

Article Two – Doctrinal Statement of Faith

Section One: The Bible, the Inspired Word of God

We believe the Bible in every word and part is the divinely inspired and complete Word of God without error in its original manuscripts, preserved for us today as the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible is our supreme and final authority in faith and life. (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Matt. 5:18)

Section Two: The One True God in Three Persons

We believe in one God, forever existing in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is Holy and Righteous and is absolutely perfect and blameless in every way for all time. God created all things and is in control of all things, having made all things to eternally express His greatness. (Is. 6:3; Ps. 116:5; Ps. 18:30; Matt. 5:48; Gen. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:17; Gen. 1:26; Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11; Col. 1:17; Rom. 1:20)

Section Three: Jesus, the God-Man

We believe Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is fully God and fully man. Jesus lived among men, experiencing such human weakness and limitations as hunger, tiredness, and thirst. While He also was tempted as we are, He lived a perfect, sinless life. (Matt. 1:20, 23; Col. 1:19; Heb. 1:3; Titus 2:13; Jn. 1:1-3; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 2:14; Jn. 1:14; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5; Lk. 4:1-13; Heb. 4:15)

Section Four: The Holy Spirit

We believe God the Holy Spirit draws sinners to faith in Jesus Christ as He convicts individuals of sin and enables them to repent and believe. He also assures believers of their place in heaven, comforts them in their times of need, indwells and equips them with gifts for service, and seals their future inheritance. He thus empowers and sets believers apart to live lives pleasing to God the Father. (Jn. 16:7-15; 15:26; Titus 3:5; Eph. 1:13b-14; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Rom. 14:17-18)

Section Five: Mankind

We believe all human beings are made in the image of God and therefore we uphold the sanctity of all human life. God created mankind to enjoy fellowship with Him and to rule over His creation. God created all people as eternal beings, yet incomplete apart from a relationship with Him. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ps. 8:3-8; 139:13-16; Eccl. 3:11)

Section Six: Sin

We believe our original parents, Adam and Eve, while created in perfection by Almighty God, abandoned their exalted status and unbroken communion with God and disobeyed Him, falling into sin. God's stated consequence for such disobedience was death, and so Adam and Eve brought this penalty upon themselves and the entire human race that proceeded from them. The lingering result is that all people are both by inherited nature and by personal choice sinners in rebellion against God. Sin is any thought or action that is inconsistent with God's character in all His perfections or with His perfect will for our lives. No one has any inherent ability to escape this condition. (Gen. 3:1-24; Eccl. 3:11; 7:20; Rom. 3:10; Rom. 3:23; Rom. 5:12-18; 1 Jn. 1:8)

Section Seven: The Gospel – “Good News”

Part A: God Requires Punishment For All Sin

We believe God is both holy and perfectly just and that He has decreed that all sin must be punished. Because of our sin, we have incurred God's promised punishment of death. This death is not only physical, but spiritual – our loss of relationship with God and eternal separation from Him. (Is. 13:11; Rom. 5:12; Ezek. 18:4; Lk. 13:5; Rom. 6:23)

Part B: God Desires Relationship With Us

We believe God is merciful and deeply loves and values every person. It is God's strong desire that none should perish. He longs to have a close and personal relationship with us. (Lk. 6:36; Jn. 3:16; Rom. 1:16; 2 Pet. 3:9)

Part C: Jesus Bore Our Punishment to Reunite Us With God

We believe Jesus Christ was sent by God the Father to carry out His plan for our deliverance from sin. In obedience to His Father, Jesus willingly bore the punishment deserved by and intended for each of us. He died in our place when He shed His blood on the cross in order to satisfy the holy justice of God for our sin and restore our relationship with God. This once-for-all, finished work is available to all people during their earthly life and enables us to have a close and personal relationship with God forever. (Is. 53:4-6; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Jn. 2:2; 1 Jn. 4:10; 1 Pet. 3:18; Heb. 9:22; Heb. 9:26; Heb. 10:10, 12; Acts 2:21; 1 Thess. 4:7)

