
BELIEFS

at

RISEN HOPE

The following beliefs represent Risen Hope's understanding of God and his purposes within redemptive history. We've cited Scripture passages to show where our understanding of these doctrines have originated. This document reflects the teaching position of Risen Hope.

GOD

There is only one true God [Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Kings 8:60; Isaiah 45:5-6; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5] and he exists eternally in three persons [Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 1:1-13; 1 Corinthians 2:11; John 1:1-3]: Father [Romans 1:7; Philippians 1:2], Son [John 1:1-3; Titus 2:13; Colossians 2:9; John 20:28; Hebrews 1:8], and Holy Spirit [Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Romans 8:9]. God is unchanging [Malachi 3:6; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 102:25-27; Isaiah 46:10; Psalm 33:11] and entirely self-existent [Exodus 3:14; Psalm 50:12-13; Acts 17:24-25; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3], without beginning or end [Deuteronomy 33:27; Job 36:26; Psalm 90:2; Romans 1:20], and completely perfect in his wisdom [Psalm 147:5; Isaiah 40:28; Romans 11:33], power [Genesis 18:14; Job 42:1-2; Matthew 19:26], and glory [Isaiah 6:1-5; Isaiah 42:8; Philippians 2:9-11]. God is supreme in righteousness: all that he is and does is good [Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 71:19; Psalm 119:142; Psalm 145:17; Mark 10:18]; he is sovereign over all things, such that nothing happens outside of his control [Ephesians 1:11; Job 42:2; Psalm 103:19; Psalm 115:3; Proverbs 16:33; Proverbs 19:21]. God's ultimate purpose in all his actions is to display his intrinsic and unequalled glory [Psalm 86:9; Isaiah 43:21; Isaiah 60:21; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 10:31] for the joy of all creation [Psalm 19:1-6; Isaiah 55:12-13; Romans 1:20; Revelation 5:13]. The highest joy of all creatures is to know and be known by their Creator, which only happens when they receive and embrace his glory as their greatest treasure [Psalm 16:5-11; Psalm 63:1-8; Psalm 73:25-26; Matthew 13:44; Philippians 1:21; Philippians 3:7-8; Hebrews 11:24-27; Luke 2:10; Philippians 4:4; Revelation 21:3-4].

HUMANITY

God created all things, and they were good [Genesis 1:2; John 1:1-3]—including men and women, whom he uniquely fashioned in his own image [Genesis 1:27-28; James 3:9] in order to glorify and enjoy him forever [see 'GOD']. He also provided them with his law, a moral framework entailing his design and purposes, written on their hearts for their well-being and joy [Romans 2:14-15; Psalm 19:7-11]. In this state, the beauty and wonder of God could be enjoyed by his image-bearers forever through trusting and obeying his word [Genesis 1:26-31; Genesis 2:15-17; Leviticus 18:5; Luke 10:28].

SIN

Although men and women were originally created blameless, they eventually rebelled against God and his design, seeking to overthrow his authority by embracing the glory of creation over the glory of the Creator [Genesis 3; Romans 1:18-32]. This refusal to love and embrace an infinitely worthy God is called sin and it defaces the image of God borne by humans [Jeremiah 2:12-13; Romans 3:9-23; Romans 5:12-21; Ephesians 2:1-3]. The only appropriate response of God toward sin is justice and wrath. Therefore, their moral treason inevitably led to the cataclysmic fracturing of the entire created order [Romans 6:23; Romans 8:20-22].

FALL

God subjected the cosmos to futility and death, an appropriate response to the severity of mankind's devastating rebellion [Romans 5:12-21; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:20-22]. In doing this, he handed over all humanity to the fallen nature and desires embraced by their first parents [Romans 3:9-23; Romans 8:7; Ephesians 2:1-3]. In addition, the intrinsic, unparalleled value of God objectively and justly demands that all sin receive the penalty of eternal separation from his presence [Isaiah 6:1-5; Luke 13:1-5; Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:44-49; Daniel 12:2; Luke 16:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 14:10-11; Revelation 20:10]. Nevertheless, God did not subject the cosmos to futility in vain; rather, he subjected it in hope [Romans 8:20].

HOPE

This hope would point to the advent of a Savior [Genesis 3:15; Deuteronomy 18:18; Psalm 1-2; Acts 2:22-36; Hebrews 1:1-2]. In addition to revealing his eternal power and divine nature to all people through creation [Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:19-20; Acts 14:17], God communicated with humanity throughout history, revealing himself to a specific people, the nation of Israel, whom he adopted as the means by which he would display his power and his purposes to the world [Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15:1-6; Genesis 17:1-8; Joshua 24:2-3; Deuteronomy 7:7-9]. Through this people would come a Savior—the Christ, the Son of the living God [Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 1:46-55, 67-79; Luke 3:23-38; Hebrews 1:1-14]—who would redeem all who believed in him [John 3:16-18; John 6:29; Romans 3:21-22; Romans 10:9–10; 1 John 5:1; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; Revelation 5:9-10]. This coming Savior was revealed clearly in Scripture.

