

Kerrville Bible Church

Doctrinal Statement

PREAMBLE

The Elders of Kerrville Bible Church recognize that any doctrinal statement is but a fallible human effort to summarize an infallible divine revelation. But this in no way detracts from the importance of such a statement. The affirmations which follow carefully specify the Elders' teaching position with regard to major biblical doctrines, and thus provide a framework for preaching and teaching at Kerrville Bible Church, as well as an anchor to protect us from theological drift. The Elders of Kerrville Bible Church are the sole interpreters of this Doctrinal Statement and are required to sign a statement annually affirming full agreement.

GOD: We teach that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), one in essence, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person has precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections (Matthew 28:18-19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 1:4-6) and so equally deserves love, worship and obedience (Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:12-13). We teach that God is the uncreated Creator and Sustainer of all things (Acts 17:24-28; Romans 11:36; Colossians 1:16-17); an infinite (Job 11:7-9), timelessly eternal (Isaiah 40:28), self-existing (Exodus 3:14), all-powerful (Jeremiah 32:17), all-knowing (Psalm 139:1-4; 147:5), all-wise (Romans 16:27), all-glorious (Psalm 72:18-19), and everywhere present Spirit (Psalm 139:7-10; John 4:24). He sovereignly ordains, and then providentially and meticulously ensures the occurrence of all things that come to pass (Isaiah 45:5-7; 46:9-11; Daniel 4:34-35). We teach that God is perfect (Isaiah 46:5) and unchanging (Malachi 3:6) in all His attributes; a supremely holy (Isaiah 6:3), good (Psalm 34:8), and righteous God (Psalm 7:9-11; 97:2); wholly just (Deuteronomy 32:4) and abounding in love and mercy (Exodus 34:6; 1 John 4:16). This God has freely chosen to reveal Himself in creation (Romans 1:18-20) and especially through the special revelation that constitutes the Bible.

THE BIBLE: We teach that the Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is God's inspired (God-breathed), written, authoritative revelation to man. It was given to us by the Holy Spirit and constitutes the complete Word of God (inspired equally in all parts) (2 Peter 1:19-21). We teach that the Bible is God's revelation of objective, propositional truth (1 Thessalonians 2:13), with every word verbally inspired and thus absolutely inerrant in the original documents (2 Timothy 3:16). We teach that the Bible is the only sufficient and infallible rule for all matters of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:19-21).

We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors such that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in whole or in part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16). We teach that there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, but there is only one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal, grammatical, historical method of interpretation under the illumination of the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers, especially preachers and teachers, to

rightly interpret the Word (2 Timothy 2:15), carefully discerning its original meaning, true intent and fitting application. We teach that the Bible begins with the literal, historical account of Creation (Genesis 1:1).

CREATION: We teach that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal, 24-hour days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17) and that God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing. Genesis 1-2 describes the special creation of male and female apart from any evolutionary process (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7, 18-23). We teach that the age of the universe should be measured in thousands of years, not millions or billions. We reject the “gap theory” of creation as well as all theories involving theistic evolution.

We teach that angels are created spirit beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. They are created to serve and worship God (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9) and to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation (Hebrews 1:14).

We teach that the pinnacle of God’s creation was mankind, represented by the first two people, Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:27).

GOD THE FATHER: We teach that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, is the Creator of everyone and everything (Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 3:9), who orders and accomplishes all things according to His own sovereign purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; Isaiah 46:9-11; Daniel 4:34-35; 1 Corinthians 8:6) with a plan to bring all things together in Christ Jesus the Lord (Ephesians 1:10-11). As the absolute and all-powerful Ruler of the universe, He is sovereign over creation, redemption and the consummation of all things (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36; Ephesians 1:3-14). His fatherhood involves His designation within the Trinity and His relationship to believers as their spiritual Father (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Ephesians 3:14-15; 4:6).

We teach that the sovereign Father has graciously chosen, before the foundation of the world, those whom He would save and have as His own (Ephesians 1:4-6) while justly leaving the rest of fallen humanity in their sin (Romans 9:14-24). As a result of this decree, He will in time infallibly draw those whom He has chosen into a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ (John 6:44) and they will freely come to the Father through faith in the Son (Matthew 11:25-30; John 1:12-13; 3:16; 6:35-37, 45).

