



“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. ‘He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

- JOHN 3:16-18 (NASB)

### **AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE**

The Scriptures and the Scriptures alone are the authority for what we believe. We believe the Bible as transmitted in its original Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek texts, is the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God (2 Tim 3:16). We believe that the Holy Spirit superintended all writings of Scripture (2 Pet 1:20), using the human author’s own literary styles and personalities to convey God’s Word in their own unique way. We affirm the miracles of the Bible and believe, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16,17).” We believe the Scriptures are able to make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ (2 Tim 3:15). The Bible should be understood through the literal, contextual, grammatical, and historical method of interpretation, and applied to our everyday lives under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

### **DOCTRINE OF GOD**

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.(Deut 6:4,5 NIV). We believe God is the sovereign creator of heaven and earth (Gen 1:1), One in essence, three in Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe that each person of the Godhead is distinct, demonstrating the attributes of a unique personality (Luke 3:22; John 11:35; Eph 4:30), yet in a mysterious way the three remain One God. The three persons of the Trinity are co-eternal (Ps 90:2), co-equal as to their deity (Col 2:9), power and glory, but different in role (2 Cor 13:14). God is perfect in all His attributes. Everything He does is in accordance with His good and perfect will (Rom 12:2).

### **FATHER**

We believe that God the Father is one in essence (being) with the Son and the Holy Spirit (Deut 6:4), yet different in role (John 10:29; 1 Thes 4:8). The Father is the sovereign ruler (Ps. 71:16) of the universe, creator (Gen 1:1), sustainer of all things by means of His Son Jesus Christ (Col. 1:17) and by the power of His Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2). We believe that God the Father concerns Himself perfectly in the affairs of humanity (2 Cor 1:3,4), demonstrating His fatherly affection for His children Israel (2 Cor 6:18) and for those adopted in Christ (Eph 1:5). The Father is gracious and extends His common grace to both the righteous and unrighteous (Matt 5:45).

## SON

We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God (John 1:1) and fully man (Phil. 2:6-8). We believe that He is one in essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit (Deut 6:4), but different in role. We believe in the virgin birth of Christ (Luke 1:34-37), His sinless life (2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22; 1 John 3:5), His substitutional death on the cross for our sins (Eph 2:16), His burial and resurrection on the third day (Matt 28:5,6). We believe that Christ ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9-11) and sits at the right hand of God the Father (Acts 2:32,33) in the position of power and authority, from where He shall come again to judge the living and the dead. We believe Christ's death on the cross atoned for our sin (Rom. 3:25) and satisfied the demands of a righteous and holy God. Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God (John 1:29), the Lion of Judah (Rev. 5:5), the Messiah of Israel (Is. 53; Ps. 2) the Mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5). He is the Prophet (Acts 3:22), Priest (Heb 4:14-16), and King (John 1:49); the Head of the church (Col 1:18), the Savior (2 Tim 1:10) and Redeemer of His people (Titus 2:14). He is our Reconciler with God (Col 1:19-20) the Heir of all things (Heb. 1:1,2), the Judge of all the world (2 Tim. 4:1); and the exact representation of God the Father (Col 2:9). We believe that Jesus Christ will come again to set up His kingdom (Rev 22:20). All the Bible points to Christ and our need for Him. History is "His story". Acts 4:12 says: "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6 NKJV).

## HOLY SPIRIT

We believe the Holy Spirit is one in essence with the Father and Son (Deut 6:4), yet different in role. We believe the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son (John 14:26;16:7) to convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11). He is called the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9; 1 Pet 1:11) and also the Spirit of truth (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit has been active in creation (Gen 1:2), revelation (Is. 61:1-3) empowerment (Ex. 31:2-6), and inward renewal (Ps. 51:10-12). The Spirit regenerates (John 3:5-8), baptizes (1 Cor 12:13), enlightens (Eph 1:17,18), teaches (John 14:26), sanctifies (Gal 5:16-18), seals (Eph 1:13,14), counsels (John 16:7), and transforms the lives of believers into Christlikeness (Gal 5:22,23). The work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus by showing His disciples who He is (John 17:7-15). We believe the Holy Spirit empowers each believer for ministry (Acts 1:7,8) and is the giver of spiritual gifts (Rom 12:6-8;1 Cor 12:7-11; 1 Pet 4:10,11). The Holy Spirit is the Comforter (John 14:16 KJV) who helps us in our weaknesses by interceding for us when we are too weak and discouraged to pray (Rom 8:26,27).

