

Concerning the Scriptures

We affirm that the sixty-six books of the Bible are the inspired (God-breathed) and infallible (without error) written Word of God given by the Spirit and are the complete and final verbal revelation of God for this age. (Ps. 19:1-6; Jn. 1:1-5, 14, 18; 20:30, 31; Acts 14:17; Rom. 1:19-20; 2:14-15; 1 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 1:1-2; 4:12)

These books were written by a process of dual authorship in which the Spirit so leads the human authors that, through their individual personalities and styles, they composed and recorded God's Word without error whole or part. These books, constituting the written Word of God, convey objective truth and are the believer's only infallible rule for faith and practice. (Ps. 119:160; Jn. 10:35; 17:17; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)

There is but one true interpretation of Scripture, although there may be several applications. A careful literary process applies the grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The proper understanding of the meaning of each passage is governed by the author's intent, canonical context, and consideration of the various literary genres (e.g. narrative, poetry, parable). (Jn. 7:17; 16:12-13; 1 Cor. 2:14, 15; 1 Jn. 2:20)

Concerning God

The Triune God - We believe there is but one living and true God who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, loyal love and truth. He is absolutely separate from and above the world as its creator, yet everywhere present in the world as the upholder of all things. We further believe that God is one in essence, but eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and each worthy of precisely the same worship, confidence, and obedience. (Gen. 1:26; Deut. 6:4; Pss. 100:5; 139:8; Isa. 45:5-7; Matt. 28:19; Mk. 10:18; Jn. 4:24; Acts 17:24-29; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:6)

God the Father

The first person of the trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. As the absolute and highest ruler in the universe He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. He created the universe apart from pre-existing materials and without means. He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass, and continually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and events.

He accomplishes this without being in any way the author or approver of sin or abridging the accountability of morally intelligent creatures. He has graciously chosen from all eternity those whom He would have as his own; He saves from sin all who come to him through Jesus Christ; and He relates Himself to his own as their father. (Ps. 145:8, 9; 1 Chr. 29:11; Ps. 103:19; Jn. 1:18; Rom. 11:33; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 1:3-6; Heb. 4:13; 1 Pet. 1:17)

God the Son

Jesus Christ, the second person of the trinity, is the eternal Son of God and the virgin-born Son of Man incarnated as the God-Man to reveal God, redeem human beings, and as Messiah rule over God's kingdom. (Ps. 2:7-9; Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Jn. 1:1, 3, 18, 29; 10:36; 1 Jn. 1:3)

In the incarnation, He surrendered nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind, voluntarily limiting the manifestation of the divine attributes forming this essence. Although He was fully human, since He was also fully God, He was without sin as to nature, resisting all temptation to sin. (Jn. 1:14, 29; 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 2:9; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:21-24)

By His sinless life, miraculous ministry, and substitutionary death, He satisfied divine justice concerning sin. (Matt. 11:2-6; 12:28; Rom. 3:24-26; 2 Cor. 5:19; Heb. 1-3; 10:5-10; 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10)

In the resurrection of Christ from the grave, the Father confirmed both the deity of the Son and His acceptance of the atoning work on the cross, raising Him bodily as a guarantee of the future resurrection to life of all believers. (Matt. 28:6; Jn. 14:19; Acts 2:30, 31; Rom. 1:4; 4:25; Rom. 6:5-10; 1 Cor. 15:20)

After his ascension to the Father's right hand, the Father through Christ sent the Spirit at Pentecost as a companion like to Himself to assume the care and keeping of His own. Throughout this age He is seated at the Father's side performing the intercessory aspect of His high priestly work for believers. (Jn. 15:26; Acts 2:33; Heb. 7:25; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22)

Christ is the only mediator between God and humanity, the head of His body, the church, the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David, and the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as their Savior from sin. (Isa. 53:10; Lk. 1:31-33; Jn. 5:27-29; Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25; Rev. 20:11-15)

God the Holy Spirit

It is the work of the Spirit, the third person of the trinity, to execute the divine will with relation to humanity. We affirm this sovereign activity in creation, the incarnation, the written revelation, and the work of salvation. (Gen. 1:2; Matt. 1:18; Jn. 3:5-7; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21)

His work in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father, as promised by Christ, to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ, which is the church. The broad scope of this special divine activity includes convicting the world, glorifying the Lord Jesus, and transforming believers into the likeness of Christ. (Jn. 14:16, 17; 15:26; 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; 1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 2:22)

This work in believers is regeneration, baptism into the body of Christ, indwelling, sanctifying, instructing, empowering for service, and preserving to the day of Christ. He alone administers spiritual gifts to the church to glorify Christ. He does not glorify Himself or the gifts by ostentatious displays but executes his work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith. (Jn. 3:5-7; 16:14, 15; Rom. 8:2; 1 Cor. 6:19; 12:4-13; Eph. 1:13, 14; 2 Thess. 2:13)

