

Abbreviated Doctrinal Statement

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What the Bible says (and thus we believe)...

About the Bible Itself

The Bible, in its 66 books, was breathed out by God (2 Tim. 3:16) in its entirety (Ps. 119:160) and to the very words of the original manuscripts (1 Cor. 2:13). It was written down by men as they were guided by the Holy Spirit (2 Pt. 1:21). It is totally without error in the original manuscripts (Jn. 17:17) and has been preserved (Ps. 119:89; 138:2) for us today in reliable translations (Neh. 8:8). The Bible is to be interpreted literally or normally rather than allegorically (2 Pt. 1:20).

About Who God Is

God is one (Deut. 4:6), yet exists in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The word Trinity is never used in the Bible, but the concept is clearly seen in both the Old and New Testaments (Gen. 1:26; Is. 48:16; 2 Cor. 13:14). All three of these persons are equally God, yet an authority structure exists in the God-head with God the Son submitting Himself to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit submitting Himself to the Son (1 Cor. 11:3; Jn. 16:13-14; Jn. 14:23). The Bible reveals God's attributes, which can be classified as moral and nonmoral. The moral attributes of God include such attributes as holiness, kindness, love, and mercy. Some of His non-moral attributes include Omniscience (all knowing), Omnipotence (all powerful), Omnipresence (present in every place), and Immutability (unchanging).

Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity. He has always existed (Micah 5:2), and came to earth as a human being, being born of a virgin (Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-23). He is both fully God (Jn. 10:30; Tit. 2:13) and fully Man (Jn. 1:14, Phil. 2:5-11). He lived a sinless life (being God) (Heb. 4:15; 1 Jn. 3:5), died on the cross for the sins of all men (1 Jn. 2:2), and rose from the dead three days later (1 Cor. 15:3-4). He is currently at the right hand of the Father (Rom. 8:34, 1 Pt. 3:22), interceding for believers (Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 2:1). He will come again at the Rapture (1 Cor. 15:51-21, 1 Thess. 4:13-15), prior to the seven year tribulation, to take His church to heaven (Rev. 3:10). At the end of the tribulation he will come to judge His enemies and establish His thousand year kingdom on the earth (Rev. 20:2-7).

The Holy Spirit is equally part of the God-head just as the Father and the Son (Acts 5:34). He is a person, rather than an impersonal power or force (Zech. 4:6). He works in the unsaved world convicting them of sin, the reality of Christ's righteousness, and the certainty of judgment (Jn. 16:7-11). He indwells the Christian (Jn. 14:16), empowers them (Rom. 8:26, Jn. 15:26), and enables them to live out the Christian life in conformity to God's Word.

About Creation

God is the creator of the universe, the world, and all that is in it (Is. 40:28; Acts 17:24). He also created the angels (Col. 1:16). At some point, prior to the creation of man, the angels were created with the primary purpose to worship God and do His will (Job 38:7; Ps. 103:20). The

angel Lucifer rebelled against God and took a third of the angels with Him in his rebellion (Is. 14:12-15; Ezra 28:11-19; Rev. 12:4). Lucifer, now known as Satan or the devil, exists as the enemy of God and of the Christian and goes about on the earth like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (Job 1:7; 2:2; 1 Pt. 5:8). He and his angels will eventually be cast into the lake of fire where they will spend eternity (Matt. 25:41).

God the Father is the architect of creation and the work was executed by the Son (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16), through the power of the Holy Spirit. The earth was created in six literal, 24 hour days (Gen. 1:3-2:3 [note the phrase “evening and morning”]; Ex. 20:11). Mankind was created in the image of God (having an intellect, emotion, and will) on the sixth day of the creation week (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6). All human beings are descendants of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, and thus there exists only one race (Acts 17:26).

About Sin

When the angel Lucifer rebelled against God, sin entered God’s creation (Is. 14:12-15; Ez. 28:11-19). Man was originally created in a state of unconfirmed holiness (they could choose between good and evil); mankind was untainted by sin, but because he was created by God with a will, he could choose between right and wrong. Adam chose to disobey God in the garden of Eden by eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, something that God had specifically commanded him not to do (Gen. 2:17), and thus mankind fell into sin (Rom. 5:12). Now all human beings that are born into this world are sinners both by nature (Rom. 7:15-18) as well as by the actual sinful choices that they make (Rom. 3:23). Further, sin corrupted the whole of creation when Adam chose to sin, bringing death and decay into the world that God had created (Rom. 8:21-23). Sin has broken the fellowship that mankind had with God in the beginning and separated him from God, who is holy (separate from sin) (Lev. 11:44) by His very nature (Hab. 1:13).

About Salvation

Apart from God, man is destitute of salvation because of his fallen nature which he inherited from the first man Adam. There is nothing that he can do, of himself, to earn God’s favor (Rom. 3:10-12; Eph. 2:8-9, Tit. 3:5). Man comes into the world spiritually dead because of the sin of Adam (Gen. 2:17; Eph. 2:1-5), and he will eventually experience physical death and is bound for the second death in the lake of fire apart from some divine intervention (Rev. 20:14). Yet God has provided salvation for *all* men by sending Jesus to die on the cross for their sin. The Bible is clear that not all will be saved (Eph. 1:3-13, 1 Peter 1:2), yet salvation has been made available for all men if they will believe and receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior (1 Jn. 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:15; 2 Pt. 2:1). It is only through receiving the free gift of salvation that God offers to man through Jesus Christ that one can have eternal life (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8-10). In order for one to be saved, they must first understand the fact that they are a sinner (Ecc. 7:20; Prov. 20:9), that Jesus died a suffering death on the cross as a sacrifice for their sin and that he rose from the dead three days later as the victor over death. If they repent of their sin (Rom. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:25; 2 Pt. 3:9) and believe on Him they can have their sins forgiven and become a child of God (Jn. 1:12). Once one is saved, they can never lose this salvation (Jn. 10:27-29; Matt. 16:18; Rom. 8:28-39).