Part D: God Raised Jesus From the Dead

We believe God bodily raised Jesus from the dead, as prophesied both in the Old Testament and in His own ministry. Jesus then appeared to His disciples, ministered to them, and ascended into heaven to be with His Father, where He now prays, interceding on behalf of His followers. (Acts 13:30; Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:3b-6; Acts 10:40-41; Acts 26:23; Col. 1:18; 1 Jn. 2:1; Heb. 7:25)

Part E: Faith in Jesus is the Only Way to Receive Forgiveness and Eternal Life

We believe Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Furthermore, a restored relationship with God is completely dependent upon God's love and grace for us and is offered to all who in faith believe in His Son, Jesus Christ. This free gift of salvation includes both a restored relationship with God now and the guarantee of eternal life in heaven with Christ. We receive this gift by admitting our sinful condition and personally trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. God Himself then secures and keeps His child as His own. (John 1:12; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Jn. 5:11-12; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 3:22-24; Rom. 10:9; Mk. 1:15; Jn. 14:6; Rom. 8:11; Jn. 6:37,39; 17:12; Eph. 1:13-14)

Section Eight: The Christian Life

We believe whoever trusts Christ as Savior and Lord becomes a "new creation" and is enabled by the Holy Spirit to live a life pleasing to God, discern God's will, have confidence in eternal life with Christ, and experience a life of true joy, peace, holiness, and victory. The child of God is called to a life of deepening holiness, set apart from the principles of this ungodly world. This will require an examined life of regular confession and repentance of sin. Genuine faith and true salvation will also be manifest by a lifestyle of Bible reading, meditation and prayer, worship and fellowship with other Christians, as well as service and good works toward others, showing the love of Jesus in all we do. Such is the manner of the believer's cooperation with the Spirit of God in "working out our salvation." (2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Pet. 1:13-16; 2:11-12; Titus 2:11-14; Matt. 5:16; Jn. 2:14-26; Col. 3:1-17; Gal. 5:16-24; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:12-13)

Section Nine: The Church

We believe the Church, with Christ Jesus as its Head, consists of all true Christians who have embraced the Gospel of Christ. Every believer in Jesus Christ has direct and personal access to God, without any other mediator than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Christians in community with one another in a local church are to be committed to God, Scripture, each other, exalting the name of Christ, practicing the ordinances of baptism and communion, and fulfilling Christ's Commission. The local church is autonomous, free of any hierarchical governance beyond its

own local, God appointed leadership, as determined by the local body. (Eph. 5:23; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:9-10; Gal. 2:20a; Rom. 12:10; Gal. 5:13b; Acts 2:42; Matt. 28:19-20a)

Section Ten: Baptism and Communion

We believe water baptism and communion are commands of Christ and are testimonies of the obedient believer. We hold to believers' baptism by immersion. The bread and the cup of the Lord's Supper are symbols given by Christ to the church to remember His body and blood shed for us. (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38-41; Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 8:38b-39a; Rom. 6:3-4b)

Section Eleven: Angels

We believe God created supernatural, spiritual beings called angels. Faithful angels are ministering spirits who serve God's plan and purposes in heaven and on earth. Satan and his demons, once heavenly angels who rebelled against God, now stand as our adversaries and seek to thwart God's purposes. Their doom and destiny in the lake of fire, however, is certain. (Jude 6; Ps. 148:2, 5; Heb. 1:14; 1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 6:11-12; Rev. 20:10)

Section Twelve: The Return of Christ

We believe in the future, personal, and bodily return of Jesus Christ, the "blessed hope" of the church. While the timing of Christ's return is undisclosed, His return will be visible to all. He will call His faithful to Himself and restore righteousness to the earth, first in His one thousand year millennial reign, and then for all eternity. (Is. 9:6-7; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Titus 2:11-13; Rev. 20:1-6)

Section Thirteen: The Coming Judgment

We believe in the bodily resurrection and judgment of all people. Those who have believed and obeyed the Gospel will be raised to everlasting joy and reward in God's presence in heaven. Those who have not believed and obeyed will be raised to everlasting conscious punishment and eternal separation from God in hell. (Matt. 25:34-46; 1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; Jn. 5:28-29; 2 Thes. 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:17; Rev. 20:11-15)