Concerning Humanity

We believe God created man and woman without natural processes in His image, free from sin. They were created with a rational nature, great intelligence, and moral responsibility to God. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 1 Thess. 5:23; Jas. 3:9)

They were created with the divine intention that they should glorify God, enjoy his fellowship, and fulfill his will and purposes on the earth. (Gen. 1:26-30; Isa. 43:7; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11)

Adam and Eve subsequently fell into sin by a voluntary act of personal disobedience to the revealed will of God. (Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1-19; 1 Tim. 2:13, 14)

The human race became subject to the wrath of God, inherently corrupt, and incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. All are hopelessly lost apart from the salvation, which is in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Jn. 3:36; Rom. 3:23, 6:23; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Jn. 1:8)

The fall of the race was an historical and non-repeatable act. Its effects are transmitted to all people of all ages, Jesus Christ excepted. All thus are sinners by nature, deed and divine pronouncement. (Ps. 14:1-3; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:23; 5:12-19; James 2:10)

Concerning Salvation

We believe salvation consists in the satisfaction of divine justice, the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God, the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the gift of eternal life, every spiritual resource needed for life and godliness, and the guarantee that those thus saved shall never perish. (Jon. 2:9; Isa. 53:6, 10; Jn. 10:27-29; Rom. 3:24; 5:8, 9; 8:38, 39; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19, 21; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 1:7; 2 Pet. 1:3; 1 Jn. 4:10)

Salvation is based upon the elective grace of God, was purchased by Christ on the cross, and is received by grace through faith. It is received apart from any human virtue or work, through the instrumentality of the Word of God as applied by the Holy Spirit. The gospel message is authenticated through the faithful proclamation of and faith in the finished work of Christ. (Jn. 1:12; 3:16; Acts 16:31; Rom. 8:29, 30; 9:14-24; 10:8-13; Eph. 1:4, 5; 2:8-10; 2 Thess. 2:13, 14; Heb. 11:6)

Salvation results in righteous living and good works as its proper evidence and fruit. It will be experienced as believers submit to the control of the Holy Spirit in their lives in obedience to the Word of God. This is accomplished by conformity of believers to the image of Christ, culminating in their glorification at Christ's coming. (Jn. 5:24; 10:28; Rom. 8:35-39; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 2:10; 5:17-21; Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:4-10; 1 Jn. 3:2-3)

Concerning the Church

We believe all who have placed their faith in Christ are immediately united by the Holy Spirit into one spiritual body, the church, of which Christ is the head. The church began on the day of Pentecost and will be completed at the coming of Christ. In addition to the spiritual union and communion, which extends to the entire body of Christ, the members of this spiritual body are directed to identify themselves with local assemblies. (Matt. 16:18; Acts 1:4, 5; 11:15; 2:46-47; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:19-22; 3:4-6; 5:25-27; Col. 1:18; Heb. 10:25)

Individual members of this body and local assemblies are priests before God having the privilege and responsibility of offering prayer and

spiritual sacrifices to Him. Because God alone is Lord of the conscience, He has left it free from human doctrines or commandments which are in any way contrary to his Word. For this reason, the distinctions between the institutions of the church and the state should be maintained. Since civil magistrates are ordained of God, subjection in all lawful things commanded by them should be yielded by the believer. (Matt. 22:15-22; Rom. 12:4-21; 1 Pet. 2:5-9; Rev. 1:6; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17)

These local assemblies have authority for administering the order, discipline, and worship which Christ the sovereign head has appointed. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are pastors (elders/bishops/overseers) and deacons. (Matt. 18:15-18; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Cor. 14:40; Eph. 4:11, 12; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-5)

The mission of the church is to glorify God by worshiping corporately, building itself up in the faith by instruction of the Word, fellowshiping and observing the ordinances, communicating the gospel to the entire world, and making disciples from all the nations. (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:41-42; Rom. 15:6, 9; Eph. 1:6, 12, 14; 3:10; 4:11-16; Heb. 10:25; 1 Pet. 2:9-10)

To fulfill its God-ordained mission of worship, edification, and evangelism, the church has been given spiritual gifts. One class of gifts is gifted believers, given for the equipping of the saints for the work of this ministry. The other class is spiritual abilities.

Each member of the body of Christ receives at least one such gift, which is sovereignly given by the Lord through the Spirit. When the purpose of any gift is fulfilled, it ceases. Members must develop and employ their spiritual gifts according to the biblical guidelines for their use so that the church may accomplish its task. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4:7-13; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; Heb. 2:3-4; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

Two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. This ordinance, being a command of Christ, follows confession of faith and precedes membership in the local assembly. The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ to commemorate 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)