

Statement of Beliefs

Bible

We believe the Bible (both Old and New Testaments) is God's Word to us. Although written through human authors, the Holy Spirit supernaturally guided its writing. The Bible is inspired by God, which literally means that the Scripture is God-breathed. It is free of error in its original writings and is our final authority in all areas of life.

SCRIPTURE: *Psalm 119:160, Matthew 4:4, 2 Timothy 3:16, John 5:39*

God

We believe in the one true God. God has eternally existed in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. They are three, and yet one; distinct, and yet the same. This mysterious union of co-equal persons is what we call the Trinity.

Father: He is the creator and ruler of everything. Before the world was created, the Father planned to send his Son, Jesus, to redeem mankind. God is all-knowing, so nothing that happens surprises him; in fact, everything in human history works together to accomplish his good plan for the world.

Son: Jesus is God the Son. He is the Messiah (or, Christ) that was promised to Israel. Because Jesus is God, he is eternal. He came to earth, was supernaturally conceived through the Holy Spirit, and born through Mary, who was a virgin. He lived a sinless life but was crucified according to God's plan of redemption. Jesus defeated death (the greatest enemy) by his bodily resurrection. Hundreds of people were eyewitnesses and saw Jesus alive. After this, he ascended into Heaven, where he exists in a glorified body. Jesus now acts as our advocate and intercedes for us with God the Father.

Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He is not just a force or a power, but the actual Spirit of God. He convicts the world of sin, leads us to right-living, and warns of impending judgment. He is a deposit in the life of every believer, guaranteeing our future inheritance – eternal life. The Spirit empowers the preaching, teaching, and understanding of the Gospel. We receive gifts from the Spirit that enable us to build up the body of believers and work towards the mission of God in our world.

SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 3:16-18, 28:19-20, 1 Corinthians 8:6, 2 Corinthians 3:14, Hebrews 9:14*

People

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God as male and female. The first man and woman (Adam and Eve) sinned, and as a result, they would experience physical death and spiritual death – which is separation from God. Since each human being is their descendant, we are all born with a sinful nature. Our natural inclination is to sin (for example, no one had to teach us how to lie), and we sin with our thoughts, our words, and our actions. This sin has severed our relationship with God, and unless it is dealt with, will result in eternal death and separation from him.

SCRIPTURE: *Genesis 1:26-28, 1 Corinthians 15:22, 1 Corinthians 2:14, Romans 5:12, 14, 17, Romans 6:23*

Salvation

We believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world. The death and wrath that Jesus experienced is what we rightly deserve because of sin, but he is our substitute. Everyone who puts their faith completely and totally in Jesus are declared, “Not Guilty,” by God because of Jesus’ sacrifice. Everyone who receives Jesus by faith experiences new life. The Bible refers to this as “a second birth” or as being “born again.” For all who do this, they become God’s children and receive eternal life.

SCRIPTURE: *John 1:12, John 3:3-8, John 10:28, Romans 8:31-39, Galatians 2:15-16, Ephesians 2:8-9, Philippians 1:6, 1 Peter 1:3-5, 1 John 2:1-2, 1 John 4:9-10*

Last Things

We believe in the existence of a personal devil. He has several titles and names, all describing how wicked and rebellious he is: the deceiver, the accuser (the literal meaning of Satan), a liar from the beginning, and the Enemy of our souls. He seeks to destroy the lives and souls of people, just as he did in the beginning with Adam and Eve. God permits the Enemy to have a certain amount of power and influence in the world, but it is limited. One day, God will judge Satan and all his demons, along with everyone who rejects Jesus. They will suffer because God will not shrug off their unrepentant wickedness. Their punishment is too terrible for words, but the Bible says they will eternally be punished in a lake of fire.

We believe that the blessed hope of believers is the imminent return and appearance of Jesus. We long to see him, because he is our Savior. After this, he will set up a Kingdom that will never be destroyed or overturned.

We believe in the future, bodily resurrection of all humanity. For those who belong to Jesus, they will live with God forever when Heaven is joined with a redeemed earth. For those who reject Jesus, they will be separated from God in Hell forever. In this final act of mercy, God gives them what they’ve always wanted: to be independent of him.

SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 24:27-31, Matthew 25:31, John 8:44, 1 John 3:8, 1 Thessalonians 3:13, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16, 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10, Revelation 19:11-22:21*

The Church

We believe in the Church, which is made up of all believers in Jesus Christ throughout the world. The Bible refers to the Church as the Body and the Bride of Christ. We belong to him. Our mission is God's mission: to preach the Gospel of Jesus in the whole world, and announce that people can be reconciled to God.

We believe in the local church, which is one expression of the larger Body of believers. Those who belong to the local church have a responsibility to make an investment there with their time, skills, resources, and money.

We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion) are to be a regular and integral part of the local church. We baptize with immersion because it symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. We celebrate the Lord's Supper to remember Christ's sacrifice for us. The bread and the cup are the symbols of the new covenant, representing Jesus' body and blood.

SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 26:26-30, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Acts 20:28, Romans 6:3-4, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 1 Corinthians 12, Colossians 1:18, Colossians 2:12, Ephesians 4:11-13, Ephesians 5:22-33, 1 Timothy 3:15, 1 Peter 3:21-22*

Reflect

How does grounding these beliefs in Scripture deepen your understanding of them?

Which belief resonated with you most, and why?

How can these truths shape the way you live out your faith daily?