

## Our Beliefs

St. Augustine (early church father) once said, "In essential beliefs we are to have unity; In non-essential beliefs we are to have liberty; In all our beliefs we are to show charity."

Amos 3:3 "How do two walk together unless they are in agreement?"

1 John 2:3 "By this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments."

### God

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. God is eternally existent in three personalities; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and are all co-equal. God has Perichoretic nature, which means the members of Godhead mutually indwell and contain one another. God is omnipotent (all powerful), omnipresent (present everywhere) omniscient (all knowing). God is wisdom and knowledge. God is Love. Jesus taught His disciples to pray and refer to God as "Our Father..." The apostle Paul stated our spirit cries out to God "Abba Father." Abba is ancient Aramaic for 'dadda'. Jesus always pointed to the Father. Jesus said the words and works that I do and speak are from the Father. God's nature is Holy. The Triune nature of God models a perfect expression of love meaning that they each point to and exalt the other. Jesus directs attention to the Father, The Father directs attention to the Son, the Son directs attention to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit exalts Jesus.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) God is creator; He has always been and will always be.
- 2) God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are One and the same; they are three in one and of the same substance.
- 3) God is our Father.

Scripture References:

### Jesus Christ

Jesus is God the Son, the second member of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). 'Homousious'(of the same substance as the Father) is a Greek term the early church fathers decided upon at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. when referencing the deity of Jesus. Jesus said, "I and the Father are One – if you have seen me, you have seen the Father. Before Abraham was, I am. Jesus was born of a virgin (without inherited sin nature), lived a life on earth without sin, and offered Himself on the cross as the sinless sacrifice for sinful mankind. Without a blood sacrifice, there is no forgiveness of sin, according to the Scripture. By Jesus living a sinless life according to the Law of God, He was and is the perfect sinless sacrifice that was required for our sin. Jesus took the sin of the world upon Himself, making His

righteousness available to those who put their faith in the sacrifice He made. Jesus bodily arose from the dead after three days to declare His power over sin and death. He ascended to heaven to be seated at the right hand of God the Father with all authority in heaven and on earth. Jesus promised to return to earth to rule and to reign as eternal King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law and fulfilled all the prophecies made through the Old Testament prophets concerning the Messiah. Jesus ushered in salvation by grace and belief in/on Him is the only means of salvation. Jesus now bodily sits at the right hand of the Father and lives to make intercession for the saints. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. John the Baptist said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and Fire.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) Jesus is God the Son, the second member of the Trinity
- 2) Jesus lived a sinless life, fulfilling all the requirements of the Law and fulfilled all the prophecies made through Old Testament prophets concerning the Messiah.
- 3) Jesus is not only the perfect sacrifice for sin, but He is also the only sacrifice for sin. Jesus' sacrificial life ushered in salvation by grace and those who put their faith in Him have everlasting life.

Scripture references:

### **Holy Spirit**

Jesus said that it was necessary that He leave the earth; otherwise, the Father would not send the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit comes from the Father but would not come with a different agenda than Jesus. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would not bring attention to or speak concerning Himself, but would further reveal and unveil the words of Jesus. The apostle Paul referred to the Holy Spirit as the 'Spirit of Christ' (Romans 8:9). Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as the 'helper' and 'comforter'. 'Comforter' comes from the Greek word *parakletos*. 'Para' means side by side. 'Kletos' means one who is called. The Holy Spirit gives you power, boldness, and confidence as believer. Jesus said that when one is baptized with the Holy Spirit, that he/she would receive power. 'Power' comes from the Greek word *Dunamis* which means ability. The power is given to us as believers to be witnesses; empowered to share your faith without fear. The Holy Spirit will walk with you and reveal the truth to you. Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the 'Spirit of Truth' who will live with you and IN you. Just as Jesus glorified the Father, so the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus. The Holy Spirit is a personality, just as God the Father and God the Son are personalities. You can 'quench' the Holy Spirit, meaning He could desire to operate or move in a certain way but He is not going to take control unless you yield to Him; you can stop Him from moving in your life. The Holy Spirit living in us as believers is the proof and guarantee that Jesus will return for us.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) The Holy Spirit is the Third member of the Trinity and we are living in the days of His ministry on earth through our lives and the church.
- 2) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, which comes to live inside of every person who places their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ for their sin.

- 3) The Holy Spirit empowers the believer to not only live a holy, consecrated life, but to also be an effective witness to the world.

