

WHAT WE BELIEVE

About the Bible

We believe the Bible is God's written message to humanity, which has been sovereignly preserved through the centuries. The human authors were under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit so that what was written was the very Word of God. Because it is inspired by God, it is true and trustworthy without any mixture of error, and it has the power to transform lives. Therefore, it is the supreme source of authority for Christian belief and behavior. The scriptures provide help and hope to mankind.

About the Father

We believe there is only one God. God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He is all-knowing, all-powerful, all-present and all-good. He has eternally existed in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one.

About Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, is co-equal with God and has always existed. Because of His love for the world and obedience to the Father, He chose to lay aside His glory and come to earth in the form of a man. He was both wholly God and wholly man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. Jesus lived a sinless life, taught with authority, and performed many miracles. He offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice by acting as a substitute for humanity and dying on the cross in their place and for their sins. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death and to secure our salvation. He ascended to heaven, was given all authority, and will return again someday to manifest His eternal reign.

About the Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is co-equal with God and has always existed. His purpose is to be a "Counselor" who assists us. He is present in the world to make people aware of their sin and need for Jesus Christ. To those who believe in Jesus, the Spirit brings salvation and new life. He then dwells in the life of every Christian from the moment of salvation, providing such things as assurance, power for service, understanding of spiritual truth, resistance to sin, guidance in following God, and development in Christ-likeness. He gives every believer at least one spiritual gift at the point of conversion for the purpose of serving others. The gifts are to be exercised in an orderly manner to build up and unify the church. As Christians we seek to live under the daily leadership of the Holy Spirit.

About Human Beings

We believe men and women are made in the image of God. They have a spiritual dimension allowing them to commune with God and a moral dimension allowing them to differentiate right from wrong. People are the supreme object of God's creation. The human race has been marred by disobedience toward God. The scriptures call this disobedience "sin." Sin separates people from God and causes a multitude of problems, both individually and corporately. The ultimate result of sin is spiritual death and eternal separation from God.

About Salvation

We believe that the problem of sin has no human remedy. Jesus Christ died on the cross for the sins of all humanity. Jesus Christ is the only way people can come to God to receive salvation. Salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must accept it. We can never please God with our own efforts or make up for our sin by self-improvement or any other good work. Both repentance (turning from sin) and faith (turning to God) are inseparable aspects of the single event of conversion. When we choose to repent of our sins and place our faith in Jesus Christ, we are converted, receiving salvation and a new life. Salvation consists of God establishing our relationship with Him (justification), beginning His work of making us more like Christ (sanctification), and accomplishing His goal of making us like Christ when we die (glorification). Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of Christians. Consequently, nothing a believer can do can cause him or her to lose the gift of salvation.

About the Church

We believe the head of the church is Jesus Christ. The church is a local and unified group of baptized believers who share a common faith in Jesus Christ, commitment to the scriptures, and follow Christ's commission to make disciples. The New Testament also speaks of the church as the body of Christ, which includes all of the redeemed of all ages. Church members are to model the life of Christ and as such are to live holy lives. Church members also care for one another, and are to support the vision and ministry of the church with their time, talents and treasures. The leaders of the church are to model the servant leadership of Jesus. The church is an autonomous body, operating under the headship of Jesus Christ.

About Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

About Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Marriage is the unity of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord.

About Last Things

We believe God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to an appropriate end. Though some of the details of the events encompassing this time period are highly debated, there are many certainties. Jesus Christ will return to manifest the kingdom of God. At this time, the dead will be raised and all humanity will be judged by God. Those people who have accepted salvation through Christ will be received into heaven. Those people who have rejected salvation through Christ will be consigned to hell. Both heaven and hell are real places of eternal existence.