SCRIPTURE

At specific times throughout history, God chose to communicate to mankind, and these words were recorded in Scripture [Romans 3:1-2; Hebrews 1:1-2; Matthew 5:18; Luke 24:25-26]. Written by men under the direct and sovereign inspiration of the Holy Spirit [2 Peter 1:20-21; John 14:26; John 16:13; 2 Timothy 3:16], the books of both the Old and New Testaments are without error in the original manuscripts, and they operate as the only absolutely trustworthy guide for life and faith [Psalm 19:7-11; Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Proverbs 30:5-6; John 10:35; John 17:17]. In addition to this, the central message of Scripture is the gospel—the good news of God. In the gospel, God reveals the hope of a coming Savior and records the specific events of his coming and its profound implications for the entire world [Genesis 3:15; Deuteronomy 18:18; Psalm 1-2; Acts 2:22-36; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38; John 3:16-21; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:16-17; Romans 10:9–10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5].

CHRIST

The only remedy for mankind's tragic state was for God himself to enter human history to undo the trauma caused by sin by redeeming a people for himself [Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:1-5, 9-15; John 10:30; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:1-14; Philippians 2:5-9; Colossians 1:15-20; Galatians 4:4; 1 Timothy 2:5]. God the Son—known as Jesus Christ—was conceived by the Holy Spirit to a virgin [Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-37] and took on human flesh [John 1:14; Hebrews 2:17; Philippians 2:5-8], being both fully God and fully man [John 1:1-3; Titus 2:13; Colossians 2:9; John 20:28; Hebrews 1:8]. He proclaimed the hope of the gospel, doing many signs to reveal himself as the true Savior [Matthew 4:23, 9:6-8; Mark 1:14-15, 29-39; John 3:2; Acts 2:22]. His earthly ministry culminated in his crucifixion on the cross in the place of sinners [Matthew 27:32-50; Mark 15:21-39; Luke 23:26-49; John 19:16-30]. Having never committed sin himself [1 Peter 2:22; Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 3:5], this perfect, atoning sacrifice secured the forgiveness of sins and eternal redemption for all those who would be saved, ransoming them fully from the curse of sin and death [Romans 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:20-21; Ephesians 1:3-14; Colossians 1:13-14].

RESURRECTION

After his death, Jesus Christ was buried for three days and on the third day he rose from the dead [Luke 24:5-6; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 1:9-11]. Once risen, he appeared in a glorified body to many [Luke 24; John 20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8] and then was exalted to the right hand of the God the Father as the Lord of all that exists [Ephesians 1:19-23; Philippians 2:4-11]. This great, divine work of redemption purchased a people for salvation from every tribe, tongue, and nation in the world, ending their rebellion and causing them to be reconciled to God [Colossians 1:11-14; Ephesians 1:7-10; Romans 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Revelation 5:9; Revelation 7:9]. The same hope of Scripture now points to a future time when Christ will return at the end of history, bringing a new heaven and earth to share with those he has redeemed [John 14:1-3; Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13]. His people will enjoy this new creation through resurrected bodies free from the futility and death that plagues the current world [Isaiah 11:6-10; Isaiah 55:12-13; Revelation 21].

GOSPEL

The Scriptures reveal the gospel—the incredibly good news of salvation—that by God’s grace alone, through faith in Christ’s work alone, sinners can receive forgiveness for their sin and be fully reconciled to God [Romans 1:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-2; Romans 3:28; Galatians 2:15-16; Ephesians 2:1-10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Colossians 1:19-22]. In Christ’s death and resurrection, those who believe in him have their own sins punished in him and his own perfect righteousness credited to them [Romans 3:21-25; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:4-12; Romans 5:12-21]. This is a result of God’s own purpose and work having chosen his own people in Christ before the creation of the universe, not based on any righteousness they have earned, but on his grace alone, such that salvation would be regarded as God’s work alone [Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 Peter 1:12; Titus 3:4-7; 2 Timothy 1:8-10; Revelation 13:8; Philippians 3:8-9; Ephesians 2:1-10; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31].

SALVATION

According to the purpose of God’s will and the immeasurable riches of his grace [Ephesians 1:11-12; 2 Timothy 1:8-10; Ephesians 2:4-9; Romans 9:15-29; Titus 3:4-7], God forgives and justifies all whom he unfailingly draws to himself [John 6:35-40, 43-46; John 10:1-38; Romans 8:28-30; Colossians 1:12-14], adopting them into his family as his own children [John 1:9-13; Romans 8:12-23; Galatians 3:24-4:7; 1 John 3:1-2], committing himself to conforming them into the image of Christ [Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18]. God mercifully grants both faith and repentance to those he has appointed to eternal life [Acts 11:18; Acts 13:48; Philippians 1:29; 2 Timothy 2:25; Ephesians 2:8-10], ensuring that there is absolutely no room for boasting of earning their salvation outside of his gracious work [Ephesians 2:1-10; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31]. To guarantee their salvation, God invincibly keeps and sustains all those he calls to himself through the process of sanctification [John 6:37-40; John 10:27-29; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Philippians 1:6; Jude 1:24-25; Romans 8:29-30]. All of this is achieved in the life of an individual believer by the powerful work of the Holy Spirit.

