

FOR IT  
IS BY **GRACE** YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED,  
THROUGH FAITH - AND THIS IS NOT FROM  
YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF **GOD**.



# GRACE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

## *Foundational Standards*

The following statements provide an overview of the foundational standards of Grace School of Theology.

**Questions may be submitted to:**  
[doctrine@gsot.edu](mailto:doctrine@gsot.edu)

# Foundational Standards Preamble

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## Calling

We are called to glorify God by instilling in our students the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and educating the next generation of Christians. Our calling includes both introduction to and encouragement to remain in a life of full devotion to Jesus Christ. We are charged with educating, encouraging, equipping, and serving our students and their families, which are an integral part of Grace School of Theology (GRACE). We do this by directly instilling our Christian philosophies, values, mission and goals in our students through offering a Christ-centered education. Overt liturgical religious purpose activities (preaching, worship, Bible instruction, communion, baptism) as well as related non-liturgical religious purpose activities (social service activities, weddings, teaching, ministry, or events) all serve as methods that GRACE utilizes to instill our religious values and beliefs. Even non-liturgical ministries are grounded in the *Policies Manual*, *Board Manual*, *Academic Catalog*, *Employee Handbook*, *Faculty Handbook*, *IE Plan*, *Strategic Plan*, *Student Handbook*, *Doctrinal Statement*, *Mission Statement*, *Vision Statement*, *Core Values*, *Purpose and Objectives*, *Philosophy of Education*, and *Ethical Values and Standards of Grace School of Theology*, and are therefore subject to all of its ministerial, enrollment, discipline, termination and expulsion policies.

## Community and Partnership

We believe that our religious activity and education derives meaning in large measure from participation in a larger religious community. For this reason, parents and family of our student body play a large role in furthering our mission and viewpoint as a school. We exist to foster a Christ-like, educational environment of persons subscribing to our religious beliefs and faith. GRACE seeks to instill Christian values in students by having faculty and staff spend time with the students, instructing and engaging them in the learning process. In this way, we transmit our Christian system of values to the next generation.

Associating with like-minded Christian families reinforces GRACE 's Christian purpose and is vital to our educational mission to perpetuate the faith. We are committed to being and educating disciples who understand what it means to follow Jesus Christ into a life of worship, fellowship, sacrifice, service and being led by the Spirit. (*Matthew 28:19*, *Acts 1:8*, *John 15:16*, *Mark 16:15*) Our mission as part of the body of Christ is to participate, share, and encourage each other toward spiritual growth. (*1 Thessalonians 5:11*, *Hebrews 10:23-25*, *Colossians 3:16*) For these reasons, participation in our school requires a tangible commitment to our beliefs, purposes, and mission as outlined in GRACE's Written Foundational Standards, which are incorporated herein by reference, as if fully set forth herein.

## Expression of Faith

GRACE intends to transmit our system of religious beliefs, tradition, Christian morals, reverence and values. We do so by engaging in the community and students' lives, acts of worship, and through all activities, educational and otherwise, in which we participate. Likewise, we believe that all behavior of students and staff of GRACE is communicative in nature, exemplifying and expressing our faith, both publicly and privately. Any student or employee who propounds a point of view contrary to our beliefs as stated in our referenced written Foundational Standards, will impair GRACE 's integrity and ability to educate in accordance with its religious views and message.

## Outreach Ministry

We take very seriously GRACE 's charge to be a Christian presence in a secular world. Therefore, all activities that GRACE engages in are intended to further its religious purpose, as stated in our Purpose Statement. As such, all of our programs are considered an outgrowth of the mission of GRACE to preach, teach, evangelize and instill the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

# Foundational Standards

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## Mission Statement

Grace School of Theology is an evangelical Christian institution of higher learning and has as its purpose the offering of programs of study in an environment where academic excellence is emphasized and a biblically based perspective is maintained. GRACE is committed to enriching its students spiritually, intellectually, and professionally, and to preparing students to serve God in a global and culturally diverse society.

## Vision Statement

Grace School of Theology's vision is to develop spiritual leaders in every nation who can teach others about the love of Christ, a love that cannot be earned and cannot be lost.

## Purpose and Objectives

Grace School of Theology is committed to living, learning, and worshipping as a community of faith based upon the grace of God. Through the faculty, staff, administration, and trustees, GRACE strives to lead students to a correct understanding of doctrine with the necessary skills to communicate the Truth. We live by the spirit of God to love one another, to challenge one another for greater growth in the Lord, and to walk together with integrity in this world. Grace School of Theology seeks to prepare others to proclaim God's Truth courageously to a world that is in need of hope. We want to glorify God by walking in God's grace, ministering God's Word, and equipping God's people.

