

# DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

## I. SCRIPTURE

### A. Revelation

1. God has revealed Himself to mankind. He has made known to mankind His divine person and truth. The purpose of God's self-disclosure is to call man into fellowship with Himself (John 17:3; 1 John 5:20). Scripture describes two distinct forms of God's self-disclosure; General Revelation and Special Revelation.
2. Through General Revelation or Natural Revelation God has revealed to mankind all that we need in order to realize the existence of God. Specifically, this revelation is through creation (external) and conscience (internal) (Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:18-20; 2:14-16)
3. Through Special Revelation God has revealed to mankind all that we need to know for salvation. Special Revelation is divine self-disclosure through Jesus Christ, the Living Word and through the Holy Scriptures (Psalm 19:7-20; John 1:1-18; 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:15,16).

### A. Inspiration

1. The Inspiration of Scripture concerns the authorship of Scripture. God so directed the human authors so that their individuality and literary style were preserved. Yet, at the same time the full message and intent of God was recorded (2 Timothy 3:15,16; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
2. The revelation of God, written in the original languages of Scripture, is infallible and inerrant. God's word is without error and is totally reliable and the authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice. As such it demands our obedience and full trust (John 3:33; Romans 3:4; 1 Corinthians 2:12,13; 2 Timothy 3:17; James 1:22-25).

### A. Illumination

1. The Holy Spirit enlightens, clarifies, and teaches the truth of God's word. The reading of and prayerful meditation upon God's word is very important as it opens the believer's heart to the illumination of the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:11-16).

## II. GOD

### A. The Nature of God

1. Scripture assumes the existence of God as the supreme creator of all that exists. He is the pre-existent uncaused-cause of creation (Genesis 1:1ff). He is knowable and yet incomprehensible (Job 11:7-12; 36:26; Isaiah 40:18).
2. The nature/essence of God is revealed through His attributes. These attributes are the manifestations of who God is (essence) and how He acts (nature). These attributes can be classified as those which are incommunicable and those which are communicable.
  - a. The incommunicable attributes of God are those which surpass human comprehension. There is no correlation to the experience of mankind by which these attributes may be explained. The incommunicable attributes of God are:
    - 1) eternity: God is free from the succession of time (Psalm 90:1-6; 102:27; 2 Peter 3:8)
    - 2) immutability: God never changes (Psalm 102:26,27; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 1:12)
    - 3) infinity: God is free from all limitations. Nothing limits His power, wisdom and

- justice (Psalm 90:2)
- 4) omnipresence: God is not limited spatially and occupies all space with the entirety of His being (Psalm 139:7-12)
  - 5) self-existence: God's existence is not dependent upon anything outside of Himself (Exodus 3:14,15; John 5:26)
  - 6) simplicity: God's attributes are unified without division or separation (Deuteronomy 6:4)
  - 7) unity: God is uniquely one as the only true God (1 Kings 8:60; 1 Corinthians 8:6)
- a. The communicable attributes of God are those which are comprehensible by mankind. There is found within them a correlation to the experience of mankind. The communicable attributes of mankind are:
- 1) faithfulness: God is true to His word. He keeps His promises (Deuteronomy 7:9; 2 Timothy 2:13)
  - 2) goodness: God graciously and kindly provides for His creation (Psalm 145:9,15; Acts 14:17)
  - 3) grace: God's unmerited favor (Ephesians 2:8,9)
  - 4) holiness: God's attributes separate Him from everything else. Relationally, He is separate according to His moral excellence (Exodus 15:11; 1 Peter 1:14-16)
  - 5) justice: God acts according to His holiness in relationship to Himself and creation (Acts 17:31; James 4:12; Revelation 16:5)
  - 6) love: God has committed Himself to the ultimate good of His creation. Love is that attribute which motivates God to self-disclosure (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8,16)
  - 7) mercy: God has compassion upon those who are in the pitiable condition of sin (Deuteronomy 13:17; Psalm 57:10; Romans 9:14-18; 11:30-32; 1 Peter 1:3)
  - 8) omnipotence: God is all powerful (Revelation 1:8; 4:8)
  - 9) omniscience: God knows all things (Isaiah 40:13,14; Hebrews 4:13)
  - 10) patience: God is long-suffering towards those who act in disobedience towards Him (Romans 2:4; 1 Peter 3:20)
  - 11) sovereignty: God upholds all things by His power and determines their just end. He is in complete control (Genesis 14:19; Deuteronomy 10:14,17; Acts 17:24-26; Ephesians 1:11)
  - 12) spirituality: God, in substance is invisible, and without composition, extension, or spatial existence (John 4:24; 1 Timothy 1:17)
  - 13) truth: God is the reliable source of all truth (Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 6:18)
  - 14) wisdom: God is complete in His knowledge and perfect in His application of that knowledge to achieving His will (1 Samuel 2:3; Proverbs 8; Ephesians 1:11,12; Colossians 1:16)

## B. The Trinity of God

1. God exists as one divine nature yet in three distinct persons. These persons are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each person of the Godhead shares equally and without division the complete nature/essence of God. Yet, each is distinct in manifesting the workings of the Godhead (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 10:30; Acts 5:3,4; 1 Peter 1:2).

