

Grace Community Church of Effingham County Position Statement on Lordship Salvation

Scripture teaches fundamental truths essential to all evangelical teaching:

- Christ's death on the cross paid the full penalty for our sins and purchased eternal salvation. His atoning sacrifice enables God to justify sinners freely without compromising the perfection of divine righteousness (Rom. 3:24-26). His resurrection from the dead declares His victory over sin and death (1 Cor. 15:54-57).
- Salvation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone—plus and minus nothing (Eph. 2:8-9).
- Sinners cannot earn salvation or favor with God (Rom. 8:8).
- God requires of those who are saved no preparatory works or prerequisite self-improvement (Rom. 10:13; 1 Tim. 1:15).
- Eternal life is a gift of God (Rom. 6:23).
- Believers are saved and fully justified before their faith ever produces a single righteous work (Eph. 2:10).
- Christians can and do sin (1 Jn. 1:8, 10). Even the strongest Christians wage a constant and intense struggle against sin in the flesh (Rom. 7:15-24). Genuine believers sometimes commit heinous sins, as David did in 2 Samuel 11.

Corresponding to these essential biblical truths, Grace Community Church recognizes that Scripture also teaches:

- The gospel calls sinners to faith joined in oneness with repentance (Acts 2:38; 17:30; 20:21; 2 Pet. 3:9). Repentance is turning from sin (Acts 3:19; Luke 24:27). It is not a work but a divinely bestowed grace. (Acts 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:25) Repentance is a change of heart, but genuine repentance will effect a change of behavior as well (Luke 3:8; Acts 26:18-20).
- Salvation is all God's work. Those who believe are saved utterly apart from any effort on their own (Titus 3:5). Even faith is a gift of God, not a work of man (Eph. 2:1-5, 8). Real faith therefore cannot be defective or short-lived but endures forever (Phil. 1:6; cf. Heb. 11).
- The object of faith is Christ Himself, not only a creed or a promise (John 3:16). Faith therefore involves personal commitment to Christ (2 Cor. 5:15). In other words, all true believers follow Jesus (John 10:27-28).

- Real faith inevitably produces a changed life (2 Cor. 5:17). Salvation includes a transformation of the inner person (Gal. 2:20). The nature of the Christian is different, new (Rom. 6:6). The unbroken pattern of sin and enmity with God will not continue when a person is born again (1 John 3:9-10).
- The “gift of God,” eternal life (Rom. 6:23), includes all that pertains to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 8:32), not just a ticket to heaven.
- Jesus is Lord of all, and the faith He demands involves unconditional surrender (Rom. 6:17-18; 10:9-10). He does not bestow eternal life on those whose hearts remain set against Him (James 4:6).
- Those who truly believe will love Christ (1 Pet. 1:8-9). They will therefore long to obey Him (John 14:15, 23).
- Behavior is an important test of faith. Obedience is evidence that one’s faith is real (1 John 2:3). On the other hand, the person who remains utterly unwilling to obey Christ does not evidence true faith (1 John 2:4).
- Genuine believers may stumble and fall, but they *will* persevere in the faith (1 Cor. 1:8). Those who later turn completely away from the Lord show that they were never truly born again (1 John 2:19).

That is [our] position on “lordship salvation.” Anyone who supposes [Grace Community Church] have some deeper agenda has misunderstood what [we are] saying.¹

¹ The bulleted statements are taken verbatim from John F. MacArthur Jr., *The Gospel According to the Apostles* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1993; reprint, Nashville: Nelson Books, 2000), 7-9.