



DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Our goal in outlining our doctrinal position is not to promote endless arguments or unnecessary divisions. We believe beliefs dictate behavior, and therefore our understanding of Bible truths as a whole determines how we live. We do not believe every affirmation in this statement is of equal weight, nor do we believe a person must believe every one of these assertions to be saved. We do not claim infallibility for these affirmations, but remain open to growth and deeper understanding arising out of careful Bible study. *Nevertheless we do hold firmly to these beliefs as we find them in Scripture.* We recognize that good Christians may differ with us on some of the issues, but we are committed to loving one another despite these differences.

1. **The Bible.** We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the fully inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, and the complete revelation of God's will for mankind. The Scriptures are all-sufficient and are the Christian's supreme and final authority in faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21; Matt. 5:17-18)
2. **God the Father.** We believe that there is only one God, the Creator of all things. He always was, is and will be. He is a holy God, infinitely perfect. We believe that God eternally and equally exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Genesis. 1:1, 26; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45: 5-6, 21-22; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1,3; 10: 30; Acts 5:1-4; Ephesians 4:5,6; Colossians 1:16-17; 2:9)
3. **God the Son.** We believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life while here on earth and then died on the cross, a substitute and sacrifice for our sins, according to the Scriptures. Furthermore, He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where at the right hand of the Father, He is now our High Priest and Advocate. We believe that there is a future visible, personal, bodily return of Christ for those who have trusted in Him for their salvation. (Isaiah 53; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 20:28; Acts 1: 1-11; 1 Cor.15: 2-4; 2 Cor. 5: 21; Heb. 4:14-16; 7:25; 1 John 2:1)
4. **God the Spirit.** We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person. He is the one who convicts unbelievers of sin, righteousness and judgment. The Spirit regenerates, sanctifies, indwells, guides, instructs, and seals forever every true believer. His primary ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, empowering believers to do the will of God for the glory of God. (John 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor.6: 19; Eph.4: 30)
5. **Man.** We believe that man was originally created in the image of God but fell into sin by an act of his own will and is therefore lost. Having sinned, he incurred the punishment of death, which means not only physical death but spiritual separation from God. All human beings are now born with a sinful nature and are thoroughly sinners in thought, word, and deed. Therefore man in his natural state is condemned to an eternal death. Being totally depraved and spiritually dead, man can only obtain salvation and spiritual life through regeneration by the Holy Spirit. (Gen.1:26-27, 3:1-6; John 3:3; Rom.3:10-13; 6:23; 5:12-18; 1 John 1:8)
6. **Salvation.** We believe that man in his lost condition needs a Savior; he cannot get to heaven on his own. Only the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection can provide

- the ground for our justification before God. We believe that eternal salvation is freely provided by God to all who personally trust in Christ Jesus alone for the forgiveness of their sins. Jesus died for the sins of the world so that we would not have to die. He fully satisfied the demands of a holy God. Therefore, He can give those who believe a life that can never be separated from God. (John 1:12-13; 3:16; 6:47; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:24-26; 5:1; 10:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-9; Hebrews 9:22; 1 John 2:2)
7. **Eternal Security.** We believe that those who have put their faith in Christ for salvation have the promise of eternal life as a present possession and are saved forever, being kept by the power of God. It is the privilege of believers to have a present and continuing assurance that they possess salvation. (John 5:24; 6:37; 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39; Ephesians 4:30; 1 John 5:10-13; 1 Peter 1:5)
 8. **The Church.** We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head, and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in one locality, baptized on credible confession of faith, and gathered together for worship, teaching, witness, and fellowship. The local church has been given the primary responsibility of evangelizing the lost and edifying those that are saved. Its leadership is biblically defined as that of pastors and deacons. Christ has committed two ordinances to the church: believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. These ordinances are symbolic memorials and not to be regarded as a means of salvation. (Matt. 16:18; 28:19-20; Acts 2:42-47; 6:1-7; 9:31; 13:1-3; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-32; 12: 1-26; Ephesians 4: 11-16; Colossians 1:24; 1 Timothy 3: 1-13; Titus 1: 5-9; Hebrews 10:25)
 9. **Religious Liberty.** We believe that every human being can have direct relations with God, and is responsible to Him alone in all matters of faith. Each local church is to be independent yet interdependent. Congregations should be autonomous, able to decide and govern their own affairs, free from interference by any denominational or political authority. Yet, it is also proper for biblical churches to partner and work together in order to promote the cause of Christ. Also, church and state are to be kept separate; each has different functions and is to fulfill its own duties, free from dictation or patronage of the other. (Romans 14:1-12; James 4:11-12; I Corinthians 8; Romans 13:1-7; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:28-29; Acts 15:1-35)
 10. **Christ's Second Coming.** We believe in the imminent (coming without warning) return of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that His coming to earth will be personal, visible, and pre-millennial so that He can set up His 1000-year kingdom. We also believe that there will be a rapture of all true believers prior to the Great Tribulation Period. This "blessed hope" has a bearing on the personal life and service of all believers. (Matthew 24:42-44; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess.4:13-17; Titus 2:13; I John 3:1-3; Rev.19-20: 9)
 11. **The Eternal State.** We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, whether saved or lost. We believe that at death the souls of those who have trusted in Christ for salvation pass immediately into the presence of Christ. We also believe that all those who are saved will spend an eternity of conscious blessedness with God in heaven; and all those who reject the message of the Gospel in this life will suffer an eternity of conscious torment in Hell. (John 5:28-29; 14:2, 3; 2 Corinthians 5:8; 2 Thessalonians 1: 7-9; Revelation 20:11-15).
 12. **Satan and Demons.** We believe that Satan is a literal and personal being, initially created sinless by God. Because of sin, He fell from his original estate. He is the god of this age and the author of sin, but was defeated at the cross. Demons are other angels