We teach that for His own glory the Father has decreed all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11; Daniel 4:34-35). In His sovereignty He neither directly causes nor approves of sin (Habakkuk 1:13), nor does His sovereign decree or providential activity ever diminish the accountability and responsibility of His moral, intelligent creatures (Romans 1:18-20; 1 Peter 1:17).

We teach that the Father always upholds both His ordained and prescribed will in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25-30; 2 Timothy 1:9).

GOD THE SON: We teach that God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the perfections of Deity, and in these, is coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Spirit (John 10:30; 14:9; Colossians 1:17-19; 2:9; Hebrews 1:3). We teach that God the Father created the universe through His Son by whom all things exist and are sustained (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2). We teach that in the incarnation, the Son took on flesh with all the characteristics of humanity, yet without sin. He permanently became man without ceasing to be God and continues to be the God-Man forever (John 1:1, 14, 18; John 14:9-10; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, having been miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35). The purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem the elect, and one day rule over God's Kingdom on earth as the final or second Adam (Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 9:6-7; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 7:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished the believer's redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 2:2). We teach that on the basis of the effectiveness of Christ's death, the believing sinner is freed from the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that through faith in Christ he is declared righteous, forgiven of all sins, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:21-26; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

We teach that the believer's justification is secured by Jesus Christ's literal, bodily resurrection from the dead. Christ is now ascended and exalted to the right hand of the Father. As Head of His Body, the Church, He ministers as its Mediator, Intercessor, Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Ephesians 1:20-22; 5:23; Philippians 2:9-10; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 1:3; 3:1; 4:14; 7:23-25; 9:24; 12:2; 1 John 2:1). We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God the Father confirmed the Deity of His Son and gave proof that He had accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' resurrection is also the guarantee of a future bodily resurrection to eternal life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ will return for His Church at the Rapture and then after the seven-year Tribulation, He will return with His Church in glory to establish His Millennial Kingdom on earth (Daniel 9:27; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20) where He will reign from the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33).

We teach that the Father will judge all people through Christ (John 5:22-23): first believers at the Bema seat judgment (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10); then living inhabitants on the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 17:30-31); and finally the unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20:11-15).

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT: We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, uncreated, possessing all the attributes of personality and Deity including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13),

emotions (Ephesians 4:30) and will (1 Corinthians 12:11). He is timelessly eternal (Hebrews 9:14), all-knowing (Isaiah 40:13-14), all-powerful (Romans 15:13), everywhere present (Psalm 139:7-10) and truthful (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes as the third Person of the Trinity, He is coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; cf. Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10:15-17). It is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute God's will with relation to all people, namely His sovereign will in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation of the Son (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation of Scripture (2 Peter 1:20-21), and the regeneration of the elect (John 3:5-8).

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26) to create the Body of Christ, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The scope of His divine activity broadly includes restraining evil according to His divine will (2 Thessalonians 2:7), convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:7-9); glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ, and transforming believers into the image of Christ (Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in the regeneration of the elect, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). He also indwells (Acts 2:1-4; Romans 8:9), sanctifies (2 Corinthians 3:18), and seals all believers until the day of their bodily redemption, never forsaking even the weakest of believers (Romans 8:11; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13). In addition, He fills (Acts 4:8, 31; Ephesians 5:18), instructs (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), leads (Romans 8:14), empowers (Acts 1:8; Romans 8:13), intercedes for (Romans 8:26-27), and provides assurance to all believers (Romans 8:16).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher and illuminator of Scripture, who guided the Apostles and Prophets into all truth as they committed God's revelation to the writing of Scripture (John 14:26; 16:12-15; 2 Peter 1:19-21). Every believer possesses the indwelling Holy Spirit from the moment of their new birth, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with or controlled by the Spirit (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27). We teach that the Holy Spirit bestows at least one spiritual gift to every saint (1 Corinthians 12:11; Ephesians 4:7-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11). He glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by outlandish displays, but He does glorify Christ by applying His work of redemption to the elect and building up believers in the faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18). We teach that, in this respect, God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

