

Doctrinal Statement

of

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Bibliology: The Doctrine of the Bible

Revelation: Revelation is God's disclosure to man about Himself what man otherwise would not have known. God reveals himself in two ways: general revelation and special revelation. In general revelation God reveals Himself to all people through creation (Rom. 1:19-20), order in creation (Acts 14:15-18), man's own conscience, and man's inner sense of God's laws (Rom. 2:15). General revelation condemns man, but special revelation is necessary to bring man to salvation. In special revelation, God has supernaturally revealed Himself through theophany (Gen. 18), direct address (Ex. 19—20), dreams (Matt. 1—2), visions (Is. 1:1; 6:1), Jesus Christ (John 1:14, 18), and the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16).

The Scriptures:

- 1) **Are Inspired** (2 Tim. 3:16). All the words of Scripture are equally God's words and are spoken by God. God via the Holy Spirit superintended the authors of the Bible to compose His message to mankind in the words of their original writings (2 Pet. 1:21).
- 2) **Are Inerrant** (John 17:17; Prov. 30:5). All the words and parts of Scripture are completely true, without error, and is preserved forever (Ps. 119:160; Matt. 4:4; John 10:31-38).
- 3) **Are Necessary** (Rom. 10:13-17; John 14:6). The Scriptures are necessary for knowing the gospel, living the Christian life, and knowing God's will (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 1:23-25).
- 4) **Are Sufficient** (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3). The Scriptures consist of all the words of God that are necessary for salvation, trusting Him, and obeying Him. It is only through Scripture that man should search for God's word to humanity (Ps. 119:1; 2 Tim. 3:15). The Scriptures are written clearly (Ps. 19:7; 119:130), but rightly understood through the work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:14). All of Scripture is complete (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rev. 22:18-19)

Canon: The sixty-six books of the Bible are the only inspired Scriptures. The books of the Bible, canon from the moment they were written, were determined through self-authentication and God-directed recognitions of men. The prophets in the Old Testament acknowledged the inspiration of Scriptures (2 Sam. 23:2), the apostles acknowledged the Old Testament as Scripture (Rom. 15:4), and the apostles believed they were writing the inspired words of God (2 Pet. 3:15-16). Jesus revealed the entire range of the Old Testament to be Scripture (Matt. 23:35; Luke 24:44).

Theology: The Doctrine of God

His existence: Man has an inner sense that God exists and that God is their Creator (Rom. 1:18-23). Creation itself gives evidence of God's existence (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 19:1). All of Scripture assumes that God exists (Gen. 1:1; Rev. 22:21).

His incommunicable character: Attributes than an infinite God does not share with finite man

- 1) **Infinite** (1 Kings 8:27; Acts 17:24-28). He is not bound by space and time. Accordingly, He is omnipresent, existing in every point of space but acting differently in different places.
- 2) **Eternal** (Ps. 90:2). He has no beginning or end. He never came into existence, and He will never expire.
- 3) **Independent** (Is. 40:13-14). He is free of His creatures and creation. He has no need of anything.
- 4) **Unchanging** (James 1:17). He does not grow and is never inconsistent with His character. However, He does experience emotions and acts differently in response to different situations while still true to His character (Ex. 32).
- 5) **Unity** (1 John 1:5; 4:8). God is not divided into parts. No one attribute of God is more important than the other, but different attributes may be emphasized in Scripture at different times (Ex. 34:6-7).

His communicable character: Attributes that are shared and imitated by Christians (Eph. 5:1)

- 1) **Spirituality** (John 4:24). He has no size, dimensions, matter, and does not need to be worshipped in a specific place.
- 2) **Invisible** (1 Tim. 6:16). His total essence is not able to be seen by man, but He reveals Himself through visible things (John 1:18).
- 3) **Omniscient** (1 John 3:20). He fully knows Himself and everything.
- 4) **Wisdom** (Ps. 104:24). His choices are the best possible for His glory.
- 5) **Truthfulness** (John 17:17). He is the only true God and His words are final.
- 6) **Love** (1 John 4:8, 10). He eternally gives of Himself, the best possible thing to give, to others.
- 7) **Holy** (Lev. 19:2). He is completely separated from sin and *is* how people should live.
- 8) **Wrath** (Rom. 1:18). He hates all sin, but delivers believers from it (1 Thess. 1:10).

His essence: God's essence is identical to his perfect attributes. He is fully each attribute and each attribute is active. Each attribute has God as their object. He is eternally one God in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each person fully God, and there is one God (Gen. 1:26; Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 12:4-6).

