

Doctrinal Statement

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The following express the orthodox Biblical beliefs of this church and its members. These beliefs form the basis of our theological understanding and its application to Christian living. The Doctrinal Statement is not an exhaustive statement of our beliefs. The Bible itself is the final authority for all that we believe.

(a) The Holy Scriptures:

The sole basis for our belief is the Bible. It is composed of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that the Scripture in its entirety originated with God and that He revealed it to chosen authors. The Scriptures speak with the authority of God while reflecting the backgrounds, styles, and vocabularies of these human authors. Every word of the original writings was inspired by God and is therefore without error. The Scriptures are the full and final authority on all matters of faith and practice and should be interpreted according to their normal, literal, grammatical-historical meaning. There are no other writings similarly inspired by God. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21, Hebrews 4:12)

(b) The Godhead:

There is one, true, personal, holy God Who exists eternally. He exists and reveals Himself to man in three distinct persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each possesses equally all the attributes of deity and characteristics of personality. He created all things and upholds all things (Gen. 1-2; Col. 1:16-17; John 10:30). In Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28). He is a God of truth and without iniquity (Acts 17:31). He is just and righteous (Ps. 145: 17), and He shall judge the world. (Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14; Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 26; Isaiah 6:1-3)

(c) God the Father:

God the Father orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Eph.1:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom.9:11). He is the absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe. He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). As Creator He is Father to all men (Acts 17:26), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (John 1:12-13; Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). In His sovereignty He is neither the author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). In the relational economy of the Trinity, the Son is in submission to the Father (John 6:38), and the Holy Spirit is in submission to the Father (John 16:13)

(d) The Person and Work of Jesus

(1) Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Godhead (Luke 1:30-35). He voluntarily chose to be made in human likeness (Philippians 2:5-8). He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He became man without ceasing to be God. He is fully man and

fully God. He is the promised Messiah. (Isaiah 7:14;9 :6-7; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; Galatians 4:4-5)

(2) While on earth He lived in perfect obedience to His Father (John 6:39, 12:49), so He lived not only a sinless life but also a perfectly righteous life. He voluntarily paid the price for the sins of all people by dying on the cross as their substitute (1 Peter 2:24), and satisfied divine justice (1John 2:2), bringing salvation to all who trust in Him alone (Acts 4:12). After His physical death Jesus miraculously rose from the dead in a glorified body; he appeared to a large number of witnesses on a number of occasions for forty days (Acts 1:1-3). He then ascended into heaven, where He is exalted at the right hand of God the Father. He is the High Priest (Heb. 4:14) and Advocate for His people, the only Intercessor between God and humans (1Tim. 2:5). He is the head of the church (Col. 1:18).(Acts 2:18-36; Romans 3:24-25; Ephesians 1:7; 1Peter 1:3-5) (Acts 1:9-10;Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24;7:25; 1John 2:1-2)

(e) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead. He is fully God (Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14). He was sent into the world by the Father and the Son (John 14:26, 15:26). Part of His mission is to convict the world of sin, of God's righteousness, and of coming judgment. He is the Spirit of truth. Jesus said of the Spirit, "He will glorify Me." (John 16:14) He guides Christ's followers into truth. (John 16:8-15; Romans 8:9; 1Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:13-14) The Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to the sinner upon belief in Christ (Titus 3:5), baptizes or places that believer into the body of Christ (1 Cor.12:13), permanently indwells the believer (1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 1:22), and seals him/her unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). The Holy Spirit becomes the believer's source of assurance, strength, wisdom, and spiritual gifting for the building up of the church. The Holy Spirit guides believers in understanding and applying the Bible.

He fills those yielded to him so they can lead a life of Christ-like character and bear fruit for the Father's glory. (Romans 12:3-8; 1Corinthians 12:4-11, 28; Ephesians 4:7-12, 5:18-21; Galatians 5:22-23)

(f) Man:

Man was created by God in His own image, male and female, and was created in innocence. God created man to live in relationship with Him. However, man fell into sin through personal disobedience to the revealed will of God. In addition to alienating themselves from God, their disobedience resulted in all mankind being sinful in nature and practice and being under just condemnation. Man cannot save himself, and apart from intervention from God, man will face eternal separation from God. (Genesis 1- 3. Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

(g) Salvation and Eternal Security

(1) The central purpose of God's revelation in Scripture is to call people into relationship and fellowship with Him. Because of the fall, man is dead in his sins and trespasses (Eph. 2:1); he is

alienated from God (Eph. 2:12, 19), and he is headed for eternity in the lake of fire separated from God (Rev. 20:15). He cannot save himself. He needs forgiveness, spiritual life and eternal life. These can be found only in Christ (Acts 4:12).

(2) The payment for our sins has been made by Christ as he shed his blood on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice for us (1 Peter 2:24, 3:18). He rose from the dead so He can give us new, spiritual, eternal life. The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23). He who has the Son has life (1 John 5:12). No one comes to the Father but through Christ (John 14:6). This free gift is received by grace through faith apart from any works, sacrament, merit, or human effort (Gal. 2:16).

