



# WHAT WE BELIEVE

## Unity on the Essentials, Liberty on the Non-Essentials, and Love in all things.

**These are the things we hold to as the Essentials of the Faith:**

### **THE BIBLE**

We believe the Word of God is enclosed in both the Old and New Testaments. They are inspired of God, in whole and in part. They are error-free in the original writings and are the supreme authority of faith and practice for the believer in Jesus Christ. We further believe that there is but one true interpretation of any biblical passage with different practical applications.

### **THE TRIUNE GOD**

We believe there is but one living and true God who is infinite, eternal and unchangeable. We further believe that God is one in essence while existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Godhead possesses precisely the same nature and attributes, each functions differently in respect to God's purposes and dealings with humanity.

### **GOD THE FATHER**

The first person of the Trinity orders and directs all things according to his own purpose, pleasure, and grace. The Father is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. He has decreed all things that come to pass for his own glory. He graciously involves himself in the affairs of humanity, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to him through Jesus Christ.

### **GOD THE SON**

The second person of the Trinity is both the eternal Son of God and virgin-born Son of man. Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, surrendered none of his deity during his earthly life. Having led a sinless life, he satisfied the Father's justice concerning sin by his substitutionary death. We believe in his bodily resurrection, his physical ascension, and his visible return to earth to establish his earthly kingdom.

### **GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The third person of the Trinity executes the will of God in the world of humanity. It is the Holy Spirit that applies the salvation that Jesus Christ secured through his death on the cross. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and

judgment. It is the Holy Spirit that empowers the church to live a lifestyle pleasing to God, endowing each believer with special gifts that equip the church to accomplish distinct ministries, planned beforehand by God the Father.

## **HUMANKIND**

We believe that humankind was directly created in the image of God to enjoy his fellowship and to fulfill God's will on earth. Through the first humans, Adam and Eve, sin entered the world through a voluntary act of personal disobedience to the will of God. As a result, all people are spiritually dead and subject to the certainty of physical death. The fall of humanity was a non-repeatable event, the effects of which are transmitted to all persons, each of whom is born with a sinful nature, and sins habitually in thought, word, and deed.

## **SALVATION**

We believe that Jesus Christ died as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice for our sins. All who believe in him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They become, thereby, the children of God forever and members of the one true church, the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his or her life to the control of the Holy Spirit who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God.

## **THE CHURCH**

We believe that all who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit belong to the one true universal church, and are directed by the Scriptures to associate themselves in local, visible churches. The local church is the only scriptural representation of Christ's invisible church and consists only of regenerated believers. The local church is self-governed and recognizes its own members for biblical offices and leadership positions. Two ordinances have been committed to the local church— baptism and the Lord's Supper. The purpose of the church is to lead humanity to Christ, mature them in the faith, and equip them for personal ministry.

## **FUTURE**

We believe that God in his own time and in his own way, will bring an appropriate end to the earth. This will include Jesus Christ's bodily and visible return to earth, at which time all who are believers in Christ will receive an eternal relationship in his presence, and the unrighteous will be condemned to an eternity of judgment