His motive: All God's character and acts are aimed at His glory. (Is. 42:8, 48:11).

Christology: The Doctrine of Christ

His person: Jesus is fully God and fully man in one person who will be so forever, who lived on earth, died, and became alive again (John 1:1-18).

His preexistence: Jesus existed before His birth always, eternally (John 1:1; 8:58; 10:30; 17:5). He was involved in Creation, and all things were created for Him (Col. 1:16-17).

His incarnation: Jesus was born of a virgin as foretold in Scripture. He is God revealed to us, a living example to follow, and came as a sacrifice for sin (Is. 9:6; John 1:14, 18; Heb. 10:1-10; 1 John 2:6).

His humanity: Jesus emptied Himself of his divine appearance and humbly took on the appearance of a human (Phil 2:5-8). He is fully human.

- 1) Jesus had a human birth (Luke 2:5-6).
- 2) Jesus had a human body (John 8:40). He became tired, hungry, thirsty, and experienced pain and death. He rose from the dead in a physical body, no longer prone to weakness (Luke 24:39).
- 3) Jesus grew like a human (Luke 2:52). He learned how to function as a human, and how to be obedient (Heb. 5:8).
- 4) Jesus had human limitations. He could not be in two places at once and needed the basics for human life such as rest, air, food, and water (Matt. 4; Luke 4; John 11).
- 5) Jesus had human emotions (John 13:1). He experienced a range of emotions and their effects such as anger, joy, laughter, crying, compassion, sympathy, pity, conviction, and love.
- 6) Jesus was without sin (Heb. 4:15). He was fully man, but different in this one respect. He was the only person to never sin.

His deity: Through the incarnation, the Son of God took on Himself human flesh and nature. Jesus was and is fully divine.

- 1) Jesus claimed equality with God (John 5:18), and others claimed Jesus as God (John 20:28).
- 2) Jesus was involved in creation and sustains it (Col. 1:16-17).
- 3) Jesus forgave sins (Mark 2:1-12).
- 4) Jesus demonstrated omniscience (John 16:30). He knew people's thoughts and was aware of actions outside His presence.
- 5) Jesus performed signs and miracles (John 20:30-31). He raised the dead, healed the sick, controlled nature, and supernaturally manipulated physical objects.

His work: Jesus came to earth to be "God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

- 1) Jesus revealed God to man (John 1:14, 18).
- 2) Jesus is our example to follow (1 Peter 1:21).
- 3) Jesus is the one sacrifice for all sin (Heb. 10:12).
 - a. His aim was to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10).
 - b. His voluntary, substitutionary death on the cross satisfied God's demands for man's reconciliation. (1 Peter 3:18).
- 4) Jesus rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and intercedes for believers (1 Cor. 15; Acts 1:9-11; 1 John 2:1).

Pneumatology: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is fully God and the third person of the Triune God. He has intelligence, shows feelings, and has a will (1 Cor. 2:10-11; Eph. 4:30; 1 Cor. 12:11).

His deity: The Holy Spirit is God.

- 1) The Holy Spirit is directly called God (Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 6:11).
- 2) The Holy Spirit possess the attributes of God that only belong to God such as omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence (Is. 40:13; Ps. 139:7, Ps. 104:30).
- 3) The Holy Spirit acts in a way that only God can such as in creation and inspiration (Gen. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:21).
 - a. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Scripture (2 Peter 1:20-21).

His work: The Holy Spirit is currently the primary manifestation of God to believers.

The Old Testament

- 1) The Holy Spirit was involved in creation (Gen. 1:2).
- 2) The Holy Spirit indwelt people for specific purposes (Ex. 31:3; 1 Sam. 10:10).

The New Testament (and the continuing age)

- 1) The Holy Spirit indwells all believers at the moment of salvation (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:11, 13).
- 2) The Holy Spirit gives power to be witnesses (serve) (Acts 1:8).
- 3) The Holy Spirit comforts believers (John 16:7).
- 4) The Holy Spirit convicts people of sin, righteous, and judgment (John 16:8-11).
- 5) The Holy Spirit fills, guides, and assures believers (Rom. 8:16; Eph. 5:18).
- 6) The Holy Spirit intercedes in prayer for believers (Rom. 8:26-27).
- 7) The Holy Spirit illumines the Word of God (1 Cor. 2:14-15).
- 8) The Holy Spirit is a guarantee of the fulfillment of salvation by sealing the believer until the day of salvation (Eph. 1:13-14).
- 9) The Holy Spirit regenerates sinners to a clean and new creation (Titus 3:5).
- 10) The Holy Spirit gives a believer gifts for service in the church (1 Cor. 12:11).