As an academic community of faith, GRACE seeks to guide students:

- To develop a personal Christian philosophy of service and an ethical and spiritual commitment which is based upon and examined in the light of biblical revelation.
- To grow in an understanding of the Word of God that is textually based, theologically consistent, and scripturally sound.
- To develop effectiveness in the use and understanding of communications, both written and spoken, employing analytical and logical thinking in the process.
- To become a contributor to God's kingdom in a manner consistent with historical, conservative, evangelical Christian principles, leading and participating responsibly in local church, community, and world affairs.
- To accurately handle the Word of God in ministries appropriate to their calling.
- To grow in understanding, appreciation, and application of biblical exegesis, biblical and systematic theology, biblical interpretation, hermeneutics, history, the church, and global ministry opportunities.
- To prepare students to make life-long commitments and investments of their lives in Christian ministries.
- To prepare students for continuing study by becoming acquainted with electronic technology resources and methods of scholarly research.

## Core Values

- Grace School of Theology is committed to and intentional about our Christian faith.
- Grace School of Theology will responsibly teach the Truth of the Gospel.
- Grace School of Theology strives for excellence.
- Grace School of Theology believes in the importance and cultivation of Christian character.
- Grace School of Theology believes in impacting and changing the world for Christ.
- Grace School of Theology believes in and affirms God's free gift of grace for mankind.

## Philosophy of Education

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God and was given the responsibility of caring for all things that God has created (*Genesis 1:27*). We believe that all people have many abilities and that we need to help them to develop these God-given talents. These principles apply equally to men and women, young and old.

Because of our high calling, we need to excel in all educational programs, providing a systematic and comprehensive training in the Word of God from a Cristo-centric perspective. Therefore, it is imperative to have professors and staff that are competent in their respective fields, who receive evaluation regularly, and who constantly seek ways to improve professional skills.

Our Christian philosophy is reflected in the Bible-centered curriculum taught by well-trained and dedicated Christian professors. Our faculty uses textbooks authored by scholarly writers that maintain a commitment to the Bible as the divinely revealed guide for all people.

The faculty teaches and students study without fear of their academic freedom being violated and without fear of any kind of discrimination. Each student is granted the right to learn, to inquire, and to explore without restraint. This freedom is guaranteed when a corresponding liberty of instruction is granted to instructors. These rights are extended to the student and faculty members within the parameters of sound scholarship and within the appropriate framework of Biblical foundations and institutional sphere granted by the Board of Trustees.

## Ethical Values and Standards

Grace School of Theology is an institution that emphasizes the importance of the Christian perspective in all of its academic endeavors. At the heart of its mission and purposes is the School's commitment to the values and principles of the Christian faith through grace. By accepting the identity of being Christian, GRACE makes both explicit and implicit promises about the relationship between its words and actions. This means that integrity defines the very core of its existence as an institution of higher learning.

GRACE recognizes that it must demonstrate integrity in its practices and relationships. It is necessary that the School be able to show not only that it has policies and procedures, but also that those policies and procedures reflect the values and practices of its mission.

GRACE demonstrates integrity by its classroom performance, public representations, distribution of information, business practices, contractual arrangements, and relationships with internal and external constituencies. We adhere to the code of ethics accepted by the academic community as well as its specific standards of Christian behavior.

Academic integrity is inherent in the nature of our educational tasks. This is reflected not only in the unique relationship between faculty and student but in the manner in which the School represents itself to the public. GRACE identifies itself as an evangelical Christian institution of higher learning, which indicates that the academic programs are developed and implemented for a perspective that is distinctly Christian. GRACE believes this perspective is consistently expressed in its written documents, academic programs, and in the conduct of its faculty, staff, administration, and students.

Every faculty, staff, and administrator at GRACE is required to be a Christian in practice and belief and must give a statement of faith as part of the overall interview process for employment consideration. Students are informed about the ethics and values of GRACE and agree to abide by the codes of conduct as described in the *Student Handbook*. GRACE believes that Christian values and practices form the basis of all academic and administrative departments.

## **Doctrinal Statement**

### **The Bible**

We believe that the words of the Bible, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, are “God-breathed.” They give humankind His authoritative revelation, wholly without error of any kind on every topic discussed in the original writings. We believe that the Bible must be interpreted as language is normally used, recognizing the importance of dispensational distinctions.