## DOCTRINE OF MAN

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26,27), but Adam's willful sin in the Garden of Eden involved the representation (Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:22) and fall of all humanity. As a result of the fall, the human race lost its position of innocence and was expelled from the Garden. From that time, each person has been born with a sin nature (Ps 51:5) manifesting itself in habitual acts of sinful thoughts, words and deeds. Only Jesus (through the virgin birth) bypassed the sin nature. Spiritually dead (Eph 2:1-4), mankind is inclined to sin, alienated from God, subject to aging, disease and death. Being sinners by nature (Rom 8:5-8) and by choice, humanity is utterly lost and in desperate need of salvation (Rom 3:23). Mankind's only answer is to have faith in the Last Adam - Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:22,45) who brought salvation to all who trust in Him (Acts 16:31). Marriage: We believe that marriage is ordained by God to be between one man and one woman. God's design for marriage is that it last for a lifetime (Gen 2:23,24).

## SATAN

We believe that Satan is a real and personal being, a fallen cherub (Eze 28:14-17) who led some 1/3 of the angels in rebellion against God (Rev 12:4). We know his name to be Lucifer, and that he wanted to exalt himself (Isa 14:12). We believe that Satan is a created being (Eze 28:13) and does not possess the divine attributes of omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence. He is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). Satan is angry, on borrowed time, and trying to inflict as much damage as he can in the little time that he has (1 Pet 5:8). Although Satan can harass and torment believers in Christ, he can not possess born again Christians (1 John 4:4). Satan's end will be the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).

## SALVATION

We believe that salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone (Eph 2:8-9). Salvation is a gift of God (Rom 6:23), purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28) as He died on the cross for our sins (Rom 5:9; 1 Cor 15:3). Salvation is received by faith apart from any works of the Law, human merit, or ritual (Tit. 3:5-7). We believe those who receive Christ as Lord and Savior are regenerated [born again] (John 1:12,13; Acts 16:31), justified in God's sight (Rom 3:23,24), sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30), forgiven of their sins (1 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 2:2), delivered from their guilt (Ps 103:11,12), reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:18), saved from God's wrath (Rom. 5:9), adopted into God's family (Eph 1:5), given access to God (Eph 2:18), and have peace with God (Rom 5:1). We believe there are three aspects of our salvation: 1) Justification [past] ~ The moment a person has saving faith in Christ, God declares the guilty sinner "not guilty" and the person is born again. (Rom 8:29,30). 2) Sanctification [present] ~ The lifelong process of being set apart for God and becoming more like Christ (Phil 2:12). 3) Glorification [future] - The consummation of our salvation when sin will be absent and we will be in the presence of the Lord for all eternity (1 John 3:2). NOTE: The Sovereignty of God does not eliminate or minimize human responsibility (Acts 2:38).

## THE CHURCH

We believe the New Testament church (Greek: Ekklēsia - "the assembly" or "the called out ones") to be made up of believers in Jesus Christ, called out of the world and bought by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). We believe the church is the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27), a living organism with Christ Himself as the Head (Eph 5:23). The church is also called: the bride of Christ (Rev. 21:9), the family of God (1 Pet 4:17), the elect (2 Tim 2:10), the company of the redeemed (Gal 3:14) and the people of God (1 Pet 2:10). Though fragmented by denominations, the believer in Christ is united by "one Spirit into one body" (1 Cor 12:13; Eph 4:4-6). We believe that the local church is autonomous and retains authority for its own affairs. We believe in the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2:9), meaning that each believer has equal access to God through Christ (1 Pet. 2:5). We believe the church body is to encourage one another (Heb 10:25), help the poor (Gal. 2:10), build one another up (Eph 4:11-13), assemble regularly in worship, hold each other accountable in the biblical faith (1 Cor 16:13; 1 Pet. 5:8,9), and to engage in local (Acts 1:8) and world evangelism (Mark 16:15; Matt 28:18-20). We believe Christ commanded His church to practice the two ordinances of believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## **RAPTURE**