His gifts: The Holy Spirit empowers a believer at the time of their salvation with spiritual gifts (1 Pet. 4:10). The gifts of revelation (tongues, interpretation of tongues, healings, and visions) ended with the age of the apostles and the completion of Scripture. These gifts were signs used to authenticate the gospel (1 Cor. 13:1-10). The gifts of edification are still used today to build up the church (Rom. 12).

Angelology: The Doctrine of Angels

Origin: Angels are spiritual beings created by God and were present at the creation of the world (Job 38:6,7; Heb. 1:14).

Nature: Angels are personal beings that exercise intellect, moral judgment, and emotion (1 Pet. 1:12; 2 Pet. 2:4; Luke 15:10). They are also immortal, powerful, and non-reproductive (Luke 20:36; 2 Pet. 2:11; Mark 12:25). They can be invisible or visible (2 Kings 6:15-17). When visible, they take form in the appearance of men (Gen. 18:2; Dan. 10:16, 18; Mark 16:5).

Work: Angels are ministering spirits.

- 1) Angels praise, worship, and serve God (Ps. 148:1-2; Heb. 1:6; Ps. 103:20).
- 2) They were and will be actively involved in the work of Christ through prediction, warning, and announcements (Matt. 1:20; Matt. 2:13-15; Matt. 28:5-6; Matt. 25:31).
- 3) The archangel, Michael, guards Israel (Dan. 12:1) and other angels watch over rulers and nations (Dan. 10:13).
- 4) Angels help believers today (Heb. 1:14) and rejoice at a believer's salvation (Luke 15:10)

"Angel of the LORD": The "angel of the Lord" in the Old Testament is a preincarnate appearance of Christ. At times, the "angel of the Lord" would declare divine nature (Ex. 3:2-5), divine attributes (Is. 63:9), receive worship (Josh 5:15), and forgive sin (Ex. 23:21).

Demons: Demons are angels who sinned against God and work evil in the world.

- 1) All angels were created holy, but some chose to follow Lucifer in rebellion against God and were cast out of heaven with him (Ez. 28:16-17; 2 Pet. 2:4).
- 2) At times they are referred to as unclean spirits (Matt. 17:18; Luke 10:17-20).
- 3) Some demons are free to carry out Satan's plans and some are confined (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
- 4) They oppose the plan of God, but may be used to carry out His purposes (Rev. 16:13-16; 1 Sam. 16:14).
- 5) They wage war with believers (Eph. 6:10-11).
- 6) They promote idolatry and false religion (1 Cor. 10:20; 1 John 4:1-4).

Satan: Lucifer is the originator of sin and the chief adversary of God and man.

- 1) Satan carries many names such as Lucifer, the Devil, the prince of demons, the god of the age, and the prince of the power of the air (Job 1:6; John 8:44; Matt. 12:24; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2).
- 2) Satan is the temporary ruler of the world, but only under the sovereign purpose of God (Job 1—2; John 12:31; Matt. 4:8-9; 1 John 5:19).
- 3) Satan seeks to blind unbelievers of the truth (2 Cor. 4:4).
- 4) Satan seeks to hinder the work of God in believers' lives (1 Peter 5:8-9).
- 5) Satan was defeated by Christ on the cross and will be thrown into the Lake of Fire for all eternity (Gen. 3:15; Heb 2:14; Rev. 20:10).

Anthropology: The Doctrine of Man

Origin: God created man on the sixth day of creation (Gen. 1:26) from the dust of the ground and breathed life into him (Gen. 2:7). Woman was made from a man's rib (Gen. 2:21-22) as a helper for man. God created man in His own image (Gen 1:26) to exercise dominion, experience relationships, and have a personality.

- 1) **Gender:** God created man with two distinct genders as male and female objectively established at conception (Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4). God's desire that man live in accordance with his gender (Deut. 22:5).
- 2) **Marriage:** God ordained marriage as the union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:23-24). Believers are to marry believers (1 Cor. 7:29; 2 Cor.6:14).

Purpose: Man was created for the pleasure of God and he was to multiply and have dominion over the earth (Ps. 100:3; Gen. 1:28). His chief aim is to give God glory (Is. 43:6-7; 1 Cor. 10:31).

