



GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

DEAR GRACE BIBLE CHURCH FAMILY,

Recently we announced that we were recommending to the congregation that it approve a change to the Statement of Faith (SOF) staying aligned with the [EFCA](#) SOF. Because the SOF is included in our By-Laws (see [Article I Section 1](#)) modification requires a 25% quorum of voting membership and 67% approval.

The Elder Team, as part of its review, enlisted the help of two respected and well known leaders in our congregation - Jim Tahmisian and Dick Stepanian - to research and offer a recommendation on the change. Their recommendation was that we adopt the changes in alignment with the EFCA. Some highlights of the reasons:

- Premillennialism is not an essential doctrinal issue (it doesn't rise to that level) and changing the word premillennial to glorious does not contradict the Bible. It changes the focus of "when" Jesus will return to "how".
- The EFCA has a focus to "major on the majors and minor on the minors". Our core conviction is that Jesus is Lord, he is the Christ, our Savior, died for our sins, and because of his resurrection he offers life eternal. This is the message we proclaim to a world that desperately needs it. We know that Jesus will return but "when" he returns is not a core, central piece of the Gospel.
- The three common protestant positions (premillennial, amillennial, postmillennial) are acceptable according to this change and no matter which position someone takes they can still be considered evangelical. The words of Titus 2:13 overarch this: "We wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."
- Unity is a key for us. This issue is not something that should divide us as followers of Jesus. As the GBC leadership team and as part of EFCA, we are proposing an agreement to adopt the new Statement of Faith and if we didn't agree with it, we wouldn't recommend adopting it.

The Elder Team spent considerable time and effort reading, analyzing, praying, discussing, and weighing many factors of this change. It was crucial to us that we were not "Liberalizing" our theology and we do not feel that this change is doing so. And it is important to us, as much as possible, to remain aligned with the EFCA for the sake of unity.

We are making available to you two documents authored by Jim and Dick:

- ["Reflections on the Evangelical Free Church of America 2019 Revision of the Statement of Faith"](#) - a detailed paper written by Jim and Dick
- ["Views on the timing of Christ's return"](#) - a presentation of various millennial views prepared by Jim and Dick

We encourage you to review the documents and engage us with questions or comments. As always you can reach us at elders@gracebibleag.com. We have also scheduled both a drive-through and Zoom (Meeting ID: 453 100 3211) call option on both June 7th and June 14th at 10:00 AM.

Together in Christ,

The Elder Team