*(Psalm 12:6; 119:89, 130; 160; Isaiah 40:8; 55:8-11; Luke 24:27, 44-47; John 5:39, 17:17; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, 13; Ephesians 1:10; 3:9; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:10-12, 23-25; 2 Peter 1:19-21).*

### **God**

We believe in one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each of whom possess equally all the attributes of deity and characteristics of personality and with each having specific work to perform. We believe that God is a personal being who is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

*(Matthew 3:16; John 10:30; 14:10; 14:26; 15:26; Ephesians 1:3-4; 6-7; 13-14)*

### **Jesus Christ**

We believe that God the Son, Jesus Christ, became flesh through His miraculous conception in a virgin by the Holy Spirit and His birth. He is, therefore, perfect and complete deity and perfect humanity, these being united without mixture in one person forever. We believe that He lived a sinless life and voluntarily and vicariously paid for the sins of all mankind by dying on the cross. We believe in the resurrection of His crucified body, in His ascension to heaven, in His present ministries in heaven, and in his future literal return to the earth.

*(Psalm 2:7; 110; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:18-25; 28:19; Luke 1:26-35; 2:52; John 1:1-3, 14, 18; 3:16; 8:58; 10:30; 17:5; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 15:1-20; Galatians 4:4; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 1:14, 15-17; 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:1-3, 6, 8-12; 4:15; 13:8; 1 Peter 1:1; 2:22; 1 John 2:1-2; 3:16; 4:10, 5:20; Revelation 1:17-18; 19-20)*

### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God and that He has come to reveal and glorify Christ, to convict sinners of sin, righteousness, and judgment, to regenerate, indwell, seal, and baptize believers into the body of Christ, impart gifts to believers, and to enable them to live holy lives.

*(Genesis 1:2; Psalm 139:7; Isaiah 40:13-14; Matthew 1:18-20; 28:19; Luke 1:35; John 1:13; 3:3-8; 6:63; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15, 13; Acts 2:1-4; 5:3-4; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10, 12; 6:19; 12:13; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2:22; 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 9:14; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 John 2:20, 27)*

### **Creation**

We believe that the Genesis account of creation is to be understood historically and literally and not allegorically or figuratively. We believe that man was created in the image of God and that the first man, Adam, sinned, bringing spiritual death to all, who, therefore, stand condemned and in need of Christ's salvation.

*(Genesis 1; Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:15-20; Romans 5:12; Romans 7)*



## **Salvation**

We believe that God saves by grace alone, apart from works (whether past or future), those who put their faith in Christ alone as God and Savior from sin. Initial faith resulting in justification and regeneration is not a gift of God. That is, fallen humanity when persuaded by the illuminating and convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit and the drawing ministry of the Father still possesses the capacity to believe in Christ. Such faith precedes regeneration. At the moment of belief, Christ imputes His righteousness to believers and keeps them secure eternally. Based on the promises of God (not works), we believe a person can and should have complete assurance of his or her Eternal Life the moment he or she believes in Christ.

*(Isaiah 55:8-11; Matthew 4:4; 26:28; John 1:4, 9, 12; 3:5, 16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; 14:6; 16:8; 17:17; Acts 4:12; 13:38-39; 16:31; Romans 1:7, 16-17; 3:22, 26; 4:4-5; 5:1, 6-9; 6:11-13, 23; 8:2-4, 9, 12-13, 29-30, 32; 10:4, 17; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 8; 6:11; 12:13; 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 5:21; 7:1; Galatians 2:16; 5:13-26; 6:15; Ephesians 1:3, 7; 2:8-9; 4:22-24; Philippians 3:4-9; Colossians 1:22; 2:6, 10; 3:1-7, 16; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 4:3-4; 5:23; Titus 3:5-7; Hebrews 4:12, 10:10, 14; 12:14; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:18-19, 23; 2:2, 11; 1 John 1:5-7; 3:2, 5-9; 5:13; Jude 24)*

## **The Christian Walk**

We believe that although sinless perfection is not possible in this life, all believers are called to live holy lives in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

*(John 17:17; Romans 8:1-17; Galatians 5:13-25; Ephesians 5:26-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 1 John 3:2)*

## **Marriage and Human Sexuality**

We believe that all matters of faith and conduct must be evaluated on the basis of Holy Scripture, which is our infallible guide. *(2 Timothy 3:16-17)* Since the Holy Bible does speak to the nature of human beings and their sexuality, it is imperative that we correctly understand and articulate what the Bible teaches on these matters.

We are committed to the home and family as set forth in Holy Scripture. We believe God has ordained and created marriage to exist between one man and one woman, with absolute marital fidelity. The Bible sets forth specific home and family values, which include the distinct roles of husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, and children. It is our firm conviction that we uphold the dignity of each individual as we embrace the unchanging and longstanding principles of scriptural truth.