Nature: Man was created from material and immaterial parts to make a living being (Gen. 2:7). Many aspects make up the whole immaterial part: soul (Gen. 35:18), spirit (James 2:26), heart (Prov. 4:23), conscience (Rom. 13:5), will (1 Cor. 14:15), and mind (Rom. 12:2).

Fall: God created man with the ability to execute moral judgment and distinguish right from wrong (Gen. 2:17; 3:6-7). When Adam chose to sin, man received a sin nature and the result was physical and spiritual death (Rom. 5:12). Without God, the end result is a second eternal death (Rev. 20:14). Although still in the image of God, man is now born in the image of sinful man (Gen. 5:1-3). The image of God is marred by sin (1 Cor. 11:7), can be somewhat restored now (2 Cor. 3:18), but will be completely restored when salvation is fulfilled (1 John 3:2).

Hamartiology: The Doctrine of Sin

Definition: All sin is against God (Ps. 51:4). Anything that is contrary to the character, moral law, and will of God in attitude, thought, or action is sin (1 John 3:4). Sin can also be an omission of what should be done (James 4:17).

Origin: Sin originated with Lucifer and then the fallen angels (Ez. 28:15; 2 Peter 2:4). When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, sin entered and marred humanity (Rom. 5:12). Sin resulted in a broken relationship with God, disrupted human relationships, and brought a curse upon creation (Gen. 3:14-19).

Nature: Because of the sin of Adam, the first representative of humanity, all people inherit a sinful nature (Rom 5:12-21). As a result, God sees all man as guilty. At birth, all are born spiritually dead and do not have the ability to save themselves from the penalty and effects of sin (Rom. 5:12; Ps. 51:5; Rom. 1:18; 3:12). The penalty of sin is physical and spiritual death (Eph. 2:1). For a believer, sin can break fellowship with God, draw discipline, and hinder reward (1 John 1:5-7; Heb. 12:5-6; 1 Cor. 3:11-15).

- 1) All aspects of man are corrupt in heart, mind, spirit, and strength (Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21-23).
- 2) Man is unable to please God without God's help (Rom. 8:7-11).
- 3) All men are born sinners—turned from God and not seekers of Him (Ps. 14:1-3; Rom. 3:23).

Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation

Definition: Salvation is total work of God in bringing people from condemnation to justification. Man is saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. In the greatest demonstration of love, God sent Jesus to die for the sins of the world (Eph. 2:8-9; John 3:16).

Spectrum: The moment of salvation is a one-time event, but its implications have a broader effect.

- 1) At the time one believes, he is saved (justified) from the condemnation of sin (Rom. 8:1)
- 2) The believer, being saved from the sin's power, is set apart (sanctified) for God's use (Rom. 6:19)
- 3) The believer will be saved from sin and death itself (glorified) for all eternity (Rom. 8:16-17)

Nature: Jesus is the sacrificial substitute for sin (Matt. 20:28). Because of His death, man can be redeemed and all of God's demands have been fully met (1 John 2:2). Salvation is permanent, and it bestows eternal life from God (John 10:28). Man can be assured that he is saved (1 John 5:13).

Process: Man can do nothing to save himself. He must believe and express faith in God. *"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."* (Rom. 10:9).

Aspects: There are many words used to describe salvation.

- **General Call**—God desires that all man repent and receive eternal life (Acts 17:30; 2 Pet. 3:9).
- **Election**—God has chosen before the foundation of the world those who would be saved (Eph. 1:1-6). God calls and draws those chosen to Himself through the conviction of the Holy Spirit (John 6:44; 1 Cor. 1:24).
- **Propitiation**—God's wrath was turned away by the offering of Christ's sacrifice (Heb. 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).
- **Grace**—God's unmerited favor toward man. Man is totally dependent on God for salvation (Eph. 2:5, 8-9).
- **Faith**—The means by which salvation is given. It is a complete trust in Christ alone for salvation (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 5:1).
- **Repentance**—A change of mind whereby the person turns from sin to the Savior (Acts 20:21).
- **Regeneration**—A person is made alive (born again) by God at the moment of salvation. They are a new creation (John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; 2 Cor. 5:17).
- **Justification**—God declares a guilty person to be righteous based on their faith in the sacrifice of Christ (Rom. 3:21-24; 5:1).
- **Imputation**—Our sin is placed on Christ due to His sacrificial death. His righteousness is placed on the believer. When God sees a believer, He sees the righteousness of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21).
- **Adoption**—God sees a believer as a son or daughter and gives him or her all the rights and inheritance of sonship (Gal. 4:1-7; Rom. 8:14-17)
- **Sanctification**—The work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer is made holy and set apart. A believer is sanctified in position (Heb. 10:10), is progressing to holiness (Eph. 4:22-24), and will be permanent in their sanctification (Rom. 8:30).
- **Glorification**—All believers dead and alive will receive a resurrected body at the return of Christ (1 John 3:1-3).