SPIRIT

The means God uses to bring people to salvation is his own Spirit. By a powerfully compelling work of grace, the Spirit brings people to faith and repentance, convicting them of their sin and drawing them out of rebellion and into right standing with God through the glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ [1 Thessalonians 1:4-5; John 16:8-11; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Corinthians 2:3-5; 2 Corinthians 3:17-4:6]. In Scripture, this dramatic and extraordinary change is referred to as the new birth, the raising of a person from spiritual death to spiritual life [John 3:1-21; Ephesians 2:1-5; Colossians 2:11-13; Ezekiel 36:26]. The Spirit seals believers for their future resurrection [2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13-14; Ephesians 4:30; 2 Corinthians 5:5] and empowers their delight and obedience to God’s law in this present life [Romans 8:1-17; Romans 8:26-27; Galatians 5:16-24; Titus 3:4-7; 1 John 4:12-13; 1 John 3:23-24; James 2:14-26], causing them to be gradually sanctified [1 Peter 1:2; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13] and granting them gifts [1 Corinthians 12:4-12; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Acts 2:1-41] to be used as part of the family of believers: the church.

CHURCH

The body of believers ransomed by Christ's work is called the church [Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:14-15; 1 Corinthians 6:17-20; Revelation 5:9-10], connected to him so intimately that they are also called the body of Christ and the bride of Christ [1 Corinthians 12:12-20; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:4; Colossians 1:24; Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 5:22-33; Revelation 19:7-9]. The church is sanctified to God through Christ, by his grace alone [Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Peter 1:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 13:12], and she exists to worship and enjoy him as her supreme treasure forever [Psalm 16:9-11; Ephesians 1:3-14; Ephesians 2:6-7; 1 Peter 1:3-9; Revelation 7:15-17; Revelation 19:1-10]. Although the church represents believers across history and throughout the world [Hebrews 12:1-2; Romans 4:11-12; Romans 9:6-13], God has ordained that the local church be a gathering of believers in the fellowship of the Spirit [Acts 2:42-47; 2 Corinthians 13:11-14; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:27-2:2], sharing a deep love for each other through Jesus Christ [Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Ephesians 5:1-2; Colossians 1:1-4; 1 John 3:11-24], frequently eating and worshipping together [Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 5:18-21; Colossians 3:16-17], where they are edified and equipped to do the work of ministry [Ephesians 4:11-13; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Romans 10:12-17; Titus 2], whether locally or throughout the world.

MINISTRY

This ministry is expressed in loving the world through both word and deed [Colossians 3:17; Romans 15:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; Romans 10:13-17; Acts 20:18-35; Matthew 25:31-46; John 13:1-17], proclaiming the gospel so that those who remain in rebellion against God would come to faith in Christ Jesus and be grafted into the family of God [1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Matthew 24:14; Romans 1:16-17; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; Matthew 28:19-20; John 1:12-13; Galatians 3:23-29]. Prior to ascending to the Father, Christ gave a final command: the proclamation of the gospel to a lost world in order to make disciples of Jesus and accomplish his great redemptive purpose [Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:4-11]. Those who believe in him become not only obedient disciples but passionate witnesses, sent to spread the hope found only in Christ [2 Corinthians 4:1-15; Acts 4:18-20; Acts 8:4; Romans 10:13-15; 1 Peter 3:13-17; 2 Corinthians 5:16-6:11]. The church's primary ministry in this world, therefore, is living as people sent by God, bringing glory to Christ through loving, witnessing, and serving the world [Luke 10:30-37; Romans 13:8; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 4:7; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Philippians 2:3-11].

ETERNITY

Scripture teaches that death is not the end for any human being. The risen Christ will return as Lord of all creation at the end of human history to judge mankind [Acts 10:42; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Corinthians 5:10; John 5:21-29; Romans 2:16], resurrecting all those who have faith in him to eternal life: a perfect, sinless joy in the presence of their God and Savior forever [John 5:24-25; John 11:25-26; Romans 8:18-25; Colossians 3:4; 1 Corinthians 15:50-55; Revelation 21:1-7]. Those who have rejected Christ's work, continuing in rebellion by valuing creation over the Creator, will be eternally separated from God by their sin [2 Thessalonians 1:5-9; Daniel 12:2; Romans 1:18-2:10; Matthew 18:8; Luke 3:16-17], ultimately finding their permanent place in the lake of fire [Revelation 20:10-15; Revelation 21:8; Matthew 25:41]. Therefore all humanity will experience one of two conscious finalities: the sobering reality of eternal separation from God that displays his absolute holiness and irrefutable justice [2 Thessalonians 1:9; Romans 9:22-23; Isaiah 45:24; Romans 2:15-16] or the matchless joy of knowing and experiencing the unsearchable riches of Christ for all time [Ephesians 2:6-7; Psalm 16:11; 1 Corinthians 2:6-9; Matthew 5:8; Revelation 22:1-4; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 1 Peter 1:3-8].

These two future paradigms fuel the church's urgency in loving the world in such a way that others both see and embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ [John 4:35; Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:15; Luke 13:1-5; Matthew 24:14; 2 Corinthians 6:2].