THE CREATION OF MAN: We teach that Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, were directly created by God in His image and likeness and did not evolve from anything. They were created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, emotions, will and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 1:26; 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9). God created man to glorify Him and enjoy His fellowship forever (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

MARRIAGE: We teach that marriage is the fundamental human relationship in the created order. It is defined as a committed one-flesh covenant union between one biological male and one biological female for life (Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:3-6). We teach that marriage was given by God as part of His common grace, and that it has no meaning other than what He has

revealed (Genesis 2:18–25). We teach that God instituted monogamous marriage between male and female as the foundation of the family and the building block of human society. Marriage is subject to the curse of the Fall (Genesis 3:16) but believers, living in obedience to the Scripture and under the control of the Holy Spirit, can experience peaceful, productive and fulfilled marriages as God intended (Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

We teach that the marriages of believers are to illustrate the loving relationship of Christ and His Church, with the husband loving his wife as Christ loves the Church and the wife submitting to her husband’s loving leadership as the Church submits to Christ (Ephesians 5:22–33). Believers should marry only those who share their regenerate life and faith in Christ (2 Corinthians 6:14).

Conjugal cohabitation does not establish, and is not equivalent to, marriage (John 4:18; Hebrews 13:4). We teach that where a valid marriage has been established prior to coming to faith in Christ, the couple should remain married (1 Corinthians 7:24).

INTRODUCTION TO THE FALL: We teach that Adam’s sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God in the garden of Eden brought about the fall of creation and all mankind. This resulted in a curse from God that extends to all creation (Genesis 3:14-19). The curse brought about corruption and disruption of the created order that was previously declared to be “very good” (Genesis 1:31). The Fall introduced uninterrupted sin, suffering, death, decay, futility, and conflict (Romans 5:12; 8:18-23). We teach that the curse of the Fall will be reversed and fully removed with the creation of the New Heavens and New Earth (Revelation 20:11-21:1; 22:3) whereby the Eternal Kingdom of God will be fully established by the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

THE FALL OF MAN: We teach that in Adam’s sin of disobedience to God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; Romans 6:23); and became subject to the wrath of God (John 3:36). Because all people were represented by Adam when he sinned, his totally corrupted or depraved nature has been transmitted to all people throughout all time (Romans 3:9-20), Jesus Christ being the only exception (Hebrews 4:15). Fallen man is utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace (Romans 8:5-8; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 1:8). With no power to save himself, man will in time freely and willfully sin and is hopelessly lost apart from God’s direct intervention (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-20; 5:10-12, 18-19).

SATAN & FALLEN ANGELS: We teach that Satan is a created angel who incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19). He led numerous angels to join his rebellion (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14) and introduced sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15). Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, 11:3, 14-15; Revelation 12:9-10). As prince of this world, he comes only to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). He is a murderer and liar from the beginning (John 8:44) who tempts all people to sin (Genesis 3:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 3:5) and is the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). He has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20) and will be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

SEXUAL INTIMACY: We teach that the Fall resulted in strife within the marriage relationship (Genesis 3:16) which often results in defiling the purity of sexual intimacy God intended. Sexual intimacy is meant to occur only between a male and female who are married to each other. God has commanded that no sexual intimacy be engaged in outside of a monogamous marriage (Hebrews 13:4). We teach that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, pornography, bisexual conduct, incest, pedophilia, bestiality or any attempt to change one's biological sex or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:1–30; Matthew 5:27-32; 19:3-9; Romans 1:24–32; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 6:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–8).

We teach that every person, including those engaged in sexual immorality, must be given compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of the Church (1 Timothy 1:5). We teach that the faithful proclamation of the Scripture, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech, or hateful and harassing behavior, but is instead a fundamental part of the Church's loving mission to the world (Matthew 28:16–20; 2 Corinthians 5:11–20; 2 Timothy 4:1–2).

DIVORCE: We teach that God hates unbiblical divorce, permitting it only where there has been sexual immorality (Malachi 2:14–16; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:9) or desertion/abandonment (1 Corinthians 7:12–16). We teach that unrepentant abuse constitutes a form of abandonment of the marriage covenant, even when the abuser physically remains in the home. We teach that remarriage of the divorced believer to a believer is permitted, but only when the divorce was on biblical grounds. A prior divorce does not necessarily disqualify a man as an elder or deacon (1 Timothy 3:2, 12).