## C. God the Father

1. By relationship, God the Father is first in the Godhead (Matthew 28:19). He is viewed as the father of all creation (Genesis 1:1), the father of all men (Ephesians 3:14,15; Hebrews 12:9), the father of all believers (Acts 17:29; Romans 8:14-17), and the father of Jesus

- Christ (John 1:14; 8:38-45). The latter being relational and not cause and effect.
2. God the Father is not begotten. He is the father of Jesus Christ (the generation of the Son) (Psalm 2:7; John 1:14; 6:40, and the sending of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26).
  3. God the Father is the initiator of creation (1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the author of salvation (Isaiah 53:10; Ephesians 1:3-6).

#### D. God the Son

1. By relationship, Jesus is the second person of the trinity. He is the only begotten Son of God and the virgin born Son of Man. Jesus has been, is, and will be eternally God. He is the image of God. He is the agent of creation (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Matthew 8:20,29; Luke 1:34,35; John 1:1-3; 3:16; 10:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:2).
2. Jesus is uniquely fully God and fully man. Jesus has always in nature/essence been God and continues in nature/essence to be God. By incarnation Jesus' Godly attributes and His human attributes were united in one person. During the incarnation Jesus voluntarily limited the exercise of His divine attributes (Philippians 2:5-11).
3. As the Son of Man, Jesus endured the same temptations as are common to all mankind (Matthew 4:1-11; 1 Corinthians 10:13). Jesus also experienced the same bodily restrictions, such as hunger, weariness, sorrow, etc., as are common to all mankind (Matthew 26:38; Luke 2:52; John 11:35; 12:21; James 1:2-4). Jesus lived a perfect and sinless life (Romans 3:25,26), was crucified to death, remained dead for three days, and was resurrected (1 Corinthians 15:3,4). Jesus experienced death, voluntarily, and was resurrected into His glorified body (John 19:30; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 20-23).
4. The death and resurrection of Jesus provide the only means of redemption for mankind (John 14:6; Romans 3:21-26; Hebrews 10:10-14, 19-22). He remains as the only mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5).

#### E. God the Holy Spirit

1. By relationship, the Holy Spirit is the third person of the trinity. The Holy Spirit is the same nature/essence as God the Father and God the Son (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 12:14).
2. The Holy Spirit is described in scripture as a person, not just a power or an influence (Acts 10:19). The Holy Spirit possesses personal attributes:
  - a. grief/emotions (Ephesians 4:30)
  - b. life (Romans 8:2)
  - c. intelligence (John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10,11)
  - d. will (Acts 16:7; 1 Corinthians 12:11)
3. The Holy Spirit is fully God in that divine attributes and work are attributed to Him:
  - a. creation (Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 40:12-14)
  - b. miracles (Matthew 12:28)
  - c. omnipotence (Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 12:11)
  - d. omnipresence (1 Corinthians 2:10,11)
  - e. regeneration/sanctification (John 3:5-7; Romans 15:16)
4. The work of the Holy Spirit
  - a. The Holy Spirit is seen as having a part in creation and in the sustaining of creation (Isaiah 40:12-14; Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30).
  - b. The Holy Spirit is the author of Scripture (2 Peter 1:20,21)
  - c. The Holy Spirit restrains the sinful activities of Satan (2 Thessalonians 2:6,7) and convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-11).

- d The Holy Spirit was the agent in the conception of Jesus (Matthew 1:18), was active at His baptism (Matthew 3:12-17), and filled and empowered Jesus in His earthly ministry (Luke 4:1,14,18).
- e Concerning the believer in Christ, the Holy Spirit:
  - 1) regenerates (John 3:5,6)
  - 2) baptizes (1 Corinthians 12:13)
  - 3) indwells (John 14:16,17)
  - 4) seals us as a pledge of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:13,14)
  - 5) sanctifies (2 Thessalonians 2:13)
  - 6) fills and empowers (Ephesians 3:16; 5:18)
  - 7) gives gifts of service to the Body of Christ (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12: Ephesians 4:4-13)

### III. MAN

#### A. Original Nature and Purpose

1. God created man in His own image from the dust of the earth (Genesis 1:26; 2:7). Man is God's highest creation (Psalm 8). Man was created a tri-part being with a body, soul, and spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
2. Man was created for God (Colossians 1:16). The purpose of man is to glorify God (Isaiah 43:7). Man was created to have fellowship with God and to live according to God's will, his initial command being to exercise dominion over creation and to procreate (Genesis 1:28).