We believe in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. We believe the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the personal and visible coming of the Lord Jesus in the air to receive to Himself the dead in Christ and all believers who are alive at His coming (1 Cor 15:51-58; 1 Thes 4:13-18). We believe in a literal millennium (Eze 40-48) that follows the time of Jacob's trouble - the Great Tribulation (Dan 9:27; Rev 7:4). NOTE: We understand there are differing opinions on eschatology and eternal security among devout believers. Although holding to the importance of our position, it is our belief that the body of Christ should not divide over differing opinions on these issues.

## **ETERNAL SECURITY**

We believe when a person experiences regeneration by the Holy Spirit (John 3:5,6) and is saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Eph 2:8,9), he or she is saved for all eternity (John 3:16,36;10:27-30). That salvation and the ensuing security of the believer is based upon the finished work of Jesus Christ (1 Pet 1:18-21). Eternal security does not mean there won't be ups and downs in a Christian's spiritual life (Rom 7:18-25), but "that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil 1:6 NKJV). Eternal security applies only to "truly born again believers" in Jesus Christ.

## **ETERNAL STATE**

We believe when a Christian dies, his or her body goes to the grave while spirit and soul go immediately into the presence of the Lord without any interim period (2 Cor 5:6-9; Rev 7:9-10). At death, the soul of the unbeliever goes into hades to await judgment day (Luke 16:19-31; Rev 20:11-14). At the return of Christ, we believe the dead in Christ will rise, spirit and soul being reunited with their glorified bodies to be with the Lord forever (1 Thes 4:16-18). We believe in the bodily resurrection of the believer and unbeliever (2 Cor 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15). The believer will rise to everlasting life and blessing while the unbeliever will be "punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and the majesty of His power" (2 Thes 1:9 NIV; Mark 9:47,48). We believe it is God's role to be the Judge, not ours.

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE**

We believe God has called every Christian to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in their life, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." (Gal 5:22,23 KJV). We believe the life of every Christian should be marked by love (Matt 22:37-40; 1 John 4:7), holiness (1 Pet 1:16), and compassion (Phil 2:1-4), yet realize there will be times that even Christians stumble and fall (Rom 7:18-25). When we do fall into sin, 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness (NKJV)." We believe that each Christian is in the process of sanctification, the lifelong journey of being set apart for God and becoming more like Christ. Perfection will come not in this life (1 John 1:8), but only after we are glorified in the presence of the Lord. We believe that each believer is given at least one spiritual gift at the moment of salvation (1 Cor 12:7-11; Rom 12:6-8) and those gifts are to be used for the building up of the body of Christ, the church. (Eph 4:11-13; 1 Pet 4:10,11). As Christians, we are to "glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

## BAPTISM

We believe Scripture indicates that believer's baptism should be done by immersion (Acts 8:36). Baptism by immersion is a visible, outward declaration of our faith in Jesus Christ and symbolizes our identification with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection. Water baptism is the sign of the New Covenant and symbolizes the cleansing we receive through faith in Christ. We encourage every believer to follow Jesus in water baptism soon after coming to faith. (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 10:48; 16:14; 16:31-34) NOTE: Child Dedications are done at the request of parents for children who are too young to put their faith in Christ. Child Dedication is not baptism or christening, but a prayer dedicating the child's life to God (1 Sam 1:10,11).

## COMMUNION

Communion, or the Lord's Supper symbolizes Christ's shed blood and broken body on the cross (Matt 26:26-29). The Bible says, "The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it in remembrance of me. (1 Cor 11:23-25 NIV)" We believe that just as food and drink strengthen us physically, so we are strengthened as we feed on Christ spiritually (John 6:53-57). This is illustrated symbolically when participating in the Lord's Supper. In celebrating communion, we look backward to the cross of Christ, inward to examine ourselves, and forward to proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again (1 Cor 11:26-28).