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE: We teach that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 127:3-5; 139:13-16).

INTRODUCTION TO SALVATION: We teach that salvation is by God's grace alone based on the merit of Christ's life of perfect righteousness, His atoning death on the cross and His resurrection, and not in any way on the basis of human merit, effort or works, either moral or religious (John 1:12-13; Ephesians 1:7; 2:1-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

ELECTION: We teach that election is the sovereign act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He unconditionally chose in Christ, according to His purpose, all those whom He would save (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2). We teach that sovereign election does not negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:19-23; 10:13-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17). Sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation in that God grants faith and repentance to the elect. Election will always result in what God has determined. All whom the Father has chosen He will effectually

call to Himself, and they will freely come to Christ in faith. And all who come in faith, the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).

We teach that God's election of sinners is not related to any initiative of their own nor to God's anticipation of what they might do of their own will, nor to foreseen faith. Rather, election is solely of His independent and unconditional grace and mercy as God exercised the freedom of His sovereign will in harmony with all His other attributes (Romans 9:11-16; Ephesians 1:3-13; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2).

REDEMPTION: We teach that redemption of the elect was fully and effectively accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ in His atoning death. Christ purchased for God, with His blood, sinners from every tribe and tongue and people and nation (Revelation 5:9), obtaining for them forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life (Romans 5:18-19; I Corinthians 15:3; I Peter 3:18; cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21). In His atoning death, Christ bore in the believer's place the due punishment for their sin (Isaiah 53:4-6; Galatians 3:13; I Peter 2:24), fully satisfying the demands of divine justice and fully propitiating the wrath of God against them (Romans 3:21-26; 5:9; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 4:10).

We teach that the sacrificial death of Christ was designed by God the Father to atone for the sins of the elect only. Christ's death was not a potential atonement on behalf of all sinners in general, but rather a definite atonement on behalf of those particular persons whom the Father chose in eternity past and had given to the Son (Ephesians 1:4; John 6:37, 39; 10:29; 17:6, 9, 19-21). Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ laid down His life for His sheep (John 10:14-15, 26-30), for His friends (John 15:13); purchasing the Church of God with His own blood (Acts 20:28); giving Himself up for the Church, His bride (Ephesians 5:25). None for whom Christ died will ever incur the wrath of God for their sins (Romans 8:1).

We teach that all three Persons of the Trinity are entirely unified, involved and essential in the work of salvation, with redemption of all the elect decreed by the Father in eternity past, accomplished by the Son in the fullness of time, and applied to the elect by the Holy Spirit (John 10:14-15; 27-30).

We teach that Christ's definite atonement in no way undermines the responsibility of believers to make a genuine offer of the gospel to all persons possible. The death of Christ rather establishes the Church's duty to proclaim the gospel to all people, seeking to make disciples of all nations, and confidently proclaiming that whoever repents and believes will be saved (Matthew 28:18-20; John 3:16; 6:37; Romans 10:1-21; Revelation 22:17).

REGENERATION: We teach that Christ's work of redemption is applied to the elect through regeneration by the Holy Spirit (John 3:1-8; Titus 3:5-6). Regeneration is a supernatural (monergistic) work of the Holy Spirit by which the one born again immediately passes out of spiritual death into spiritual life (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5; 2 Peter 1:3-4). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit using the Word of God (John 5:24; James 1:18; I Peter 1:23) according to God's will and timing, enabling the sinner to repent of sin and respond in faith to the divine provision of salvation (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:8-10).

We teach that in his natural state, the unrepentant sinner is dead in his trespasses and sins, is blind to the glory of Christ and His gospel, and therefore refuses Him (Matthew 19:16-22; John 9:39; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:1). Yet, through the miracle of regeneration, God shines in the heart of His elect to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6). The eyes of his heart being opened and enlightened, for the first time the sinner grasps the sinfulness of sin, the beauty of Christ, and then always responds in repentance and faith.

We teach that even the greatest degree of moral reformation, personal sacrifice or religious good deeds cannot help the sinner take one step toward heaven. Only by a new nature implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word may one become a child of God (John 3:5; Titus 3:5; James 1:18).