Scripture references:

### **The Bible**

The Bible is God's Word to us; past, present, and future. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and life. It is the divine truth and revelation of God to mankind. 2 Timothy 3:16 says that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." The Greek word the Apostle Paul uses in the verse is *theopnustos*, which literally means God-breathed. In essence, what Paul is communicating is that all of written Scripture has the breath of God on it. The Bible gives written account of the creation, the fall of man, prophecies concerning God's plan of redemption, God enabling and empowering individuals to fulfill His will on the earth, gives record of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, historical record of the early church, shows how to live a successful life as a follower of Jesus, gives prophecy concerning the second coming of Jesus, and contains writings directed to specific churches concerning how they were to operate, function, teach, and equip believers.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) The Bible was written by human authors who were under the divine wisdom and inspiration of God. (God-breathed)
- 2) The Bible is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and doctrine.
- 3) The Bible shows believers how we are to live a Godly, Spirit-filled life and how to be thoroughly equipped for the work God has called us to accomplish with our lives.

Scripture references: 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105, 160; Psalm 12:6; Proverbs 30:5, Exodus 4:10-15, Jeremiah 1:7-9, Acts 1:16, 28:25, 1 Corinthians 2:13, 14:37

### **People**

People are made in the (spiritual) image of God and are called to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. People are born with a sin nature originally inherited from Adam and Eve who disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. People are inclined to commit acts of sin from an inherited, fallen nature, which is the root cause of mankind's sinful state worldwide. People worldwide, past, present, and future, need a savior and a redeemer to be free from their fallen, sinful state before a holy, perfect God.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) People are created in the image of God and are the supreme object of God's creation.
- 2) People are born with a sin nature inherited from Adam and Eve, who disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden.

- 3) All of humanity is in need of Jesus, who is the only Savior and Redeemer that can free them from their fallen, sinful state and restore and cause them to stand righteous before a Holy, Perfect God.

Scripture references: Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6, 59:1-2; Romans 3:23

## **Sin**

Sin separates us from God and severs fellowship with Him. Wages (Penalty) of sin is death. He (Jesus) who knew no sin, became sin for us so that we could become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). Without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. Jesus is our High Priest and lives to make intercession for us (Hebrews). 1 John 1:9: If we confess (agree with) our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. All have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God (Rom. 3:23)

Three main takeaways:

- 1) Sin separates us from God and severs fellowship with Him.
- 2) The wages (penalty) of sin is death and there is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (sacrifice).
- 3) Jesus was in all points tempted to sin just as we are, but He did not sin.

Scripture references:

## **Salvation**

*Those who are willing to place their trust in the merits of Jesus' righteousness and not in individual performance will be judged on Jesus' merits and not their own. (Dr. David Dorries)*

Greek words Soteria (noun form) and Sozo (verb form – 'to save) are used for the word salvation; refers to the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted immediately by God to those who accept His conditions of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus, in whom alone it is to be obtained; God's power to deliver us from the bondage of sin and brings with it the understanding of being delivered from the wrath of God to be executed upon the ungodly at the end of this age. John 14:6 – Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Believing and receiving Jesus' completed work, which was living a perfect, sinless life under the law (Hebrews 4:15) becoming the ultimate and final offering/sacrifice to God for mankind's sin (wages of sin is death – Romans 6:23; Jesus was the unblemished, spotless lamb whose one offering for sin forever eliminated the need for other animal sacrifices in the ritualistic system of temple worship under the old covenant), and Him raising from the dead signified that He not only had power over sin but of also, death, hell and the grave. Romans 10:8-10 Paul writes that the righteousness which is of faith speaks in this manner... "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (that is, the word of faith we preach); that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) Salvation is the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted immediately by God to those who accept His conditions of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus.
- 2) Salvation not only refers to freedom from sin and wrath, but also the understanding of deliverance and healing.
- 3) Salvation is ONLY through Jesus Christ; not by any human effort such as good works or self-improvement. Salvation also includes eternal life, which begins the moment a person receives Jesus Christ by faith as Savior and Lord

Scripture references: Romans 6:23, 5:1; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26

## **Eternity**

Jesus said that He was going to prepare a place for us (believers) that where He was, we would be also. We were created to live forever because we were created in the image of God. Despite some misconceptions, Hell was not created for people; it was created by God for Satan and the third of angels that left with him. God is a Holy God and has no fellowship with sin. Therefore, those who die in their sin without believing in Jesus as their Lord and Savior will spend eternity in Hell. The worst part about Hell is that you will be eternally separated from the presence of God. Those who have received Jesus will spend Eternity with Him. Heaven and hell are literal places of existence.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) We were created to live forever because we were created in the image of God.
- 2) Heaven and Hell are literal places of existence.
- 3) Those who die in their sin without believing and receiving Jesus as their Lord and Savior will spend eternity in Hell. Those who receive Jesus will spend eternity with Him.