- who sinned and are now Satan's helpers. These evil spirits have the ability to make people sick and try to cause them to disobey God. Christians cannot be possessed by demons but they can be influenced by them. (Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek.28: 14-17; Matt. 4:1-11; 25:41; John 14: 30; 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:13-15; Rev. 20:10)
13. **Creation.** We believe the Genesis account of creation is a literal, historical account and not to be understood as allegory or myth. Man was created by the direct work of God without any evolutionary process. All men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race. (Genesis 1, 2; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:3)
 14. **Christian Living.** We believe that the Christian is to strive at all times for holiness of life; that good works are the proof and result of genuine saving faith. Christians are challenged to live lives separated from the sins of the world and this can only be accomplished by living in dependence upon the Holy Spirit so as to reveal the fruit of the Spirit. The life of the believer is to be fruitful in service and witness, lived solely for the glory of God. (John 15:1-17; Romans 6:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-20; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 2:8-10; 5:18; James 2:14-26; 1 John 2:3-6)
 15. **Human Sexuality, Marriage and Divorce.** We believe that no intimate sexual activity is to be engaged in outside of the marriage of a man and a woman. Any form of fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, bisexuality, incest, pedophilia, or pornography is a sinful perversion of God's gift of sex. We believe in the sanctity and divine origin of marriage as a lifelong covenant relationship between one man and one woman. We believe that God never encourages divorce and intends that marriage lasts until one of the spouses dies. Nevertheless, we believe that divorce, like any other sin, can be forgiven by God and repentant individuals can be restored to full fellowship with the Lord. Men and women are spiritually equal in position before God; yet He has ordained distinct and separate functions for each in the home and church. (Genesis 2:22-24; 19:5,13; Leviticus 18:1-30; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:26-29; 7:2; 1 Cor. 5:1-2; 6:9-11; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4; Gal. 3:28; Ephes. 5:22-23)
 16. **Spiritual Gifts.** We believe that the Holy Spirit, according to His will, gives various spiritual gifts to believers so that they can fulfill the ministry of Christ. Each believer has been granted at least one gift and is therefore equipped for active service in the local church. Some gifts given to the early church appear to have been revelatory and others were meant to be signs (eg. healing, speaking in tongues, prophecy, etc.); these seem to have been limited to the Apostolic period and are no longer operative today. (1 Corinthians 12: 4-11; Ephesians 4:7-12; Romans 12:6-8; 2 Corinthians 12:12; 1 Corinthians 13:8-12; 14:21-22; Hebrews 2:3-4; James 5:13-16; 1 Peter 4:10)
 17. **Israel and the Church.** We believe that Old Testament Israel is to be distinguished from the New Testament Church. Yet both Jews and Gentiles must be saved by grace through faith in Christ alone. We believe in the literal fulfillment of the Scriptural prophecies and promises which foretell and assure the future restoration of Israel as a nation. God in His sovereign selection has chosen Israel as His eternal covenant people, though she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ. She will be re-gathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, God will again begin dealing with her as a nation. (Genesis 13:14-17; Jeremiah 16:14-15; Ezekiel 37; Rom 11:1-32; 10:12-13)