Based on Holy Scripture and the constant moral teaching of the universal Church, we believe:

### **Marriage**

We define marriage as the legal, permanent, exclusive, comprehensive, and conjugal “one flesh” union of one man and one woman, intrinsically ordered to procreation and biological family, and in furtherance of the moral, spiritual, and public good of binding father, mother, and child.

*(Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 2:18-24, Matthew 19:4-9, Mark 10:5-9, Ephesians 5:31-33)*

### **Sexual Immorality**

We believe that sexual acts outside marriage are prohibited as sinful. Consequently, GRACE members must resist and refrain from any and all sexual acts outside marriage — including but not limited to adultery, fornication, incest, zoophilia, pornography, prostitution, voyeurism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, sodomy, polygamy, polyamory, sologamy, or same-sex sexual acts.

*(Exodus 20:14, Leviticus 18:7-23, Leviticus 20:10-21, Deuteronomy 5:18, Matthew 15:19, Matthew 5:27-28, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-13, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, Hebrews 13:4, Galatians 5:19, Ephesians 4:17-19, Colossians 3:5)*

### **Sexual Identity**

We believe that God created mankind in His image: male (man) and female (woman), sexually different but with equal personal dignity. Consequently, GRACE members must affirm their biological sex and refrain from any and all attempts to physically change, alter, or disagree with their predominant biological sex — including but not limited to elective sex-reassignment, transvestite, transgender, or non- binary “genderqueer” acts or conduct.

*(Genesis 1:26-28, Romans 1:26-32, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)*

### **Sexual Orientation**

We believe that God created and ordered human sexuality to the permanent, exclusive, comprehensive, and conjugal “one flesh” union of man and woman, intrinsically ordered to procreation and biological family, and in furtherance of the moral, spiritual, and public good of binding father, mother, and child. Consequently, GRACE members must affirm the sexual complementarity of man and woman and resist any and all same-sex sexual attractions and refrain from any and all same- sex sexual acts or conduct, which are intrinsically disordered.

*(Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6, Mark 10:5-9, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Ephesians 5:25-27, Revelation 19:7-9, Revelation 21:2)*

### **Sexual Redemption**

We believe that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and should seek redemption and harmonious relationship with God through confession, repentance, baptism, and faith in Jesus Christ. Consequently, GRACE members must welcome and treat with respect, compassion, and sensitivity all who experience same-sex attractions or confess sexually immoral acts but are committed to resisting sexual temptation, refraining from sexual immorality, and conforming their behavior to GRACE’s Statement of Faith.

*(Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:1-10, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 2:17-18, Hebrews 4:14-16)*

### **Celibacy**

We believe that Holy Scripture grants two life-enhancing options for human sexual behavior: (1) the conjugal “one flesh” marital union of one man and one woman, and (2) celibacy. Either is a gift from God, given as He wills for His glory and the good of those who receive and rejoice in His gift to them. Celibacy and faithful singleness is to be celebrated and affirmed within Grace School of Theology.

*(Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18, 21-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:5-8; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 7:1-8; Matthew 19:12; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Romans 12:10; 1 Timothy 5:1-2)*

### **The Church**

We believe that the church, the body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost and is composed of all who receive Christ through faith. We believe God’s program for the Church is distinguished from His program for Israel described in Daniel 9. We believe that all believers should assemble regularly in local churches for worship, for observing the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord’s Supper, for mutual encouragement and discipline, and for carrying out God’s purposes in this world.

*(Acts 2:41-42; 10:44-47; 11:15-17; Romans 6:4-5; 12:3-8; 16:1, 5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-31; 12:12-13, 27; 16:19; Galatians 3:27-28; 6:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:16-22; 5:24-25, 30; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 5:11; Hebrews 10:24-25)*

## **The Future**

We believe that the personal and imminent return of Christ to rapture His church will be followed by a period of tribulation on this earth. At the conclusion of this period, Christ will return triumphantly and inaugurate His millennial reign over this earth. We believe in the everlasting conscious blessedness of the saved in the New Jerusalem and the everlasting conscious punishment of the unsaved in the lake of fire. *(Matthew 24:21, 29-30; 25:31, 46; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; 5:4-10; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 20:1-6, 11-15)*

## **Satan**

We believe that at some time in the past Satan led a rebellion, including a host of angels, against God and was expelled from the heavenly kingdom. Satan, also called other names including the Devil, is a real being who has tremendous, but limited power, and is the true adversary to God's people. Satan is destined to be judged and will endure eternal punishment in the lake of fire. *(Ephesians 6:12; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 20: 1-3)*