

All doctrine is "Gospel Doctrine" because Jesus is the starting point, the end point, and fixed point of all theology! When we trace the gospel through the story-line of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, that's called **Biblical Theology**. When we summarize an orderly and comprehensive manner of what the whole Bible says about the core doctrines that flow out of the gospel that's called **Systematic Theology**. The single most important thing about a church is what it believes. This is what WBC believes.

Doctrinal Statement (Article III of the Constitution of WBC)

I. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all its parts, in the sense that the Bible is wholly without error in all matters to which it speaks in the original manuscripts. We further believe that these writings have been preserved by divine providence through the ages so that the Scriptures as we have them are completely trustworthy and authoritative in every area to which they speak (II Peter 1:19-21; II Tim. 3:15-17; I Thess. 2:13).

II. The Triunity of the Godhead

DEFINITION: We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), who created all things, co-equal in power and glory, co-eternal in being and co-identical in nature (Gen. 1:26; Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:8).

A. The Father

We believe that God the Father is the giver of all gifts, including His Son, Jesus Christ, whom He sent into the world to be our redeemer (James 1:17; Gal. 4:4-5; John 20:21).

B. The Son

We believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20, 23), that He lived a sinless life (John 8:29; I Peter 2:22), that He died a voluntary and vicarious death on the cross (John 10:18; I Cor. 15:3; Col. 1:14), that He arose from the dead in a physical body (Luke 24:39-43), that He ascended into Heaven where He is at the right hand of the Father and intercedes for us (Romans 8:34), and that He will return to this world in the same manner in which He went into Heaven (Acts 1:10-11).

C. The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit, like the Father and the Son, has well defined ministries. These ministries include: the restraining of evil in the world, to the measure of divine will; the convicting of the world concerning sin, righteousness,

and judgment; the regeneration, indwelling and sealing of all who believe. We further believe that it is by His enabling that believers are able to carry out Scriptural commands (John 16:7-11; Romans 8:19; I Cor. 12:13; Ephesians 4:30; I John 2:20-27). We believe the Holy Spirit equips every believer for ministry in the Body of Christ by bestowing gifts; however, some of the gifts, such as the sign gifts, are no longer normative. (Romans 12:1-8).

III. **The Creation and Fall of Man**

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature and became alienated from God, and that man is totally depraved and of himself utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12).

IV. **Salvation**

The Fact of Sin: We believe that all men are sinners by nature, by practice and by the express declaration of God (Jer. 17:9; Ps. 51:5; Mark 7:21-23; Romans 3:23; Gal. 3:22).

The Penalty of Sin: We believe that the result of rejecting God's plan of salvation is eternal death —everlasting separation from the love and goodness of God in a place of conscious punishment which is referred to in Scripture as Hell, or the Lake of Fire (Romans 6:23; Matt. 25:41, 46; Rev. 20:15; 2 Thess. 1:8-9).

Good Works: We believe that salvation is not by good works, but that we may do good works (Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 3:5).

The Condition of Salvation: We accept the teaching that salvation is a work of God for man and not a work of man for God. We believe that a man is justified on the basis of his faith in Christ apart from works. We understand the Bible to teach that the only thing a lost man can or must do to be saved is believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We also believe the Bible to teach that repentance is a part of believing and not a separate act. We accept the simple meaning of repentance to be a change of mind. This change of mind involves the person and work of Christ. Concerning His person, that He is God in the flesh and concerning His work that He did for us, through His death, what we could not do for ourselves. (Acts 16:31; Romans 3:21-26; Romans 4:5; John 3:16-18; Romans 5:1).

Eternal Life: We believe that eternal life is a free gift which one receives when he believes that God's Son died for his sins (John 3:16; 1 John 5:11-13).

Eternal Security: We believe that a true child of God is saved once for all from the penalty of sin (Eph.4:30; John 10:27-29; Phil.1:6; 1 John 5:13; 2 Tim.1:12; 1 Peter 1:3-5).

V. **The Church**

A. **The Universal Church**

We believe that all who have placed their faith in Christ are united together immediately by the Holy Spirit in one spiritual body, the church, of which Christ is the head. (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:23; att. 16:18; Acts 1:5; Acts 11:15-16).

B. **The Local Church**

Its Purpose:

We believe that local churches have been instituted by our Lord to reach the lost through the preaching of the Gospel, both at home and abroad (Acts 1:8); to equip believers for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:12); to conduct the observance of the New Testament ordinances (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor.11:23-29); to provide for the enjoyment of Christian fellowship (Acts 2:42); to promote the experience of good works (Heb. 10:24).

Its Ordinances:

We believe that the two ordinances have been committed to the local church—baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in the water into the name of the triune God. Likewise, the Lord’s Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His atoning death. These two ordinances are to be observed until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:41; 10:47-48; 1 Cor. 11:23-29).