



FOOTHILLS

F E L L O W S H I P

The Foothills Flyer: *Keeping the Church on Mission*

Why Our Statement of Faith Needs to be Changed

Value: **Biblical Leadership, Unity in Community**

By Mike Potter

Our Statement of Faith has guided us for 40 years. We view the 11 statements as our non-negotiables and the foundation and bedrock of our faith as a church. These are statements that we will earnestly defend and fight for. I had to agree to these 11 statements to become your pastor. If you're a member of Foothills Fellowship, you did too. But there's one statement I struggle with, and I told the elders so 8 ½ years ago when I was candidating for the pastor position, and they let me in anyway!! Over the years, some of you have expressed the same concern.

As you will see, the proposed change is not major, but if it is not changed, our unity as a body will continued to be threatened. Here is the current statement: (k) We believe in the personal and premillennial coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this Blessed Hope has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer. (1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 John 3:1-3) The problem is NOT with the belief that Jesus will one day return. His re-



turn is certain according to the Scriptures. The problem is with the word “premillennial,” which reflects a traditional Baptist belief, but one that the elders feel is too narrow.

By including the word “premillennial” in our statement of faith regarding Christ's return, what we are saying is that we wholeheartedly believe that the Lord will return to earth before (pre) the 1,000 year period of time (millennial) mentioned in Revelation 20. Because this is in our Statement of Faith, what we are saying is that we are sure that Christ will return before this 1000 year period, and it also asserts that we are sure that this 1000 year period is literal not figurative. We are saying that we are as sure of His premillennial return as we are in our belief in one God, our belief in the inspired Word of God, our belief in the deity of Christ, etc. And this is where the problem lies.

Premillennialism is only one of the main “end times” positions today within orthodoxy. Orthodoxy is what is generally or traditionally accepted as right or true; established and approved. In this case, there are godly and solid biblical scholars today and throughout the church age who are considered orthodox but who differ on what will happen before Christ returns.

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Please note that within the boundaries of orthodoxy, ALL scholars agree that the Bible teaches that Jesus will return. But among orthodox scholars, there are 4 main positions as to where His return fits into biblically prophesied events (or events that some think are prophesied in the Scriptures). And premillennialism only covers 2 of the 4 accepted positions. Therefore, the elders believe that this word should not be included in our statement of faith and are unanimous that we should change the wording to (k) We believe in the glorious, imminent, and physical return of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this Blessed Hope has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer. (1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 John 3:1-3)

Our constitution calls for members to give the elders their feedback (affirmation, questions, etc.) about this over the next 4 months (thru August) with the goal that every member participate. Please prayerfully consider this proposal, and if you are a member, please communicate your position with the elders face-to-face, via email (elders@thefoothills.us), or by written letter.

Noah Webster College

Value: Jesus Christ, the Head

by John Donald Kinzer

NWC is a Christian Liberal Arts college in Albuquerque and begins its second freshman class this fall. We offer classes with a biblical worldview and strong academic content to adult students of all ages. Currently, the college has 18 students and expects to grow this fall. Classes are offered for credit and no-credit/audit only.

Please come to an informational meeting on May 11th to learn more about this growing college. The meeting is from 7 to 8:15pm at Hoffmantown Church, the site of our classrooms. John Kinzer, a member of the board, will present the unique NWC program and course of study. He will answer questions that parents and students may have. You can also reach NWC at 340-6569. Please let others know about this opportunity to learn more about NWC.

Testimony of Stewardship

Value: Biblical Leadership

by Pastor Joe Eastman

As a Follower of Christ, Pastor and Bible student there are many issues related to my faith that I have wrestled with. But, there is one issue in my life that required a real move of God to set me on the right path, and that issue is tithing. For me, growing up in a family where money was tight, and where much of the day to day stressors had to do with too little money and too many bills, I was impressed with the idea from a young age that money would solve all major problems. As you can imagine, this mindset ran smack in the face of what Jesus really stands for. When I became a Christian, it was an area in which God challenged me from the beginning. However, one day God used a co-worker and fellow seminary student to bring the hammer down and show me where I was wrong.

One day my friend and I were at the parking lot booth where we worked part time. My friend's name was Peter and he was a struggling Seminary student like myself. We both had kids and were trying to make ends meet while going to school full time.

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Unlike me, Peter understood how important giving to God really was. The thing that really got me was that Peter was in a worse place financially than I was. He had one more kid than I did, which meant his rent was higher. He had one less job than I had, (I always had two part time jobs) and he had other expenses that I didn't have. As we were talking, he mentioned that his family happened to be in between churches and that he had been saving ten percent of everything he was receiving, from paychecks to tax refunds to birthday money for his kids, to give to a church when they found one. When he shared that, I was immediately convicted. It was not because ten percent was some magic number and if I didn't do that with every penny God would be angry. I wasn't convicted because I hadn't met some legalistic requirement, I was convicted because, despite God's faithfulness in my life financially, I still didn't really trust Him. At that moment I realized that what I did with my money had an immediate impact on my growth, relationship with God, and my discipleship.

At that moment I told God that for one month I would give 10 percent of everything I received to Him as a show of trust. That was two months before I was set to graduate, which meant I was soon to move. I had no post-graduation plans or jobs, no place to go, no house to live in. We would be, for all intents and purposes, homeless. Now, usually in a situation such as this, common sense would dictate that I pinch every penny to make sure I had as much as possible. However, God often challenges us on our so-called "logic" and uses times such as these to really show us His power.

Despite my fears I stuck to my promise to give, and God really showed up! During that month I received almost double my normal pay from various sources. My little church of about 50 people took a collection for us to leave with. It was a spontaneous whim from the Pastor and after he counted what he collected he was able to give us almost \$1,300, which was more than what I earned from both jobs every month.

That lesson has always stuck with me when I struggle with giving. Too often for us, it is easy to forget that God will always meet our needs. God asks us to give because giving requires that we trust him a little more. Giving to God is a down to earth, concrete, material way in which we demonstrate trust in Him. Moreover, giving financially to God's work is one of the main ways we declare His authority over us. If we are not giving to God's work regularly, generously, and cheerfully as the Bible says we should, then we are in essence telling God that He has no business in that part of our lives. We are then refusing to submit that part of our lives to His Lordship, and consequently we will be stunted in our growth and in our discipleship.

The Foothills Flyer is a monthly newsletter under the oversight of Pastor Joe Eastman and designed by Rachel Gard that is aimed at Keeping the Church on Mission and committed to our 9 Core Values.

OUR MISSION: Foothills Fellowship exists to be a worshipping community of God's people whose lives are shaped by the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus and who participate in the mission of God's kingdom by proclaiming the good news locally, nationally and globally.

OUR CORE VALUES: 1) Jesus Christ, the Head 2) Biblical Leadership 3) Everyone A Minister 4) Ancient/Future Worship 5) Hospitality Without Exception 6) Unity in Community 7) Intentional Families 8) Global Missions 9) Holistic Discipleship