them that know not God (Rev 20:9; 2Th 1:7-9), resurrect the righteous and wicked dead and judge them (Act 24:15; Joh 5:28-29), gather the elect from the four winds of the earth (Mat 24:31), and burn up the heavens and the earth (2Pe 3:10-12);

all of which will happen on the last day (Joh 11:24 c/w 1Co 15:52 c/w 1Th 4:16-17), and after which He will create a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21:1-2).

11. **Eternal Punishment of the Wicked.** We believe that the souls of the wicked go to hell immediately after death to be tormented in flames (Luk 16:22-24; Jud 1:7). We believe that on the last day when Jesus Christ returns and resurrects dead, the resurrected bodies of the wicked will again be joined with their souls and they will be cast into the lake of fire to be tormented day and night forever and ever which is called the second death (Mat 25:41,46 c/w Rev 14:10-11 c/w Rev 20:10-15).

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