

The Doctrine of Scripture

Revelation:

We believe that God has revealed and continues to reveal Himself to man through *general* revelation. General revelation consists of creation (Psalm 19:1-4), common grace (Acts 14:17), and man's conscience (Romans 2:14-15). General revelation leaves people without excuse but is insufficient to bring a person to saving faith (Romans 1:19-20). Man is in need of God's *special* revelation. Special revelation has taken many forms (i.e. theophanies, dreams, visions), but climaxed in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2). Special revelation is now only found in the sixty-six books of the Bible.

Inspiration:

We believe that the original manuscripts of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are inspired, that is, God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16). Inspiration refers to the moving of the Holy Spirit upon men to pen the very words of God (2 Peter 1:21). Although these men retained their individuality, what was produced is unmistakably God's Word (Acts 1:16). The original manuscripts were inspired both *verbally* (the words) and *plenary* (the totality).

Canonization:

We believe that the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament make up the canon of scripture. Christ confirmed that the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms were to be considered scripture (Luke 24:44-45). The prophets regularly affirmed divine origin for their message (Jeremiah 1:1-2; Isaiah 1:2). Peter places Paul's writings in the same classification as scripture (2 Peter 3:15-16). Paul affirms his own writings to be scripture (1 Thessalonians 4:15).

Preservation:

We believe that God has providentially preserved His Word in the *totality* of all the manuscripts. Although the method of the preservation of God's Word is unclear, scripture does teach that God's Word will endure forever (Psalm 119:152, 160).

Translation:

We believe that the best translations attempt to keep the grammatical structure and the actual words as close to the original language as possible. We have found the NASB, ESV, KJV, NKJV, NIV, and CSB to maintain the authors intended meaning.

05/18/2022

Interpretation:

We believe that God deals with His people through covenants. Therefore, the covenants of scripture, starting with the covenant with creation, make up the backbone by which we interpret God's words. Ultimately, the covenants between God and man find their fulfillment in and through Jesus Christ.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

We believe that there is only one true God and there is none like Him (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:18). We believe that all three persons within the Godhead are spirit (Genesis 1:2; John 4:24; Romans 8:9-11). (1 Timothy 1:17). We believe that He is the I AM or Yahweh (Exodus 3:14-15). We believe that God is one being and exists in three persons; God the Father (Matthew 28:19), God the Son (Hebrews 1:2-3, 8), and God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). We believe that the three persons within the Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – are co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal, yet distinct from each other.

The Doctrine of the Father

Deity:

We believe that God the Father is truly God. He is deserving of praise (2 Corinthians 1:2). He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 1:3).

Work of God:

We believe that God spoke the heavens and the earth into existence (Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:11) and on the seventh day rested (Hebrews 4:9-11). From eternity past, God predestined the elect for adoption (Ephesians 1:4-5) and no one can pluck the elect out of His hand (John 10:29). We believe that God cannot be tempted with evil nor does He tempt anyone (James 1:13). We believe that God has revealed Himself through His Son (Hebrews 1:1). We believe that God sent Jesus into the world (Hebrews 1:6) and raised Him from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:15). We believe that those whom God elects to be His children cannot be plucked out of His hand (John 10:29).

The Doctrine of Christ

Deity:

We believe that Jesus Christ is truly God, the second person of the Trinity. Jesus is called God (John 1:1; John 20:28; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8). Jesus is worshipped as God (John 5:23; Philippians 2:10-11; Hebrews 1:6). Jesus is identified as Yahweh (John 8:58; John 12:41 cf. Isaiah 6:3). Jesus declares Himself to be the "I AM" (John 8:28). Jesus has divine attributes (John 2:25; 4:16-18; 6:11-12). Jesus is the only begotten from the Father (John 3:16).

Humanity:

We believe that Jesus Christ is truly man. We believe that the Son of God became a man in every sense of the word (Acts 17:31; Hebrews 10:5; 1 Timothy 2:5). As a man, He can sympathize with us (Hebrews 4:15). Christ felt emotions like every man (John 11:35). In His humanity, Christ was tempted yet was without sin (James 1:13; Hebrews 4:15). Jesus is the second Adam who did what the first Adam did not do—live an absolutely righteous life and accomplish redemption for the elect (Romans 5:19).

Incarnation:

We believe that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20), was born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:23), and dwelt among us (John 1:14). We believe that since the time of His incarnation, Jesus is one person with two natures—His humanity and His deity. While taking on human flesh, He never set aside His deity (John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-7).

