

What We Believe

The Scriptures

We believe the Bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God and the supreme and final authority in doctrine and practice (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21; John 17:17). Though Scriptural truth is spiritually discerned (I Cor. 2:13, 14), it is not subjective or a matter of personal opinion (II Peter 1:20). Ultimately, its reliability rests on the promises of God that it is powerful, will endure, and will accomplish what God pleases (Isaiah 40:8, 55:11; Matthew 5:18; Hebrews 4:12).

The Trinity

We believe in one God eternally existing in three equal persons -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who have the same nature and attributes, but who are distinct in office and activity (Matthew 28:19; II Cor. 13:14). God is immutable (Psalm 102:26, 27; Mal. 3:6), eternal (Psalm 90:2, 15a; Isaiah 57:15), omnipotent (Psalm 115:3), omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-12), omniscient (Psalm 147:5), and too holy to look upon sin (Habakkuk 1:13). Yet, He is not wishing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9). He is the Lord of history, declaring the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10) and working all things according to the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11).

Jesus Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God (John 1:1; 17:5, Hebrews 13:8) became man without ceasing to be God (Hebrews 2:17, 18; John 1:1, 14; Phil. 2:5-10), having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35), in order that He might reveal God (John 8:19; 14: 7, 9) and redeem sinful man (Gal. 3:13; 4:4, 5). We believe that He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice (II Cor. 5:21). We believe that our redemption and salvation are guaranteed by His literal physical resurrection from the dead (Romans 4:25; I Cor. 15:1-4, 17, 20).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven, where as High Priest He fulfills the ministry of intercession and advocacy for His people (Hebrews 1:3, 3:1, 7:23-25; I John 2:1-2).

The Holy Spirit

We believe that God-the Holy Spirit is a person (John 14:16, 17, 26) who convicts people of sin (John 16:8), regenerates those who receive Christ as savior (John 3:5-8), baptizes them into the church (I Cor. 12:13) the body of Christ, indwells them permanently (Romans 8:9; I Cor. 6:19), seals them unto the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13, 4:30) and fills those yielded to Him (Eph. 5:18). To those who live in submission to the Spirit, He leads, gives assurance and prays for them (Romans 8:14, 16, 26). He also bestows spiritual gifts on each one in order to equip for ministry and edify the church

(Eph. 4:11, 12). These gifts are not for personal gratification (I Cor. 14:12), but for the benefit of the believing community and the world.

Creation and The Fall

We believe all things in heaven and earth were created by God and exist by His power (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 8:3, 19:1; Job 26:7; Isaiah 45:12; John 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16-17). We believe that Satan was created as a perfect being until iniquity was found in him (Ezekiel 28:12-15) and that Satan is the origin of sin. We believe that man was created innocent in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) but that he was led into sin by Satan (Genesis 2:17, 3:6-19) and so death was spread to all men because all sinned (Romans 5:12, 15, 19). Satan is still the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4) who with great power (I Peter 5:8) is waging war against the saints (Eph. 6:11, 12) while blinding the lost (Eph. 4:18; II Cor. 4:4) and deceiving the nations (Rev. 20:10), but his doom is sure (Hebrews 2:14; Rev. 20:10).

Because of the fall, natural man is dead in trespasses and sin, and incapable of understanding (Eph. 2:1; Romans 3:11) and it is impossible for him to come to Christ unless the Father draws him (John 6:44).

Salvation

We believe that salvation is a gift of God (Romans 5:15, 6:23) and is received by man through personal faith in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for sin (II Cor. 5:21) We believe that man is justified by grace through faith apart from works (Romans 3:21-28; Gal. 2:16; Eph.2:8-10; Titus 3:5). We believe that all true believers, once saved, are kept secure in Christ forever (Romans 8:1, 38-39; John 10:27-30) having been called according to His purpose and grace which was given us in Christ before there was time (II Tim. 1:9).

Sanctification

We believe that at salvation we are justified, declared righteous and set apart or sanctified on the basis of the finished work of Christ (Romans 5:1, 16, 4:5; I Cor. 1:2; Heb. 10:10). Experientially, however, believers may be immature (Heb. 5:12-14). The faithful Christian's life is characterized by a walk of faith (Romans 14:23; II Cor. 5:7; Gal. 3:11; Hebrews 11:6) in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-18) toward the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:14). Thus, we may be His disciples as we abide in His word (John 8:31). Experiential sanctification (Eph. 4:7-15, 5:26, 27; I Thes. 5:23; II Tim. 2:21) or discipleship is not to be equated to the possession of eternal life. A disciple bears much fruit (John 15:8) but, unfortunately, there are carnal believers (I Cor. 3:1) who not having the joy of faithfully abiding in Christ (John 15:9-11; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 4:4-7) have not produced good fruit, but at the Judgment Seat of Christ they are saved, yet as through fire (I Cor. 3:11-15).

The Church

We believe that the Church, the Body and Bride of Christ (Eph. 1:22, 23; II Cor. 11:2), is a spiritual organism, made up of all born-again persons of this present age (Eph. 2:19-22, 3:6-10, 4:4, 5; Col. 1:18; Hebrews 12:23). We believe that the Church began at Pentecost (John 7:39; Acts 2:4) and that a believer is placed into the Church by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:13). We believe that the Church is distinct from Israel (Eph. 3:3-6, 9, 10; Romans 11:1, 11, 25-29).

We believe that the local church is an assembly of professed believers in Jesus Christ who are voluntarily joined together in one locality (Romans 16:1-5, 23; I Tim. 3:5) for the purposes of worship, study of the Word of God, observance of the ordinances, Christian fellowship, and to be equipped for Christian service (Acts 2:42, Eph. 4:11-13).

Ordinances

We believe that Christ instituted the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper which are to be observed by believers until He returns (Matthew 28:19-20; I Cor. 11:23-26).

We believe that water baptism is a picture of our identity with Christ in His death and resurrection. It depicts the death of the old man and new birth in newness of life and thus is for believers only (Romans 6:3-6; I Peter 3:21). This precludes infant baptism.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death, the elements being symbols of His body and blood. We believe that every Christian has a right to partake of the elements of the Lord's Supper but that participation must always be preceded by solemn self-examination (I Cor. 11:23-29).

End Times

We believe in the pre-millennial return of Christ followed by the Judgment of the Nations and the establishment of His kingdom (Rev. 20:1-6; Matthew 25:31-46). At this time all Israel will be saved (Romans 11:25-27). There is a resurrection of the believing dead (Rev. 20:4) and Christ will reign on the throne of David over Israel and the nations (II Samuel 7:16; Psalm 89:3, 4, 34-37; Isaiah 9:7; Zechariah 14:9, 16, 17; Ezekiel 37:14, 21-28; Luke 1:32-33) through the Church (Luke 22:30; II Tim. 2:12; Rev. 20:6). We believe that all believers will appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ to answer for what they have done in the flesh (II Cor. 5:10), but as all have trusted Christ, none are lost (I Cor. 3:10-15). The unbelieving dead are resurrected following the millenium and judged at the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:7, 11-15, 21:8) and condemned to the lake of fire.