

THE ESSENTIALS WE BELIEVE

THE BIBLE

We believe the exclusive basis for our faith is the Bible, made up of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament. All Scripture originated with God and was written through men moved by the Holy Spirit to record the exact words that God desired. As a result, they are inerrant in the original manuscripts. They reflect the background, culture, and style of the author while speaking with the authority of God. The Bible is the only perfect and reliable guide for a life that pleases God. No other writings are similarly inspired by God.

(Matt. 4:4, 2 Tim. 3:6-17, 2 Pet. 1:20-21, Ps. 119)

GOD

We believe that there is one holy, true and eternal God who exists in the persons of the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit in the Holy Trinity. While existing as three distinct persons, they all possess the same divine nature and attributes and thus make up the God-head. All are worthy of the same worship and obedience. In the beginning, God created out of nothing the world and all things. His sovereign power sustains all creation and He operates the world so as to fulfill His redemptive purposes and to advance His kingdom program on earth.

(Deut. 6:4, John 1:1, John 1:14, John 14:26, Gen. 1-2, Matt. 6:9-13)

JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father and came to earth to reveal to mankind the Father and His will. He was born by the miracle of the virgin conception through Mary as predicted by the prophets. He lived a sinless and perfect life, being the Son of God, and thus is the only person qualified to mediate between God and man. He willingly laid down His life on the cross of Calvary to accept the punishment of sin as man's substitute. He was "very God" qualifying Him to be a perfect substitute to satisfy the holy requirements of God. He was "very man" qualifying Him to redeem people who would meet the requirements of the gospel. He died and rose again on the third day in the same body in which He died and will physically return to earth someday to rule and reign.

(John 8:58, 12:44-46, Luke 1:26-38, 1 Pet. 2:22, 2 Cor. 5:21, John 1:1, 1 Tim. 2:5, John 20:1-29, Rev. 19:11-20:15)

MAN

We believe that man was originally created innocent and in the image and likeness of God, to be like Him in character. At the beginning of human history Adam and Eve defied God in the Garden of Eden. As a result, mankind fell to a place of spiritual separation from Him. Mankind became subject to the power of sin and Satan. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us have been corrupted by sin. Sin separates us from God and causes many problems in life.

(Genesis 1:27, Psalm 8:3-6, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 3:23, Isaiah 59:1-2)

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SALVATION

We believe the central purpose of God's revelation is to call all people to fellowship with Himself. While man was originally created to have fellowship with God, his act of disobedience at the Fall alienated him from God. Mankind was left unable to please God on his own. The salvation of any individual is, then, wholly a work of God's free grace, not the result, in whole or in part, of human works or goodness. All who place their repentant faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation will have eternal life in heaven with God. Those who reject Jesus Christ will spend eternity apart from God. Christ's death was for all men but is applied only to those who believe. Because salvation is the gracious gift of God, every true believer will be eternally secure in that salvation since God gives assurance in His Word that He will always continue the work until the day of completion.

(Luke 19:10, 1 John 1:1-4, 2:2, Gen. 3:8-24, Eph. 2:8-9, Tit. 3:5-7, John 1:12, 3:16, Matt. 25-31-46, 1 Tim. 4:10, Phil. 1:6, Rom. 8:29-39)

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

We believe the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, was sent by the Father and the Son to the world to carry out the work of salvation in the believer's life. He enlightens the mind of sinners, awakens in them a need for a Savior and regenerates them. He indwells and baptizes every believer at the moment of salvation, and is the agent whereby man can live a life that pleases God. While every Christian is baptized by the Holy Spirit, holy and godly living is accomplished by yielding to and being filled with the Holy Spirit, as a regular way of life. He uniquely bestows on each believer spiritual gifts to build up the body of believers. He guides believers in the understanding and application of Scripture to the issues of life. The object of the Holy Spirit's work in a believer's life is always to produce holy obedience to God, so that He will be glorified in all the earth. *(John 14:15-21, John 15:26-16:16, Eph. 1:13-14, 1 Cor. 12:13, Eph. 4:30, Eph. 5:18, 1 Cor. 12:4-7)* No individual, spiritual gift should be elevated as the single mark of spirituality. Each gift must be used in a way which edifies others in love. The apostle Paul calls this the "more excellent way".

(1 Cor. 12:29-14:40)

THE CHURCH

We believe that the church began on the day of Pentecost and consists of local bodies which make up the one, true universal church. A person is in the universal church not by being a member in a local church but by faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Scripture commands that believers gather together regularly to devote themselves to worship, instruction from God's Word, prayer, fellowship, use of spiritual gifts to serve the body, outreach to the world, and the two sacraments ordained by Jesus Christ-baptism, which is performed any time after conversion and communion, which memorializes the atoning death and resurrection of Christ. The objective of the church is to make disciples everywhere for God's glory.

(Acts 2, Eph. 2:11-22, 1 Cor. 11:17-34, 1 Cor. 12, Matt. 28: 18-20)

HUMAN DESTINY AND LAST THINGS

We believe in the personal, imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ for the church and His subsequent return to the earth in power and glory to establish His millennial reign on earth. We believe in the eternal blessedness of the saved and the eternal judgment of the unsaved. Death seals the fate of all people for eternity. The judgment that follows will determine that unbelievers will be resurrected to an existence of eternal separation from God where they will suffer eternal retribution for their rejection. Those who believe will be resurrected to enjoy eternal communion in the presence of God.

(1 Thes. 4:13-18, Rev. 19-20, 1 Cor. 15)