#### B Subsequent Sin and Present Condition

1. Sin was introduced into creation by Satan (Genesis 3:1-7). Through the work of Satan, Eve according to her own will was deceived, and Adam chose to follow in sin (2 Timothy 2:14).
2. Man sinned by a willful act of disobedience to the revealed will of God (Genesis 3:1-7). Through Adam's sin the entirety of mankind existing seminally in Adam, sinned (Romans 5:12-19).
3. Mankind is dead in sin, separated from God, and unable to comprehend the things of God (Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3). All men are without excuse with regard to sin (Romans 1:16-23).
4. The result of sin is that man experiences separation from God (Romans 3:23), spiritual death (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3), physical death (Genesis 3:19), and the disruption of intimate human community (Genesis 3:7,16). Those who die without Christ face eternal separation from God, including no second chance for salvation (Luke 16:19-31; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Hebrews 9:27). Those who are judged at the Great White Throne, who do not have Christ as their Savior, will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

### IV. SALVATION

#### A. Nature Of

1. Because of his sinful state man is incapable of earning salvation or favor with God (Romans 3:9-20,23). Salvation is a work undertaken by God for man in accord with God's love and graciousness (John 3:15; Ephesians 2:8,9).
2. God, according to His foreknowledge, in accordance with His sovereignty and loving

nature, acts according to His will with regard to the predestination of those who will conform to the image of His Son (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1).

3. Salvation is based upon the completed work of Jesus Christ on the cross, as our sin offering (Hebrews 9:22; 1 John 2:1,2). Jesus Christ is the justifier of mankind before God (Romans 3:21-26; 5:6-11; Ephesians 2:8,9). Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation (John 14:6).

#### B. Elements Of

1. Justification is the initial entrance into salvation. Being justified through Christ, being reconciled to God by the satisfaction of divine justice, man is freed from the penalty of sin as the ultimate consequence of sin (Romans 3:26; 5:9; 6:23; Ephesians 1:7).
2. Sanctification is the ongoing process of salvation in which man, having been justified, conforms to the image of Christ (Romans 6:19; 12:2; Ephesians 5:25-27). Sanctification is a work of the Holy Spirit (2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 1 Peter 1:2). Those who are being sanctified produce evidence, or fruit, of sanctification (Matthew 7:16; John 15:1-10; Galatians 5:22-25).
3. Glorification is man's ultimate hope (Romans 8:30-39; 2 Corinthians 5:2-5; 2 Peter 1:2-4). It is the hope of all who persevere in Christ (Romans 2:4-10; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Hebrews 12:1,2; James 1:12). At the time of glorification we will be made like Christ (1 John 3:2).

#### C Reception Of

1. Salvation is by grace through faith and not by the works of man's own effort (Romans 3:20; Ephesians 2:8-10). Salvation, on man's part involves both the outward confession of and inward consecration to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (Romans 10:8-10).

### V. THE CHURCH

#### A. Nature Of

1. The Church is the Body and Bride of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12; Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2,9). It is both an organization and an organism in that it has structure (Acts 6:1-6; Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Timothy 3:1-13) as well as being a living body with Christ as its head (Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:18).
2. The Church universal is viewed as the sum total of all believers from Pentecost to the rapture of the Church (Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).
3. While the Church is universal in scope it is local in manifestation. Believers are directed to assemble themselves together in local assemblies (Revelation 1:11; Hebrews 10:23-25).
4. The local Church is seen as a self-autonomous manifestation of the Body of Christ and is accountable to the head of the Church, Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 6:1-6).

#### B. Organization

1. Scripture affirms three specific offices of the Church; Apostle, which has ceased (Acts 1:21,22), Elder/overseer (1 Timothy 3:10), and Deacon (1 Timothy 3:8).
  - a. The function of Elder is of oversight, rulership, preaching, and teaching (1 Timothy 3:1-8; 5:17-22).
  - b. The function of Deacon is a compliment to that of Elder. Deacons are to care for the spiritual as well as the material welfare of the saints under the direction of the eldership (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:8-13).

