

Doctrinal Statement

SECTION 1 - The Holy Scriptures

We believe that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," by which we understand the whole of the book called the Bible; We understand inspiration to be the work of the Holy Spirit by which He gave the very words of the sacred writings to holy men of old; and that His divine inspiration is not in different degrees but extends equally and fully to all parts of these writings, historical, poetical, doctrinal and prophetic, and the smallest word, and inflection of a word, provided such word is found in the original manuscripts. (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21; I Cor. 2:13; Mark 12:26, 36; 13:31; Acts 1:16; 2:4)

We believe that all the Scriptures, from the first to the last, center about our Lord Jesus Christ, in His person and work, in His first and second coming; and hence that no chapter even of the Old Testament is properly read or understood until it leads to Him, and moreover, that all the scriptures from first to last, including every chapter even of Old Testament, were designed for our practical instruction. (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2, 3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11)

SECTION 2 - The Godhead

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that these three are one God, having precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience. (Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 5:3,4; II Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4-6)

SECTION 3 - The Total Depravity of Man

We believe man, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from his high and holy estate by eating the forbidden fruit, and as the consequence of his disobedience the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that his moral nature was not only grievously injured by the fall, but he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; John 5:40; 6:53; Eph. 2:1-3; I John 3:8)

We believe that this spiritual death, including the total corruption of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of man, the man Christ Jesus alone excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of living life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad, being enmity against God, and incapable by any educational process whatever of subjection to His law. (Gen. 6:5; Isa. 53:6; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6, Rom. 5:12-19; 8:6-7)

SECTION 4 - Regeneration

We believe that, owing to this universal depravity and death in sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again; and that no degree of reformation, however great; no attainment in morality, however high; no culture, however attractive; no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies, however useful; no baptism or other ordinance, however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation. (Isa. 64:6; John 3:5, 18; Gal. 6:15; Phil. 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; Jas. 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23)

SECTION 5- The First Advent of Jesus Christ

- A. His Virgin Birth:** We believe that, as provided and proposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the redeemer of a lost world. To this end, He was born of the virgin, and received a human body and a sinless human nature. (Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18, 3:16; Heb. 4:15)
- B. His Two Natures:** We believe that on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man, but sinless throughout His life; yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man, and that as the God-man, His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine. (Luke 2:40; John 1:1-2; Phil. 2:5-8)

SECTION 6- The Word of Christ

We believe that our redemption has been accomplished by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin, and made a curse, for us; dying in our stead; and that no repentance and feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere effort, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, or all the churches that have existed since the days of the apostles, can add in the very least to the value of that precious blood, or to the merit of that finished work, wrought for us by Him who united in His person, true and proper divinity, with perfect and sinless humanity. (Lev. 17:11; Mt. 26:28; Rom. 5:6-9; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7; I Pet. 1:18-19)

We believe that Christ, in the fullness of the blessings He has secured by His obedience unto death, is received by faith alone, and that the moment we trust in Him as our Savior we pass out of death into everlasting life, being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according to the measure of His acceptance, loved as He is loved, and having His place and position, as linked to Him, and one with Him forever. (John 5:24, 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:4-6; I John 4:17, 5:11-12)

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven, exalted at the right hand of God, where as the high priest for His people, He fulfills the ministry of representative, intercessor and advocate. (Heb. 9:24, 7:25; Rom. 8:34; I John 2:1-2)

SECTION 7 - Unlimited Atonement

We believe that the finished work of Christ - His perfect life, His death, and His resurrection -- has potentially provided salvation from sin, reconciliation to God and eternal Life for the whole world, and that anyone who desires God's free offer of eternal life may respond in faith to receive it. (John 1:29, 3:16; II Cor. 5:19; II Pet. 2:1; I John 2:2). We believe that in actuality, however, the atoning work of Christ is limited in its application only to those who believe, described in Scripture as chosen before the foundation of the world according to God's foreknowledge. (Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4; I Pet. 1:1-2)

SECTION 8 - The Extent of Salvation

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises that faith in Christ which is illustrated and described in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted by the Father according as Christ His Son is loved, having his place and portions linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow

in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, and though he may have one or more "crisis" experiences, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is, therefore, in no way required by God to seek a so-called "second blessing," or a "second work of grace". (John 5:24, 17:24; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; I Cor. 3:21-23; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10; I John 4:17; 5:11-12)

SECTION 9 - Sanctification

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting apart unto God, is threefold:

- A. It is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ's position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God.
- B. We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in his daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to "grow in grace," and to "be changed" by the unhindered power of the Spirit.
- C. We believe, also, that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be "like Him". (John 17:17; II Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Eph. 4:24; 5:25-27; I Thes. 5:23; Heb. 10:10, 14, 12:10).