REPENTANCE AND FAITH: We teach that as a result of regeneration, the sinner converts to Christ. This act of conversion always includes both repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior as commanded by the gospel (Matthew 3:2, 4:17; Mark 1:15; 6:12; Luke 5:32; 13:1-5; John 3:36; Acts 2:37-39; 3:19; 17:30-31; 20:21; Romans 1:5; 16:26; 1 John 3:23).

We teach that the repentance leading to life includes a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of sin, and a sincere commitment to forsake sin and walk in obedience to Christ (Matthew 11:28-30; Acts 26:18-20; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, 12:21; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; Hebrews 6:1).

We teach that saving faith includes knowledge of the gospel (Romans 3:9-26; 10:14), mental assent or agreement with the facts of the gospel, and personal trust in and dependence on the risen Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God (Matthew 11:28-30; John 1:12, 3:16-18, 36, 6:35-40; 7:37-38; Acts 16:30-31; Romans 3:21-30, 4:1-5, 10:9-13; Ephesians 2:8-9).

JUSTIFICATION: We teach that justification is the one-time judicial act of God (Romans 8:33) whereby He declares righteous those who repent of their sins (Isaiah 55:6-7; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10), turn to Christ in faith (Acts 16:31; 20:21; Romans 1:16; 3:22,26; Galatians 3:22), and confess Him as Lord (Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6). Justification is grounded upon the imputation of both the believer's sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and Christ's righteousness to the believer (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21), so that God "would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). Justification includes the full forgiveness of all the believer's sins and results in him having the very standing of Christ before the Father, loved as Christ is loved, one with Him forever (John 5:24, 17:23; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 2:10; 2 Peter 3:18; 1 John 4:17, 5:11-13).

We teach that the basis of the believer's justification is the righteous life, death and resurrection of Christ. Christ's righteousness that is imputed to believers consists in first, His perfect obedience to all of God's commands, attaining to the perfect standard of God's righteousness (Isaiah 53:9, 11; Matthew 3:15; Romans 3:21-22; 8:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 4:15); and secondly, His obedient death on the cross (Philippians 2:8). It is this perfect righteousness, both in His life and death, with which believers are clothed in union with Christ

and which is the sole ground of their acceptance with God (Galatians 3:27; cf. 2 Corinthians 5:21). We teach that in justification, righteousness is not infused or imparted into the believer, nor is it attained by his own virtue or work (Romans 3:20; 4:6; 5:18-19). Rather, the perfect righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer through the means of faith (Romans 3:28; 4:4-5; I Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9).

SANCTIFICATION: We teach that sanctification has three aspects: positional, progressive and perfected. First, every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional, instantaneous and has to do with the believer's standing in Christ, not his present walk (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

Second, we teach that there is also a progressive work of sanctification accomplished by the Holy Spirit whereby the practice of the believer is brought closer to his position in Christ. One aspect of progressive sanctification is separation from sin, clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments (2 Corinthians 6:14 – 7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5). Through obedience to the whole counsel of God, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness, becoming more and more like Christ (John 14:21; 17:17,19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23). Good works and the fruit of the Spirit will be experienced to the extent the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-11). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Christian life is a continual pursuit of holiness amidst constant opposition from the world, the flesh, and the devil (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 6:10-17; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10). Every saved person is involved in a daily conflict against the flesh with its indwelling sin. However, adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

We teach that out of deep gratitude for the grace of God and because God is worthy of consecration, all believers should demonstrate love for God by not bringing reproach upon the Lord. God commands believers to separate from religious apostasy and worldly practices unto the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

Third, we teach that sanctification has a final aspect called perfected or ultimate sanctification (i.e., glorification), when the child of God sees his Lord and shall be made "like Him" in His resurrected, glorified body, being fully conformed to His image (Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 1 John 3:1-3).

ETERNAL SECURITY: We teach that all the redeemed are kept by God's power through faith and are therefore secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24). It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14). However, those who once professed faith

but subsequently deny the Lordship of Jesus Christ, demonstrate by their apostasy that they were never truly saved (1 John 2:19). True believers are preserved by God and will persevere in the faith (Colossians 1:21-23; Hebrews 3:6, 14).