2. The Holy Spirit has gifted each member of the Body of Christ with a particular function, given to equip the saints for the work of service and to build up the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). The goals of these gifts are unity of faith and the maturity of each believer (Ephesians 4:13). These Spiritual Gifts are the functional organization of the framework of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:4; 1 Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:15,16).
3. Those Spiritual Gifts which are given to practical ministry in the Body of Christ are:
  - a. faith (1 Corinthians 12:9)
  - b. giving (Romans 12:8; Ephesians 4:28)
  - c. governments/rule/administration/leading (Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:28)
  - d. healing (1 Corinthians 12:9,28,30)
  - e. ministry/helps (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28)
  - f. miracles (1 Corinthians 12:10,28,29)
4. Those Spiritual Gifts which are given to the ministry of the word of God are:
  - a. apostle (1 Corinthians 12:28)
  - b. discernment/distinguishing spirits/prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:20ff.)
  - c. evangelist (Ephesians 4:11)
  - d. exhortation (Romans 12:8)
  - e. interpretation (1 Corinthians 12:20,30)
  - f. knowledge (1 Corinthians 12:8)
  - g. prophecy (1 Corinthians 12:2)
  - h. teaching/pastor-teacher: Scripture indicates three terms which are similar. The gift of pastor as the function of pastor; the office of pastor as the duties of pastor (bishop); and the office of pastor given as rank and dignity (elder). Scripture indicates that while all pastors are, by nature of the office, teachers, not all teachers are pastors (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28ff.; Ephesians 4:11).
  - i. tongues: Two aspects of tongues are given in Scripture.
    - 1) The utterance which is beneficial only in one's personal relationship with God. This is not a sign gift. Nor is it to be practiced as such, being unbeneficial for the edification of the Body (1 Corinthians 14:2,3,8-16).
    - 2) As a sign gift, tongues is the ability to supernaturally speak in a foreign language without benefit of study (Acts 2:5-13; 1 Corinthians 12:10,28; 14:27,28; 1 Thessalonians 12:19,20).
  - j. wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:6-13; 12:8; James 1:5)
5. Sign gifts (miracles, healing, tongues) are given as a demonstration of the power, love, and activity of God. Edification gifts (all others) are given specifically to build the Body of Christ and to accomplish the mission of Christ's Church.

### C. Ordinances

1. Two ordinances have been commanded to be the regular practice of the local Church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These ordinances are symbolic and do not in any way confer salvation.
  - a. Baptism symbolically represents the believer's death and resurrection with Jesus Christ. It is an outward demonstration of the believer's inward faith (Romans 6:1-11). By scriptural definition and practice baptism is by immersion following repentance (Acts 2:41; 8:12,13,26-40; 10:44-48; 16:26-34). As such, according to the command of Christ it is a public dedication of the believer's life (Matthew 28:19).

- b. The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus Christ as a remembrance and proclamation of His atoning work on the cross (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20). It is open to all those who profess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and who are striving to live in obedience to God's will (Acts 2:42,46). It is specifically a time of self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:23-29).

#### D. Mission

1. The Church is one timeless, interdenominational, interethnic Body, called out by God, led through the prompting of the Holy Spirit, for the glorification of God through individual and corporate submission to the Lordship of Christ, for evangelism and edification (Matthew 28:18-20; John 15:8; Romans 15:5,6; Philippians 2:9-11).

## VI. LAST THINGS

#### A. The Second Coming

1. The second coming of Jesus will begin with His personal, bodily return (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). He will come to remove His waiting Church (Revelation 3:10).

#### B. Resurrection

1. The resurrection of those who are asleep in the Lord will take place in several stages:
  - a. at the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
  - b. in the middle of the tribulation (Revelation 11:1-13)
  - c. prior to the millennial reign (Revelation 20:4)
2. All will be resurrected from the grave unto judgment (John 5:29,29; Revelation 20:11-13; 22:11,12).
  - a. Those whose name are not written in the Book of Life will be cast into the Lake of Fire to spend eternity in condemnation and separation from God (Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 6:9-11).
  - b. Believers will also be judged (John 5:28,29). They will receive justice (John 5:29; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 6:9-11).

#### C. The Tribulation

1. The tribulation will be a literal seven year period of great distress and destruction (Daniel 9:27; 12:1; Revelation 16).
2. The tribulation will be divided into two equal halves (Daniel 9:27; Revelation 11:3).
3. The tribulation will be climaxed by the return of Christ (Revelation 19:11-21).

#### D. The Millennium

1. Following His return, at the close of the tribulation, Jesus will reign over the earth with the resurrected saints for a period of one thousand years (Revelation 20:1-6).

#### E. Eternity

1. At the end of the millennium all those who have lived without Jesus as Savior will be committed to eternal punishment (Revelation 20:11-15; 21:8).
2. A new heaven and a new earth will be established and the present heaven and earth will be done away with (2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1).
3. The saved will dwell in righteousness with God forever (Revelation 21:1-7).