

Statement of Faith

In all essential beliefs--we have unity.

"There is one Body, and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all..."

Ephesians 4:4-6

In nonessential beliefs--we have liberty.

"Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters...Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his master he stands or falls...So then each of us will give an account of himself to God...So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God."

Romans 14:1,4,12,22

In all our beliefs--we show love.

"...If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains-but have no love, I amount to nothing at all."

1 Corinthians 13:2 (Phillips Translation)

Essentials of Belief

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SECTION 1--The Scriptures

God who is Himself truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself (2 Samuel 7:28; John 1:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches; it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises (2 Peter 1:19-20; John 17:17; James 1:22-25).

The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning (2 Peter 1:19-20; 1 Corinthians 2:12-15; John 14:25-26).

Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.

The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the church.

SECTION 2--The Godhead

We believe in one God eternally existing in three equal persons--The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, who have the same nature and attributes but who are distinct in office and role (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

SECTION 3--The Father

God the Father is the first person of the Trinity. He orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalms 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). As the absolute and highest ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence and redemption (Psalms 103:19; Job 1:6; Romans 11:33). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass, and continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). This He does so is in no way to be the author of sin (John 8:38-44), nor to abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from all eternity those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:3-6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, and He relates Himself to His own as their father (Luke 3:38; John 1:12,18; Hebrews 12:5-9).

SECTION 4--The Son

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. We believe that He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as our substitutionary sacrifice. We believe that our redemption and salvation is guaranteed by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (John 1:1,14,18; Luke 1:35; Romans 3:24-26; 4:25).

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

SECTION 5--The Holy Spirit

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is a person who restrains evil in the world and convicts men of sin. He also regenerates those who receive Jesus Christ as Savior. The Spirit baptizes him/her into the body of Christ. The Spirit permanently indwells each believer. The Spirit seals him/her unto the Day of Redemption. The Spirit bestows spiritual gifts to each believer. The Spirit fills those who yield to Him in obedience and transforms them into Christ's likeness. (John 3:8; 14:16-17; 16:7-11; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11,13; Ephesians 4:30; 5:18; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

SECTION 6--Angels: fallen and unfallen

We believe that angels are spiritual beings who were created as sinless personalities and that they occupy different orders and ranks. They presently exist in both fallen and unfallen states, the former including Satan and his angels (Hebrews 1:13-14; 2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 7:12).

We believe that Satan, by his own choice is the enemy of God and of the people of God, is the originator of sin. That he led our first parents into sin and now rules as the god of this world. We believe that he was judged at the cross and that ultimately he will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Isaiah 14:12-14; Genesis 3:1-19; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:10)

SECTION 7--Creation

We believe all things in heaven and earth were created by God and exist by his power (Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:16-17).

We believe that man was created innocent and in the image and likeness of God, but that he sinned bringing both physical and spiritual death to himself and his posterity. We believe that man has inherited a sinful nature, is alienated from God, and is in need of salvation (Genesis 1:27; 2:17; 3:19; Ephesians 2:1-3).

SECTION 8--Salvation

We believe that salvation is a gift of God and is received by man through personal faith in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for sin. We believe that man is justified by grace through faith apart from works (Acts 13:38-39; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-10). We believe that all true believers, once saved, are kept secure in Christ forever (Romans 8:1,38-39; John 10:27-30).

SECTION 9--Sanctification

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting apart unto God, is positional, progressive, and ultimate. Positionally it is already complete since the believer is "in Christ" and is set apart unto God as Christ is set apart unto God. Since he retains his sinful nature, however, there is need for progressive sanctification whereby the Christian grows in grace as he cooperates with the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, the child of God will be set apart from sin in his practice as he is now in his position in Christ when he is taken to be with Christ and shall be like Him (John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10,14).

SECTION 10--The Church

We believe that the church, the Body and Bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism, made up of all regenerate persons of this present age. We believe that the church began at Pentecost (Acts 2) and that a believer is placed into the church by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the church is distinct from Israel (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 10:32; 12:13).

We believe that the local church is an assembly of professed believers in Jesus Christ who are voluntarily joined together in one locality for the purposes of worship, instruction of God's Word, observance of the ordinances of Christian fellowship, and to be equipped for Christian service (Acts 2:43-47; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; Ephesians 4:11-13).

SECTION 11--The Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christ instituted the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper which are to be observed by believers only until He returns (Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

We believe that by water baptism a believer is publicly obeying Christ's command by identifying with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection symbolized by immersion of water baptism. We believe that infants may be dedicated to the Lord but not baptized.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death, the elements being symbols of His body (bread) and His blood (cup). We believe that every Christian has a right to partake of the elements of the Lord's Supper but that participation should always be preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:23-34).

SECTION 12--Future Events

We believe in the personal, visible return of Jesus Christ to judge the world in righteousness and assign to each his eternal award; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord; of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 24:15-31; Revelation 20:1-6, 11-15).