About Mankind's Eternal Destiny

Those who accept the free gift of salvation that God provides through the death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection from the dead are destined to spend eternity with God (Rom. 6:23). The abode of God is referred to as the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). In the future, there will be a new heaven and a new earth where believers will spend eternity. Those who refuse the salvation offered through Jesus Christ will spend eternity separated from God in the lake of fire (2 Thess. 1:7-9). This place was originally created for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). Hell is a temporary holding place for the unsaved dead but this place and all in it will eventually be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14).

About the Church

The church began in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost (Acts 11:15) and was a concept unrevealed in the Old Testament (Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:26). The universal church is made up of individuals who were saved by receiving the word from the day of Pentecost until the Rapture. A local church is an autonomous group of saved, baptized individuals (Acts 2:41-42) meeting together to glorify God through evangelization of the lost and edification of the believers. It has two officers, pastor and deacon (1 Tim 3, Phil. 1:1), and two ordinances, baptism (Mt. 28:19) and the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:17-24). It has a responsibility to be separate from all organizations that embrace doctrinal error (2 Cor. 11:2-3; Rom. 16:17) and to keep itself pure through the means of church discipline (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11; 2 Cor. 12:20-12; Gal. 6:1). It should be congregational in its government (Acts 15:19-20; 2 Cor. 2:6). It is to be completely separate from any national or state government (Matt. 22:21; Acts 4:19; 5:19; Rom. 13:7) yet subject to the laws of the land to the extent that they conform to the Word of God (Rom. 13:1; 1 Pt. 2:13-17). The believer is to be actively involved in using his or her spiritual gifts in the local church (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-11; Eph. 4:7-16; 1 Pt. 4:7-11). Sign gifts (or those gifts given to the Apostles, cf. Matt. 10:9, 2 Cor. 12:12), though active during the time of the early church, are no longer functioning today (1 Cor. 13:10; Phil. 2:25-27).

About the Christian's relation to the world

Christians, while living in the world, should keep themselves unspotted from the world (2 Cor. 7:1; Jas. 1:27). This means that they should abstain from any worldly practice that would affect their fellowship with God, who is holy, and/or knowingly cause another believer to stumble (Rom. 14:13-23). The believer is to be a light to the unsaved world (Phil 2:15) and thus must maintain relationships with unsaved friends and family members without being joined to them in way that would cause them to fall into sin or compromise (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). The Christian is not to maintain fellowship with individuals who call themselves believers yet engage in a sinful lifestyle (1 Cor. 5:9-13).

About the Family

God created one man and one woman and thus ordained that marriage be between one man and one woman for life (Gen. 1:27; Mal. 2:14-16; Matt. 19:4-6). Therefore, homosexuality is against the order of creation and is condemned by God in both Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22,23; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9). The responsibility of the believer toward the unsaved involved in a homosexual lifestyle, or in any lifestyle contrary to the word of God, is to love them, yet to

clearly speak the truth of God's word to them and to desire their salvation. God ordained man to be the head of the household (1 Cor. 11:3), to be the leader of his family, and to lovingly care for his wife (Eph. 5:25,28,33) and children (Eph. 6:4). The woman is designed to help the man (Gen. 2:18, Col. 3:18) and is equal to man in regards to her salvation (1 Pt. 3:7; Col. 3:19) but is to submit herself to her husband in the authority structure of the home (Eph. 5:22-33). Children should be raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). Children are a gift of God and belong to Him (Ps. 127:3; Ez. 16:21). Thus the termination of unborn children by means of abortion is evil and contrary to God and His character (Luke 1:41) .

About Future Events

The next event of prophecy foretold in Scripture is the rapture of the church (1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). The Bible does not reveal when it will happen (Acts 1:6-7), only that it is imminent and could thus happen at any time (Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Cor. 1:7; Tit. 2:13). Sometime following this, the works that believers did while on the earth will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ (Bema) (2 Cor. 5:10-11; Rom. 14:10). This will not be to determine their eternal destiny as this was already determined at the cross (1 Jn. 2:2); rather the rewards that they will receive in heaven will be determined at this time. After the rapture, an earthly leader known as Anti-Christ will sign a peace treaty with the nation of Israel which will begin a seven-year period called the tribulation (Dan. 9:27). The tribulation will be designed by God to judge all those who live on the earth in general (Rev. 3:10) and the nation of Israel in particular (Jer. 30:7). The last three and a half years of this time are referred to as the Great Tribulation and will be a time of unprecedented suffering for those who live on the earth (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 7:14). Yet there will be some during this time that will be saved and turn to Christ as Lord and Savior (Rev. 6:9-11). At the end of the tribulation, Jesus will return with his saints to bring judgment upon his enemies at the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21) and to establish his thousand-year reign on the earth (Rev. 20:1-7). Throughout the majority of the time of the Millennial Kingdom, Satan will be bound, but at the end of this time he will be released (Rev. 20:2,3,7). There will be those who rebel against God at the end of the Millennium, descendants of the saved individuals that entered into the kingdom in their physical bodies (Rev.20:8). God will crush this rebellion and cast Satan into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:9-10). After this, God will judge all unsaved from all time at the Great White throne (Rev. 20:11-13). These individuals will then be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14-15). After this will be the eternal scene where there will be a new heaven and new earth where righteousness will dwell forever and all saved people will spend eternity (1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 21:1-22:21).