Scripture references: John 3:16, 14:17; Romans 6:23, 8:17-18; Revelation 20:15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9

## **Water Baptism**

We believe that something very powerful and spiritual happens when a believer gets water baptized. First, we baptize because we were commanded by Jesus to do so. Second, we believe that it is symbolic as well as testifies to the world that when you go down in the water and come up out of the water, you have placed your faith and total trust in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Third, it is symbolic of the reality that when you receive Christ, you are literally washing off the old man (sinful man) and leaving the old man under the water (buried) and you are coming up out of the water (raised) and a new man. Water Baptism is identifying the new Christian with a local church (body of believers).

Three main takeaways:

- 1) We practice water baptism by immersion (going under water).
- 2) We follow the example of Jesus Christ, who was water baptized (going under water).

- 3) Water Baptism is identifying a person with the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Scripture references: Colossians 2:12; Ephesians 1:22-23; Romans 6:4-5

### **Spirit-filled life**

The same grace that you received when you accepted Jesus into your life is the same grace that continues to save you. Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace you have been and still are being saved" (Greek word used here is *este sesosmenoi*- past event with its effects felt in the future, which means God's Spirit in the believer is constantly transforming him/her; In essence, salvation isn't a one-time event. His Spirit is molding the believer into His image and likeness daily). Jesus said that His sheep would hear His voice and would not follow the voices of strangers. The Holy Spirit, as a member of the Godhead, lives in every believer from the moment of Salvation and provides the believer with power for living, understanding for spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. We believe the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a Biblical normative and a gift available to every believer subsequent to salvation for those who ask for it. We believe the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is evidenced with speaking in tongues. We believe in the operation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as they are released in proper Biblical order.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) The Holy Spirit, who lives inside of the believer in Jesus, is constantly transforming that individual into the image and likeness of God.
- 2) The Holy Spirit will speak to and guide the believer into doing what is right as well as provide the believer with power for living.
- 3) The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is evidenced with speaking in tongues and given to believers who ask for it.

Scripture references: Acts 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; 1 Corinthians 14

### **Tithes and Offerings**

Tithing and giving offerings is dated as far back as Creation and its beginning is found in Genesis 4. In Genesis 4 we see where Abel offered to God the firstborn (the first) of his flock and of their fat (the best). Cain brought 'an offering' to the Lord. God honored Abel's offering but did not honor Cain's offering. Years later we see a man by the name of Abraham, who it is said of in the Scriptures that he believed God and it was accounted unto him as righteousness. God told Abraham that he would be the father of many nations (literally father of a multitude). In Genesis we discover that Abraham gave a tenth from all the increase he received to Melchizedek after a great victory, which was 400 years before the Law was ever given through Moses. The Scripture teaches in Hebrews that Jesus is of the priestly order of Melchizedek, who had no beginning and no ending of days. In essence, Abraham gave a tenth or a tithe to Jesus. Further, the Scripture teaches in Galatians that those who are of faith are sons of Abraham and that if we belong to Christ then we are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. In Malachi, we discover that the tithe belongs to God and has its roots and foundation in one word – **Honor**. Giving ones tithes and offerings has nothing to do with the church obtaining your money, but has everything to do

with God being first and having preeminence in every area of your life. As Oral Roberts once said, "Your money represents you. It represents your time, your energy, and your talents." We practice tithing for the support of Christ's body the church so that the Gospel message of Jesus Christ can be funded locally and around the world. We recognize that giving (10%) of our income is the Biblical standard for giving. We invite you to participate in tithing and in offerings. The Lord's tithe is (10%) of your income and is given to your local church home. The offerings are financial gifts given over and above the tithe and are designated for projects, speakers, missions, etc.

Three main takeaways:

- 1) Tithes and Offerings date as far back as Creation, when Cain and Abel gave to the Lord
- 2) Tithing is simply about one word – Honor. Who is first in your life?
- 3) Tithes and Offerings support the Gospel message of Jesus Christ being propagated locally and around the world.

Scripture references: Genesis 4:1-4; Genesis 14:14-20; Haggai 2:8; Malachi 1-3; Matthew 23:23; Hebrews 7:7-8.