The Work of Christ:

We believe that in eternity past, the Son, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, created all things and continues to sustain all things and will one day make all things new. We believe the sinless Son of God laid down His life (John 10:15-18) as a substitute in order to redeem His people (Romans 5:19). We believe that His death on the cross was and is the only satisfaction for the righteous anger of the Father. Having been put to death in the flesh (1 Peter 3:18), He was buried in a tomb and rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 10:12). Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), making intercessions for us. We believe that

05/18/2022

Christ fulfills three offices; prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15), priest (Hebrews 6:20), and king (Revelation 19:16). As He left in the clouds, so He will return (Acts 1:11).

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Deity:

We believe that the Holy Spirit is truly God. Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit is a distinct person within the Godhead (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). We believe the Holy Spirit took an active part in the creation of the universe (Genesis 1:2), the inspiring of Scripture (2 Peter 1:21), the virgin birth (Luke 1:35), and the resurrection of the dead (Romans 8:11) including Christ (Romans 1:4).

The Work of the Holy Spirit:

We believe that the Holy Spirit worked with the individual writers to pen the very words of God (Hebrew 3:7; 9:8; 10:15-17). We believe that the Holy Spirit empowers men and women to accomplish the will of the Father (1 Samuel 16:13; Acts 13:2; Ephesians 1:3-14). We believe that the Holy Spirit has an active part in regeneration (John 3:5-8). We believe the Holy Spirit imparts truth to believers (John 14:17, 26) and convicts the world of sin (John 16:7-10). We believe that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells all believers since the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13; Romans 8:9). We believe that the Holy Spirit gives specific and various gifts to each believer enabling each believer to build up the local church (1 Corinthians 12:11). We believe that the Holy Spirit produces observable fruit in the life of Christians (Galatians 5:22-23).

The Doctrine of Man

Origin of Man:

We believe that God uniquely created man (Adam) and woman (Eve) in the image of God on the sixth day of creation (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7). Both Adam and Eve were originally created as sinless beings able to obey God in an unbroken relationship with their Creator (Genesis 1:26-27, 31; Genesis 2:16-17; Ecclesiastes 7:29).

05/18/2022

Purpose:

Mankind was created to glorify God (John 17:4) and enjoy Him forever (Psalm 16:11) by loving God with all his heart, soul, and mind; and by loving others as himself (Deuteronomy 6:4-5; 1 Samuel 12:24; Matthew 22:37-38).

Gender:

We believe that God has created two distinct biological genders – male and female (Genesis 1:27). God created marriage between one biological male and one biological female (Genesis 2:23-25). We believe that men and women are equal in value but unique in their roles (Ephesians 5:22-26).

The Doctrine of Sin

Definition of Sin:

We believe that man sins by falling short of the glory of God in every way (Romans 3:23), by knowingly failing to do good (James 4:17), by transgressing the clear commands of the law (1 John 3:4), and by violating one's conscience (Romans 14:23).

Origin of Sin:

Sin entered the human race when Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and eat the fruit (Genesis 3:6). Even though God allowed sin to enter the world, God is not the originator of evil. In fact, God cannot tempt anyone to sin (James 1:13).

Consequences of Sin:

The first sin in the Garden has had a permanent effect on both creation and on every person since Adam (Romans 5:12-21). Adam's sin brought both physical (Hebrews 9:27) and spiritual (Revelation 20:14-15) death into the world. Apart from the righteousness of God every person will receive the wrath of God (Romans 1:16-18).

The Doctrine of Salvation

Election:

We believe that God predestines some sinners to salvation before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4-11) and sets apart the rest for eternal damnation (Romans 9:22-23; 11:7-10). God's choosing of the elect was not based on any merit or future decision by man, but by God's love and grace alone (Ephesians 1:4-5; Romans 9:11).

Calling:

With a "general" call, God commands all men to repent and believe (Acts 17:30). With an "effectual" call the Father draws the elect to Christ (John 6:44;65). This drawing is effectual because all who are drawn will freely come (John 6:37). Without an effectual call, none can come to Christ nor desire to come to Christ.

Regeneration:

All people are born spiritually dead and in need of "new birth" (John 3:3; Ephesians 2:1-6). Regeneration is an act of God by which the elect are made alive spiritually (Ephesians 2:4-5); made a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17); given a new heart enabling the elect to walk in His statutes and obey His rules (Deuteronomy 30:20; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:26-27).

