

# What We *believe*

## *The Scriptures:*

We believe in the verbal inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. The Bible is the ultimate and final authority of faith and practice for the believer. Although inspiration applies to the original documents, God's Word has been faithfully preserved to the present day. (II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:19-21; Psalm 119:89)

### **The Trinity:**

We believe that there is only one living and true God, infinite in every excellence; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are one in substance and equal in every divine perfection.

We believe in the absolute deity of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is divine as no other man can be and existing from all eternity co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ never ceased to be God for one instant and His humiliation did not consist in laying aside His deity. As a man, Christ was miraculously begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with the Father and the Son, and of the same substance and nature. He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment, bearing witness to the truth and is the agent of the new birth. The Holy Spirit seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, and helps the believer and indwells every true child of God. (Ex. 20:2-3; I Cor. 8:6; Rev. 4:11; John 1:1-2; I John 5:20; Matt. 1:20; John 14:26; II Cor. 13:14; Eph. 1:13-14; Genesis 1:1-2).

### **The Devil or Satan:**

We believe in the distinct personality of Satan, author of all powers of darkness and sin, who is destined to the judgment of eternal justice in the lake of fire. The Devil and his demons actively oppose the plan of God and the people of God. The Christian can live victoriously against this opposition since the Bible declares that "greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." Matthew 4:1-4; II Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:10)

### **The Creation:**

We believe that God created the heavens and the earth by direct act and not through the process of evolution. God created the world and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six literal, 24-hour days. (Gen. 1; Col. 1: 16-17; John 1:3)

### **The Fall of Man:**

We believe that Adam was created in innocence but by voluntary transgression fell into sin, thus plunging the whole race into condemnation and death. All mankind is born into sin and this fact is confirmed when each individual – through their own personal choice – sins in violation of the law of God and so are without excuse before God. (Genesis 3; Romans 5:10-19; Romans 1:18-32).

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## *The Atonement:*

We believe that fallen men can never, through their own efforts, satisfy the just demands of a holy God. Such satisfaction – or atonement – was accomplished by Jesus Christ, totally and completely for all who believe. (Heb. 10:4-14; Acts 16:30-30-3).

## **Salvation**

We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the result of God's grace. The Spirit of God – in direct connection with the Word of God – bestows this saving faith which is evidenced by continued repentance and faith. Since salvation is secured by the blood of Christ, the believer's eternal security is based solely upon the merits of Christ. (Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 8:35-39; Phil. 1:6)

## **The Church:**

We believe that the Church in the larger sense is the Body and Bride of Christ – the organism to which He gives spiritual life and through which He manifests His power and grace. The Church cannot be defined in merely human terms but is the great company of persons whom Christ has saved and in whom He dwells. The Scriptures distinguish between the invisible or universal church and the individual or local church. The local church is that group of regenerate persons who, in any given community, unite themselves voluntarily together in accordance with God's Word. The local church is a congregation of baptized believers; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; exercising the gifts, rights and privileges afforded them by His Word. The officers of the local church are elders/pastors and deacons. The local church is autonomous, and as such, has the right to self-government. (Matt. 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:1-3; 41-47; 15:14; Rom. 16:26; I Cor. 12:12-28; Eph. 1:22-23).

## **The Ordinances of the Local Church:**

We believe that there are two ordinances for the local church: baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water and is properly called believer's baptism, since only believers qualify as proper candidates for this ordinance. Baptism is a prerequisite to church membership. The Lord's supper is the commemoration of our Lord's death until He returns. Participation in this ordinance should be contingent upon a believer's baptism and ought always to be preceded by careful self-examination. (I Cor. 11:23-32; Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:3-5).

## **Ultimate Destiny of the Righteous and the Wicked:**

We believe in the everlasting conscious blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost. (Rom. 1; Malachi 3:18; Rom. 6:17-23; Matt. 25:34-46).

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## *The Return of Christ*

We believe in the visible, personal, and premillennial return of Jesus Christ. Believers will be removed from this earth prior to God's final judgment and wrath destined for those who have rejected Christ. (I Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 25:31-46; & Rev. 19:11-21).

### **Resurrection:**

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection of Christ guarantees that the bodies of believers who have died will be raised at the coming of Christ for His Church. Simultaneously, those believers who are alive will be changed and will meet the Lord in the air. The bodies of unbelievers who have died will be raised to receive their sentence at the Great White Throne Judgment. (John 5:21-39; I Thess. 4:16; Rev. 7:9-17; 20:11-15).

### **Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment and for the interests and good order of human society. Governmental leaders ought to be prayed for, honored, and obeyed. The only exception to such obedience is when the will of the government clearly violates the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures. (Rom. 13:1; II Samuel 23:3; Exod. 18:21-22; Acts 5:29, 23:5).