SECTION 10 - The Assurance and Security of the Believer

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day that they take Him to be their Savior; that they can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace but are eternally saved; and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience. (Luke 10:20; 12:32; John 6:47; 10:28-29; Phil. 1:6; Rom. 8:33-39; II Cor. 5:1, 6-8; Tim. 1:12; I John 5:13)

SECTION 11 - The Church

We believe that the church is composed of all who are united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God, that by the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, and thus being members of one another we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry, and loving one another fervently with a pure heart. (Mt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:32-47; Rom. 12:5; I Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:3-10; Col. 1:24-27)

SECTION 12 - The Ordinances of The Church

We believe that Christ, the head over all things to the church (Eph. 1:22), has commanded us to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19); and to partake at His table. When He had given thanks, He broke the bread, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." (I Cor. 11:23-26)

SECTION 13 - The Local Church

We believe that God's primary, intended organization of believers, after the family unit, in the present age is local assemblies of believers, committed to the Lord and to each other for the purpose of carrying out the universal church's visible activities; that is, the communication of God's truth to the people of God, the worship of and prayer to God by God's people, the loving care of God's people for one another, and the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth; that these assemblies (or churches), though they should endeavor to cooperate with other Christian assemblies, are to function under the lordship of Christ, free from external controls of any religious organizations beyond the early oversight by the church founders and the influence of mature leaders in the entire Christian community; and that it is God's intention that all believers publicly identify with a visible, local assembly. (Acts 2:41-47; 4:19; 5:29; I Cor. 1:1-2; I Thes. 1:1; Heb. 10:24-25)

SECTION 14 - The Holy Spirit

- A. **The Indwelling and Baptizing of Believers:** We Believe that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the blessed Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise. He dwells in every believer, and by His baptism (i.e., the total identification of the believer with the Holy Spirit) unites all to Christ in one body at the point of conversion. He, as the indwelling one, is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. We believe that He never leaves the church, nor the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ; seeking to direct believers' attention to Christ and not to themselves or with their experiences. We believe that His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church. (John 14:16-17; 16:7-15; I Cor. 6:19; Eph. 2:22)
- B. **Ministries of the Present Age:** We believe that, in this age, certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit, and that is important for every Christian to understand them and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience. These ministries are: the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the convicting of the world with respect to sin, righteousness, and judgment; the baptizing, regenerating, indwelling and anointing of all believers; and the provision of power, comfort, teaching and illumination for those among the saved who are yielded to Him and who are subject to His will as revealed in Scripture. (John 3:6; 14:26; 16:7-11; Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; Col. 3:16; I John 2:20-27)
- C. **Spiritual Gifts:** We believe that, some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were given to be used as signs to authenticate the message of the first century church. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Holy Spirit, and that the complete deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection. (Acts 4:8, 31; Rom. 8:23; I Cor. 13:8) We believe that in accordance with the sovereign will of God, healing is available through the prayer of believers (Jas. 5:14). We believe that other "nonsign" gifts were given to the church and that through the exercise of these gifts in the church believers who learn and apply the truth of Scripture to their lives will mature spiritually. We further believe that ecstatic experiences, though they may be valid manifestations of the grace of God, do not appreciably contribute to one's spiritual maturity. (Eph. 4:11-16)

SECTION 15 - The Believer's Walk

We believe that we are called with the holy calling to walk, not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and so to live in the Spirit that we should not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; but the flesh being still in us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence to the dishonor of His name. (Rom. 3:12-13; 12:14; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; I Pet. 1:14-17; I John 3:5-9)

SECTION 16 - The Great Commission

We believe that it is the explicit command of our Lord Jesus Christ that everyone who is saved is to be involved in discipling the nations; that is, contributing his part in the process of evangelism, making disciples and teaching, both in his own community and around the world. (Mt. 28:18-20; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 5:18-20)

SECTION 17 - The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a personality who is the open declared enemy of God and man. (John 1:6-7; Mt. 4:2-11; Eph. 4:11; I Pet. 5:8)

SECTION 18 - The Blessed Hope of the Church

We believe that, according to the Word of God, the believers in this age are to constantly live in expectancy of the coming of Christ for the church, at which time all dead church age believers will be raised from the dead and all living believers will be transformed, and both will be translated into the presence of Christ "in the clouds" and will be made like unto His glorious body. (I Cor. 15:51-52; Phil. 3:20; I Thes. 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; I John 3:1-3)

SECTION 19 - The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that a period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person "on the clouds of heaven" and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God. (Dt. 30:1-10; Isa. 11:9; Ezek. 37:21-29; Mt. 24:15-25; Acts 15:16-17; Rom. 8:19-23; 11:25-27; I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:1-5; Rev. 20:1-3)

SECTION 20 - The Eternal State

We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming when soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in the glory; but the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. (Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; II Thes. 1:7-9; Jude 1:6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)

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