THE CHURCH: We teach that all who place their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one spiritual Body, the Church, of which Christ is the Head (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18); also known as the Bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8). We teach that the formation of the Church began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the Rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). We teach that the Church is therefore a unique spiritual organism designed and built by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The Church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32) and a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32). We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that the one supreme authority for the Church is the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline and worship are all appointed under His lordship and through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called overseers, pastors, and shepherds) (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5). We teach that elders lead and serve the body as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing and overseeing the local church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17). Deacons are servants of the congregation and helpers to the elders, meeting practical and physical needs of both the church body as a whole and of individual members, freeing up the elders to fulfill their duties (Acts 6:1-6).

We teach that discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers (Matthew 18:5-14), and the need for church discipline of sinning members are commanded by Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

We teach that the local church is autonomous, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders determine all matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence and government as well (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

We teach that, in general, the local church is to submit to the governing authorities of the State because they are ordained by God (Romans 13:1-7), seek the welfare of society at large, and pray “for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (1 Timothy 2:2), all while being salt and light in a decaying and dark world (Matthew 5:13-16). However, there are times in a fallen world where the Church must openly resist and publicly renounce evil, even to the point of peaceful protest and civil disobedience, choosing to obey God rather than men (Acts 4:19-20; 5:29).

We teach that the purpose of the Church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42), and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42). We teach that all saints are called to the work of service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12). To that end, God gives unique and special spiritual abilities, also known as Spiritual Gifts, to each member of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: We teach that gifts of the Holy Spirit were given to the Church and these gifts fell into two categories: temporary, miraculous sign gifts and permanent, edifying gifts.

We teach that miraculous sign gifts of divine revelation and healing were given temporarily in the Apostolic Era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the Apostles’ preaching of Christ (Acts 2:4, 6-8, 43; 3:1-26; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:20-21; Hebrews 2:3-4). With the passing away of the Apostles and Prophets by the end of the first century, New Testament revelation was completed and the canon of Scripture closed with the final book of Revelation (Revelation 22:18). Thus, Scripture became the sole test of the authenticity of a man’s message (Acts 17:11; Romans 10:8-17; 2 Timothy 3:16 – 4:4; 2 Peter 19-21) and miraculous sign gifts ceased. This position is commonly known as Cessationism. We teach that by the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures are self-authenticating to the elect, meaning no miracles are necessary to prove their truthfulness (John 6:44-45, 66-69; 10:1-5, 16, 27; 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:19-21). As a result no one possesses the supernatural gift of healing today, but God does hear and answer prayers offered in faith and in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; Philippians 2:25-27; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

We teach that the only gifts in operation today are the permanent, edifying gifts (1 Peter 4:10-11). These gifts are non-revelatory, non-miraculous equipping gifts for the common good of all believers (Romans 12:6-8). Since each gift is given according to God’s sovereign will and discretion, the possession of any gift is of grace and does not constitute spiritual maturity (Romans 12:1-21; 1 Corinthians 12:11-13; Ephesians 4:7-16). The proper use of the gifts is for the edification of the church body into Christ-like maturity and to promote united worship of God in the congregation, giving preeminence and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:14; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

THE ORDINANCES: We teach that only two ordinances have been committed to the local church by the Lord Jesus Christ: water baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Acts 2:38-42).

We teach believer's baptism by immersion after conversion (Acts 8:36-39) as a public, solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer's faith-commitment in the Lord Jesus Christ. We teach that baptism symbolizes the believer's union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and expresses his desire to walk in newness of life as directed by the Word of God (Acts 8:26-40; Romans 6:1-11; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21). Baptism does not confer grace nor bring about salvation, but it is a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42) that is commanded by Christ (Matthew 28:19-20) and practiced by the New Testament Church (Acts 2:38-48).

