

Our Doctrine

Listed below are the doctrinal beliefs that unite us a church.

- **About God the Father:** God is the Creator and ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Thee three are co-equal and are one God.
Biblical references: Genes 1:1, 26-27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; II Cor. 13:14; I Peter 1:2
- **About Jesus Christ:** Jesus is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on the cross. He arose from the dead after three days demonstrating His power over sin and death. He ascended to heaven's glory, sits at the right hand of God the Father, and will return again someday to claim His faithful and true followers and take them to that same heaven.
Biblical references: Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22, 23; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:3-4; I Cor. 15:3-4; I Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 4:14-15
- **About the Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make people aware of their need for Jesus Christ and to convict the world of sin. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation and is a seal and a guarantee of the promises that God has made. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, spiritual gifts for the benefit of the body of Christ, guidance in doing what is right, and is our intercessor. As Christians we seek to live under his control daily.
Biblical References: John 14:16, 16:7-14; 17; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:26-27; I Corinthians 2:12; 3:16; II Corinthians 1:21; 3:16-17; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 5:18.
- **About the Bible:** We believe in "*Sola Scriptura*" – or **Scripture Only**. We believe the Bible is God's revelation to mankind about the story of redemption. It is the supreme, and final source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because the words of scripture are from God, they are a living source of guidance, teaching, training, and correcting for both Christians and non-Christians. Because the Bible is God inspired, it is the truth without any mixture or error.
Biblical References: Psalm 119; Proverbs 30:5-6; Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; I Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 3:15-16; 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:12
- **About Man:** Mankind (male and female) were created by God and in His image and meant to live in relationship with their creator. We believe that all people are sinful by nature and by choice and are therefore spiritually separated from God and under condemnation. We believe that death seals the eternal destiny of each person. The saved will be assigned eternal life; the unsaved will suffer eternal separation from God.
Biblical References: Genesis 1-3; Romans 3:9-26; Romans 5:6-8; Hebrews 9:27-28
- **About Baptism:** Commanded and demonstrated by Christ, his apostles, and the early church, we believe that baptism is the first act of obedience for a follower of Christ. This sacred act allows each individual to touch the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ in a physical manner through the water. Because of this connection, baptism is spiritual symbol of our own spiritual death, burial, and resurrection. Because of this deep symbolism, and the examples we find in scripture, baptism at Epic is done by total immersion under water. This baptism also symbolizes the washing away of our sin and the pledge we make to God as His followers. Because baptism is identified with our salvation, we

baptize only those adults, students, and children who have made individual and independent decisions to place their trust in Christ for salvation.

Biblical References: Mark 1:9; Matthew 3:15; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:1-6; Colossians 2:12; John 3:3-5; Mark 16:15-16; I Peter; Ephesians 4:1-5; I Peter 3:18-22

- **About the Church:** We believe that the Church is the body and bride of Christ, was founded on the day of Pentecost, and consists of all Christians everywhere throughout the globe who are called to be Christ's witnesses.

Biblical References: Acts 2; Ephesians 3:10-11

- **About Spiritual Gifts:**

We believe that our God is alive and that He specifically chooses to empower His people, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish His purposes in the world. Scripture clearly teaches us that the Spirit of God empowers all of the believers for the benefit of the family of God. We believe that God can work in all of the specific gifts listed in scripture, but the manifestation and timing of those gifts is completely up to the Spirit.

Biblical References: Romans 12; I Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4

***Special note about Spiritual Gifts:** Few areas of theology within the church have caused more division than the subject of spiritual gifts. We believe that division and disunity in this issue can lead to major problems in the church, which would be sinful for us as a body. Some people believe that **all** of the spiritual gifts spoken about in scripture (Romans 12; I Cor. 12-14; Ephesians 4) are in use today. Many believe that **some** of the gifts are for today, while still others believe that **none** of the gifts are for today. You can see the potential for problems in the church!*

We believe that genuine Christ followers can hold differing views on the Spiritual gifts. The non-negotiable that we work from is that this subject does not constitute a salvation issue.

At Epic we realize that there will be differing views and beliefs on this subject. However, in our desire to be a unified family working towards the cause of Christ in the world we have chosen not to allow this to be a divisive issue in our body. We do not use divisive language such as "spirit-filled," or "full-gospel," and we don't allow any behavior that would cause disunity in the body and hurt the mission of the church. Scripture clearly outlines that certain gifts, such as prophecy and speaking in tongues (other languages), should be done in a specific way for the benefit of the body and for people who are not yet believers in Christ. It is our expectation that if God so chooses to move in these specific ways at Epic that He would do so in a manner that is in line with the Bible.

- **About the Priesthood of all believers:** We believe that God has given every Christian specific gifts, talents, skills, passions, and experiences so that they may be used in His story. When followers of Christ allow themselves to be used by God, the body of Christ grows stronger and more mature. Therefore, members at Epic are encouraged to play the part that God has prepared them to play. As everyone contributes their skills, talents, passions, and gifts, the body grows more mature and the church becomes a powerful force of love and grace in the community. We recognize that this process of discovering and using our gifts must be intentional. Therefore, the leadership of Epic is committed to equipping every member of the body for the work that God has prepared for them.

Biblical references: Ephesians 4; I Peter 2:9

- **About Communion:** Communion at Epic is one of the central elements of each week's service. It is a beautiful time where the Epic family comes together to remember and celebrate the death of Jesus

on the cross. That death was the sacrifice that took away our sin. We realize that people from many different religious backgrounds attend Epic and called Communion by different names such as “The Eucharist,” “Common Table,” “The Lord’s Supper,” “The Mass,” and “The Breaking of Bread.” No matter the name or the background, we want anyone who is a believer in Christ to participate in this time with the Epic family.

Biblical references: Luke 22:19-20; I Corinthians 11:23-26

I Corinthians 11:27-28 *“Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.”*

- **About the end times (This is a non-salvation issue):** As with the issue of spiritual gifts, we recognize that there are many views on the subject of end times. Our heart is to not allow this non-essential issue to become a divisive force in our church. We believe that at an unknown time, known only to God the father, there will be a literal return of Christ and a final judgment of mankind before Christ.

Biblical References: Matthew 24; Revelation

- **About eternity:** People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation.

Biblical references: John 3:16; 14:17; Romans 6:23; 8:17-18; I Corinthians 2:7-9; Revelation 20:15

- **About stewardship:** Throughout scripture we are reminded that everything we see and have belongs to God and comes from God. As Christians we are caretakers of all of the resources that God has given to us. These resources include our money, our time, our skills and passions, our homes, and much more. We believe that God has given us a great privilege, as well as a great responsibility, when it comes to managing His possessions. At Epic we believe that our financial giving should be done consistently, intentionally as an act of worship, and proportionately to our income. We teach “tithing” of the giving of 10% of our income as a base for our giving. Any special offerings or gifts are in addition to our tithes.

Biblical References: Genesis 14; Numbers 18 (The public and the priests); Psalm 24:1; 50:9-12; Acts 2:42-47; II Corinthians 8:1-15