

Oaks Ministry Collaborative Statement of Faith

Oaks Ministry Collaborative is a gospel-centered, Christian organization (John 3:16; John 14:6; Acts 16:31). Therefore, our beliefs and practices align with those stated in the Apostles Creed:

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.*

Further, our beliefs about the purpose, suffering, and healing of human beings made in God's image (Genesis 1:27) are determined by the Scriptures, which we believe to be inerrant, divinely inspired, spoken by God through the Holy Spirit, and inscribed by men (2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12-13).

Human Purpose:

- Creation: God created humans in his own image as male and female (Genesis 1:27) and declared his creation "very good" (Genesis 1:31). He has blessed men and women to be fruitful, to cultivate creation, and to subdue chaos (Genesis 1:28; 2:15-25).



- Christian Mission: Our mission first and foremost as Christians is to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20) as ambassadors of Jesus Christ, through a ministry of reconciling people to God (2 Corinthians 5), and subsequently, to each other, so that his people live together in unity (Ephesians 4).

Human Suffering:

We believe that human suffering exists because of the interaction between indwelling sin, the curse, the fear of death, the world, and devils.

- Indwelling sin means that since the fall of mankind, sin has been original and innate to every human being. Therefore, every person is born naturally bent toward rebellion against God and his ways, causing harm to self or others (Genesis 3:6-13; Romans 3:9-20), profoundly disordered in our desires, skewed toward self-regard in our moral compass, and ignorant to and dismissive of our divine purpose. Further, we are unable to redeem ourselves from the power and consequences of our sin apart from the saving grace of God through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:1-9; 1 Corinthians 15:56-57).
- The curse is a result of original sin and further frustrates human efforts to produce salvation through our own efforts and relationships apart from God (Genesis 3:14-24).
- The fear of death, and death itself, are consequences of sin (Romans 6:23; Hebrews 2:14-15) and the result of sins done against us. The fear of death plagues humans through haunting reminders of the gravity of sin and our impending finality, which disrupted God's created intention for humans to live forever in communion with him.
- The world encompasses false gods and their counterfeit promises of life and happiness, reified in the cultural systems and mental schemas of people living without devotion to God (Matthew 6:19-34). It is a spiritual reality rather than a reference to God's good creation.
- Devils, or demons (also called powers or principalities, Beelzebub or Satan) are preternatural beings who actively attempt to distort the truth of God into a lie to destroy the relationship between God and his people, and subsequently, their salvation and eternal life (Genesis 3:1-4; Ephesians 6:10-19; 1 Peter 5:8).

Human Healing:

Because of the comprehensive and complex nature of both human purpose and suffering, we believe that a Christian approach to healing is holistic, encompassing emotional, spiritual, physical, relational integration as a process punctuated by specific moments and modalities.

The process of healing includes:

- Creation through theological anthropology and scientific dominion. The riches of God's truth and goods are available to all people, whether Christians or not, through common grace (Exodus 2:36; Psalm 24:1-5; 1 Corinthians 8).

- Salvation and spirituality, which is God's healing through redemption and freedom when we are released from the bondage of the world, the flesh, and devils (John 8:31-32; John 10:1-21).
- Discipleship is God's healing through formation. God's discipline is gracious, loving, and healing (Hebrews 12:1-13), forming and strengthening us to be mature, resilient, and equipped by our own restoration to participate in the work of restoring others (Isaiah 61:3-4; 2 Peter 1:3-11).
- Miracles are God's help and signs in punctuated healing. Healing is a gift of the Spirit facilitated through God's people, manifested in an instantaneous breakthrough or absolution of pain. Physical healing is a representation of the deeper spiritual healing and freedom Jesus offers through forgiveness and reconciliation to God (Luke 5:24). As Jesus' disciples and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we also heal others as Jesus did (John 14:12-14; 1 Corinthians 12:9).
- The Church is God's formational ecosystem of grace and truth and redemptive family (Psalm 68:5-6; Isaiah 54) in which together we practice spiritual healing and freedom (James 5:13-20).