We teach that the Lord's Supper (also known as Communion) is the commemoration and proclamation of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ until He comes, and should be preceded by sober self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32). In the Lord's Supper, the believer's worship is focused on Christ and His work upon the cross (1 Corinthians 11:20-34). We also teach that, whereas, the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ as He fellowships with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16). The Lord's Supper reminds the believer of the basis of his fellowship with Christ, promotes an atmosphere of thankfulness in the church body, and anticipates the return of Christ for future deliverance (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:7-38). We teach that each believer is responsible to regularly partake of the bread (signifying Christ's body broken for us) and the cup (signifying His blood shed for us) in a worthy manner, having a right relationship with the brethren and the Holy Spirit so as not to grieve either (Matthew 5:21-24; 1 Corinthians 11:27-28; Ephesians 4:30). We teach that Communion is to be practiced as a gathered body of believers in the context of the local church (1 Corinthians 11:17-22), with no set frequency prescribed by Scripture (1 Corinthians 11:25-26).

INTRODUCTION TO ESCHATOLOGY: We teach that the next event on the prophetic calendar is the imminent Rapture of the Church, immediately followed by the seven-year Tribulation. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will return to earth with His saints to set up His Messianic Kingdom over the entire world, where He will reign from Jerusalem for one thousand (1,000) years. We teach that Israel—the divinely chosen descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, forming a nation in special covenant with God—is distinct from the New Testament Church in God's plan of redemption.

DEATH: We teach that physical death involves no loss of consciousness (Revelation 6:9-11), but there is a temporary separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21-24). The souls of the redeemed pass immediately into the presence of Christ and remain in joyful fellowship with Him in heaven until they are united with their resurrected bodies at the Rapture (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:21-23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). The souls of the unredeemed at death go into hell until they are united with their resurrected bodies, in which they will be judged and cast into the Lake of Fire (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15).

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH: We teach the imminent, personal, bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ to rapture the Church to Himself, meeting them in the air; first, those who have died in Him and then those who are alive (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10). At the Rapture, the believer's soul and glorified body will be united in order to be with the Lord forever (1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54; Philippians 3:21).

Between this event and His glorious return to earth with His saints, Christ will reward believers according to their works at His judgment seat (also known as the Bema seat judgment) (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

THE TRIBULATION PERIOD: We teach that immediately following the removal (Rapture) of the Church from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous judgments of God will be increasingly poured out upon an unbelieving world over a period of seven years, a time also known as the Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:24-27; 12:1; Revelation 16:1-21). These judgments will climax in the return of Christ to earth in great glory and power (Matthew 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). At that time, the Old Testament and Tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged, with Christ separating the righteous from the wicked in preparation for His Messianic Kingdom (Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50; 25:31-33; Revelation 20:4-6).

THE SECOND COMING AND MILLENNIAL KINGDOM: We teach that, after the Tribulation period, the Lord Jesus Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David in Jerusalem (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-30) and establish His literal messianic, Mediatorial Kingdom for one thousand (1,000) years on the renewed earth (Revelation 20:1-7). During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Revelation 19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, as well as the removal of Satan from the world (Daniel 7:17-27; Revelation 20:1-7).

We teach that the Kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promises and covenants with Israel (Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17) and to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily hardened and set aside (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26) but will again be awakened by grace unto repentance and forgiveness of sins in order to enter into the land of blessing in a complete fulfillment of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Zechariah 12:10 – 13:1; Romans 11:25-29). We teach that this time of Christ's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, prosperity, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11:1-16; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38; Micah 4:1-8), and will end with the release of Satan from the Abyss (Revelation 20:7).

THE FINAL JUDGMENT OF THE LOST: We teach that following the release of Satan (Revelation 20:7), he will deceive the nations of the earth a final time and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city Jerusalem, at which time he and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9). Following this, Satan will be "thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone" forever (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10). Then the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the unsaved for their evil deeds at the Great White Throne judgment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15). We teach that this will be a physical resurrection when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29) and the unsaved will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the Lake of Fire (Matthew 25:41; John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:11-15), cut off from all divine blessing forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

THE ETERNAL KINGDOM: We teach that at the close of the Millennial Kingdom the Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will deliver up the Kingdom to God the Father, “so that God may be all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). The heavens will pass away and the elements of this earth will be destroyed (2 Peter 3:10). Then the New Heavens and the New Earth, together with the New Jerusalem, will come down wherein only righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:3, 8). This will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy fellowship with God and one another in the Eternal Kingdom forever (Revelation 21:1 – 22:21). “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

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