Conversion:

Conversion is the result of regeneration and occurs when a person repents of sin (Acts 3:19) and believes in the finished work of Christ alone (Acts 4:12; Acts 20:21). True repentance is a change of mind and will, marked by a desire for obedience (2 Corinthians 7:9-11; Romans 6:1-2, 8:4). Saving faith in Jesus Christ is given at conversion, compelling the elect to trust in the finished work of Christ – namely that Christ died for his sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Justification:

Justification is a legal declaration of righteousness. This declaration occurs because God through Jesus Christ at the cross has effectively dealt with the sins of the elect (Romans 5:1). At the moment of saving faith, God imputes Christ's righteousness to an unrighteous person (Romans 4:1-8, 8:33). Therefore, the wrath of God has been satisfied because of Christ's *active obedience* – namely that He has fulfilled the obligations of the

05/18/2022

Law on our behalf – and Christ’s *passive obedience* – namely His willing submission to the Father through His crucifixion (Romans 3:20-26, 5:12-21; Colossians 2:14; Galatians 3:13).

Sanctification:

Sanctification is best understood as having two parts: instantaneous (positional) and ongoing (progressive). Positional sanctification is to be set apart by God at salvation for His holy purpose (Psalm 40:2-3; Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 6:11). Progressive sanctification begins at regeneration and is the ongoing process of being transformed into the image of Jesus Christ by beholding the glory of the Lord, which results in personal holiness (Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 6:10-16; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 7:1; Romans 8:29, 12:2).

Preservation:

Preservation is the act of God wherein He causes all His saints to continue to trust in the finished work of Christ alone until the saints are received in glory (Psalm 23, 73:21-26; John 10:28; Romans 8:29-30; Philippians 2:12-13; Hebrews 7:25).

Glorification:

At the glorious second coming of Christ Jesus our King, all of His people, both past and present, will be transformed from perishable to imperishable, from mortal to immortal, from natural to spiritual, from weak to strong, from dishonorable to glorious forevermore (1 John 3:2; 1 Peter 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:42-54).

The Doctrine of the Church

The Nature of the Church:

We believe that the church is both local and universal. The universal church refers to all believers from the beginning of time (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22-23). The local church is a group of believers referred to as a body (Ephesians 1:22-23) and as the temple of God (Ephesians 2:21-22). The local church is the pillar and support of truth (1 Timothy 3:15). Christ is the head of this body (Ephesians 1:22), as well as the builder (Matthew 16:18), the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11), and the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20).

05/18/2022

Purpose of the Church:

The local church exists to make disciples for the glory of God. The local church accomplishes this task by continually being devoted to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and prayer (Acts 2:42).

Ordinances:

We believe that there are two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, that every local church should participate in. Baptism is a one-time act that identifies a believer with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:1-11). The Lord's Supper is a repeated act done to commemorate our Lord's death (1 Corinthians 11:24). The elements are symbols representing the body and blood of Christ, but do not actually change in substance (1 Corinthians 11:24-25).

Church Government:

We believe that Christ is the Head of the church and that He has placed men-- specifically elders-- to lead His flock. There are three clear terms referring to this office-- pastor, overseer, and elder (Acts 20:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4). The pastor must meet the qualifications laid out in scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). The local church should strive to have a plurality of elders in a local body (Acts 14:23; 20:17; James 5:14).

The second office in scripture is that of the deacon. A deacon should oversee the administrative affairs of the local body so that the elders can focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-4). Because of the responsibilities placed on a deacon, he and his family must meet certain objective qualifications (1 Timothy 3:10-13).

The Doctrine of Last Things

Individual Eschatology:

We believe that the final result of sin is physical and spiritual death and that all die (James 1:15). When a person dies physically, that person remains in a state of consciousness (Luke 16:23-31). The unbeliever is separated from God in a place of torment while he awaits the second death (Luke 16:23-31; Revelation 21:8), while the believer will be immediately ushered into the presence of God (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8). Spiritual death refers to separation from God (Ephesians 2:1; Romans 8:6). The unbeliever becomes eternally separated from God at the second death

05/18/2022

(Revelation 20:14-15; 21:8). The second death refers to a total torment of both soul and a risen body by a literal fire in a place called Hell or the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:14-15; 21:8).

Second Coming:

We believe in the visible return of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:7). When He returns, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:9-11).

Eternal State:

Believers during the eternal state will enjoy the new heaven and the new earth forever (Revelation 21-22). The former things (i.e. crying and pain) will be wiped away (Revelation 21:4), and believers will enjoy the New Jerusalem where they will be able to worship God (Revelation 21:2-3). During this time, all unbelievers since the beginning of the world will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment and then cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:11-15).