Ecclesiology: The Doctrine of the Church

Church Universal: The Body of Christ is made up of all saved individuals from Pentecost until the Rapture. (Acts 2; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). A person comes into the Body of Christ (the church) at the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 1:22-23). The New Testament church is different from Israel. God's plan for Israel is earthly blessings, while His plans for the church is heavenly blessings (Jer. 33:14-26 ; 1 Thess. 4:17).

Church Local: The local church is an assembly of believers who have been baptized by immersion and organized for the purpose of equipping individuals to fulfill God's goals (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-47; Eph. 4:1-16).

Distinctions: The biblical characteristics of a local church.

- **Authority of the Bible**—the Scriptures are the sole authority for faith and practice. Only the New Testament tells us what the church is to do, but the Old Testament is not less. Both are equally the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- **Regenerated, immersed membership**—church membership is only for those who have been regenerated through the saving power of Christ and fully immersed in believer's baptism (Acts 2:41, 47; 1 Pet. 2:5; Acts 8:35-36).
- **Autonomy of the local church**—as an assembly the church is free from outside control and only answers to Christ. A pastor leads, the deacons serve, and the church decides (Acts 6:1-7; 13:1-3).
- **Priesthood of the believer**—believers require no separate priesthood other than that of Christ. Because Christ is the mediator between God and man, each believer has direct access to God and can intercede for others (1 Tim 2:1-5; 1 Pet. 2:1-10).
- **Two ordinances of baptism and communion**
 - **Baptism**—A step of obedience made by those who have professed faith in Christ as Savior, in which it is a visible picture of the believer identifying with the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is done by complete immersion (Matt. 28:19; Acts 8:35-36; 1 Pet. 3:21).
 - **Communion**—An act of corporate remembrance by looking *back* on Christ's broken body and shed blood through symbolic elements, looking *within* for unconfessed sin, looking *up* for fellowship with God, and looking *forward* until Jesus returns (1 Cor. 11:17-34).
- **Two offices of pastor and deacon**
 - **Pastor**—A title synonymous with bishop and elder. The pastor's main role is to equip believers for the work of the ministry through the preaching and teaching of the Word. The man is to be mature (elder), an administrative overseer (bishop), and a shepherd (pastor) of members within the local church (Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-3).
 - **Deacon**—A church officer whose main responsibility is to serve those within the church and to guard the responsibilities of the pastor (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim 3:8-13).
- **Separation of church and state**—the state should ensure that people have the freedom to worship God, and the church should not appeal to the state for Christian advantage (Matt. 22:21). The church should be separate from the world (2 Cor. 6:17).

Eschatology: The Doctrine of End Times

Rapture: Jesus' return for the church is imminent. The Church Age saints will be resurrected and with those still alive will meet Christ in the air (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

Tribulation: Taking place after the rapture, the tribulation is a seven-year period of judgment on the earth to prove to Israel their need to accept Jesus as the Christ. This time period falls under the seventieth week of prophecy mentioned in the book of Daniel (Dan. 9:27). The tribulation begins when the antichrist makes a covenant with Israel. He will break that covenant halfway through the time period and set up an image of himself in the temple (2 Thess. 2:3-4). Israel will then face severe persecution. This is the same time period as the judgments mentioned in Revelation 6—16. The Church Age saints will be judged for their works at this time and partake in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (1 Cor. 3:11-16; Rev. 19:7-9).

Millennium: The second coming of Christ to earth after the tribulation will begin the kingdom promised in Scripture (Rev. 19:11-16). This one-thousand-year reign of Christ is a fulfillment of the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7:12-16). The Church Age saints will reign and rule with Christ. Satan is bound in a pit and will be released at the end of the period. He and his demons will then lead man in one final rebellion against God, but will be destroyed and cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19—20).

Eternal Future: After the Millennium, the resurrection of unbelievers will take place, and they will face judgment at the Great White Throne judgment. They will be cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity (Rev. 20:11-15). The redeemed will live eternally with God and Christ in a new heaven on earth in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21—22).