(3) When a spiritually dead person exercises saving faith in Christ, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life (Eph. 2:4-6), from the old creation to the new (2 Cor. 5:17). He is justified or declared righteous (Rom. 5:1), accepted before the Father, redeemed out of the slave market of sin (Gal. 4:4-5), forgiven (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14), given every spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3), and made complete in Christ (Col. 2:10). (John 3:16; John 5:24)

(4) Every believer's salvation is secure, being kept by the power of God (John 6:37-40, 10:27-30; 1 Peter 1:4-5). However, a believer by disobedience can mar his fellowship with God, lose his testimony, and incur the Father's loving discipline. (Ps. 32:1-5; 1 Cor. 11:28-32; Acts 5:1-11)

(h) The Church

(1) The true church, called in Scripture the Body of Christ, is a spiritual organism. It is comprised of every person who has trusted Jesus Christ for salvation in this present age. Each one has been baptized by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-14). Christ is the head of the church (Col. 1:18). The Scripture also teaches the establishment and continuance of local churches. The local church is recognized when at least three things are true. First, when there is the intentional, regular meeting of God's people under the oversight of elders for worship, instruction, fellowship, and service (Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Hebrews 10:25; Acts 20:28; Acts 2:41-42, 46-47). Second, when the ordinances are consistently administered (Matt 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). Third, when the group recognizes and desires to contribute to the mission of the church. The mission of the church is to make disciples of all the nations (Matt. 28:18-20).

(2) God arranges the parts of the body and gives each believer special functions to perform for the good of the body. To remain healthy, the body's members must work together. Each part contributes to the growth and maturity of the body. God works through the church to reconcile a lost world to Himself through Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 12:4-28; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27; 1 Peter 4:10; Rom. 12:4-13; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)

(3) The local church is autonomous, free of any external human authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)

(4) There are two ordinances that were instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ-baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are to be observed by all believers until His return. Baptism is the outward testimony of the inward spiritual transformation in the life of one who has trusted Christ for salvation. It is in no way a requirement for salvation. It is an expression of that salvation. The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of His death and is to be observed regularly by all self-examined believers. The elements are used as emblems of the Lord's body and blood. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:8; 1Cor .11:23-29)

(i) Future Events

(1) One of the coming great events in the fulfillment of prophecy concerning the church is the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to remove from the earth His waiting church and to reward them according to their works. (1 Thess. 4:13-18; John 14:1-3; I Cor. 15:51-57; Rom. 14:10-12; 1Cor. 3:9-15; 2 Cor. 5:10)

(2) Another event yet to come is the seven year period of tribulation during which the judgments of God will be poured out upon the unbelieving world (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6-19; 1Thess. 1:10). These judgments will climax with the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Acts 1:11; Rev. 19:11-16). He will destroy His enemies and restore Israel to her land (Zech. 14).

(3) Christ will establish His thousand-year kingdom in which the saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth. (Ps. 2:7-9; Rev. 20:1-6)

(4) All people will experience conscious resurrection, the saved to heaven and the lost to eternal torment in the lake of fire separated from God. (Dan. 2:31-45; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10, 20:1-6; Matt. 25:46; John 5:28- 29, 11:25-26; Rev. 20:11-15)

(1) Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator. He took numerous angels with him in his fall. He introduced sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve. (Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19, Matt. 25 :41; Rev. 12:1-14, Gen. 3:1-15)

(2) Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man. He is the prince of this world. He has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Christ. (1John 3:8) He shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire. (Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:1-11; Rev. 12 :9-10; Rom. 16:20; Ezek. 28:11-19; Matt. 25 :41; Rev.20:10)

(k) Angels : Angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. (Ps. 148:2-6; Col. 1:16) Although they are a higher order of creation than man (Heb.2:7), they are created to serve God, to worship Him, and at least some have been sent out to render service to those who will inherit salvation (Heb. 1:6-7,14; Luke 2:9-14; Rev. 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9).

(l) Civil Government:

As part of His person and nature, God has innate authority. He has designed three social institutions to operate on the basis of delegated authority and limited submission: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and has balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equally ordained by God and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:21-29; 1Peter. 3:1,7; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

(m) Human Sexuality:

God has commanded that there be no intimate sexual activity outside of marriage. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman. Any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgenderism, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography is a counterfeit and a sinful expression of God's gift of sex. Because of Christ's love for sinners and through God's redemptive and forgiving power, full healing and spiritual transformation can occur in any life where sexual sin has occurred. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1Cor. 5:1;6:9; 1 Thes. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

(n) Marriage

(1) The institution of marriage was designed and established by God in creation, and it is a covenantal relationship between a husband and wife before God. Marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. Men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for each. (Gen 2:24; Matt. 19:3-6; Rom. 7:2; 1Cor.7:10-11;Eph. 5:22-33; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18-19)

(2) God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife in a sacrificial, purifying, and nourishing way as Christ loves the church. The wife is to respect her husband and submit herself to his Scriptural leadership as the church submits to the headship of Christ. The husband is to be a servant leader in the home, giving attention to the spiritual welfare of his family. That begins by the husband's leading of himself. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them through consistent lifestyle, example, and appropriate discipline. (Gen.1:26-28; Gen. 2:24; Ex.20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:18-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

(3) Marriage is a picture of Christ's covenantal relationship to his bride the church, to which He is absolutely faithful (Eph. 5:25-32). That is why God commands marriage to be held in honor by all (Heb. 13:4) and why He hates divorce (Mal. 2:16). The Bible identifies two situations where divorce may occur: adultery (Matt. 19:4-9) and desertion by an unbelieving spouse (1Cor. 7:15).

(o) Sanctity of Life

(1) Human life begins at conception and the unborn child is a living human being. (Ps. 51:5,

139:13-16; Isa. 44:24, 49:1,5; Jer. 1:4-5, 20:15-18; Luke 1:44) Every human life is made in the image of God and therefore has dignity and inherent worth. (Gen.1:26- 27, 5:1, 9:6; James 3:9)

(2) Jesus holds the keys to death and it is appointed for men to die once. The time of death is in God's hands, and we are to accept His timing for our death rather than select our timing for our death. (Rev. 1:18; Heb. 9:27; Job 3:16)