

THEOLOGICAL REFERENCE

The Bible:

We believe the Bible is God's Word, fully inspired and infallible, written by men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. In it, God reveals Himself; renews our understanding of the world and ourselves; and directs us in all our relationships and activities.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Mark 13:31; John 8:31, 32; John 20:31; Acts 20:32.

The Trinity:

We believe there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit), that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they carry out distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.

Genesis 1:1, 26; John 1:1,3; Matthew 28:19; John 4:24; Romans 1:19,20; Ephesians 4:5,6.

God the Father:

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of humans, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus.

Luke 10:21,22; Matthew 23:9; John 3:16; John 6:27; Romans 1:7; 1 Timothy 1:1,2; 1 Timothy 2:5,6; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6.

Jesus Christ:

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's one and only Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death for our sins, bodily resurrection, ascension into Heaven, continuing intercession for His people, and His personal visible return.

Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; John 20:28; Romans 9:5; Romans 8:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-23; John 20:30,31; Matthew 20:28; Ephesians 1/4; Acts 1:11; Romans 5:6-10; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Timothy 3:16.

The Holy Spirit:

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came from the Father and the Son to create faith, cleanse and renew hearts, and build a community of love and holiness for all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe the Holy Spirit indwells every believer and draws them to faith in Christ. The Spirit is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide

John 14:16, 17, 26; John 16:9-14; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Galatians 5:22-26.

Creation:

We believe that the world belongs to God who created it and sustains it by His providence. Creation is the theater of God's glory and displays His power and majesty. God calls us to discover creation's resources, to receive these gifts with thanksgiving and delight, and to use them wisely as stewards and caretakers who are responsible to God and to our neighbor.

Humans are created by God in His image and now represent Him on earth.

Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 10:12-14; Isaiah 40; Psalm 139; Romans 1:20; 2 Corinthians 5:20.

The Fall:

We believe that the fall was the act of sin entering the world and disrupting all things. All of creation has been adversely affected by it and is distorted and corrupted in one way or another. When our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God and sought happiness in the lie of Satan, they brought judgment upon themselves and all of God's creation. Brokenness, disease, hate, arrogance, alienation, abuse of creation, and ultimately death are some of the fruits of sin in our world.

Genesis 1:3-19; Romans 8:22; Romans 5:12; Romans 6:23; Galatians 5:19-21.

Humanity:

We believe that the first couple's sin removed humanity's ability to live a sinless life and replaced it with a disposition to sin. Thus, every human being is a sinner and has brought God's judgment upon himself. Humans are incapable of restoring their relationship with God or erasing their sinful debts before God. Their minds are so clouded by sin that they need the enabling grace of God to accept Christ's gospel of reconciliation.

Romans 3:10ff; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; 21; I Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 1:3-8; Ephesians 3:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14.

Redemption:

We believe that redemption is God's act of returning humanity to His original intent for them. It is a journey back home if you will. Faith in Jesus is mankind's only hope in finding his way back into a relationship with God and escaping the isolation and judgment that is caused by our sin. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus triumphed over sin and death and suffered the wrath of God in our place. Jesus promises to rescue, renew, and bring peace to all whom He draws into a living faith in Him.

Colossians 1:12-20; I Corinthians 15:3,4,57; Ephesians 1:7; Psalm 49:7.

Restoration/Last Things:

We believe in the personal and visible return of Jesus to earth and the establishment of His Kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, and the renewal of all creation. We believe in the eternal joy of the righteous in the presence of God and the endless suffering of the wicked.

Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20; I Thessalonians 1:7-10; I Thessalonians 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 4:5; I Corinthians 15:2; Revelation 20:4-6 and 11-15.

The Church:

We believe in the universal church which transcends local congregations, denominations, races, and nations. It is a living spiritual body of which Jesus is the head and all those whom God has drawn into faith in Christ are its members. We believe that God has given the church the privilege of living and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus to all peoples. We believe that every believer has been commanded to be a regular and active member of a local church. The local church is a unique family of believers whom God brings together and the Holy Spirit empowers to reflect Christ and live out His mission to those around them. Each local church must meet regularly and should display a deep love for one another. It must teach and defend the sound doctrine of the gospel. The local church must seek unity and avoid division. It must also practice church discipline for those who have fallen into false teachings or sin. The local church should also practice the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper because they were instituted by Christ.

Matthew 18:15-20; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 22:17-20; John 13:34; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:38-42; Romans 3:28; Romans 12:10; Romans 16:17-18; I Corinthians 5:1-13; I Corinthians 11:23-26; Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 5:19-21; Hebrews 10:23-25; Titus 3:10.

Christian Conduct:

We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others. This means that Christians--with the help of the Holy Spirit--should strive to grow in faith and character so that Christ is reflected by their lives. Christians should also strive to be faithful servants of His possessions and the spiritual gifts that God has given them.

John 14:15, 23, 24; I Corinthians 4:2; I Corinthians 10:31; 2 Corinthians 9:6-9; Romans 12:1-3; Colossians 1:9-10; Hebrews 12: 1-2; I John 2:3-6.

Spiritual Gifts:

We believe that the Holy Spirit equips each believer with spiritual gifts and disperses them uniquely to each individual as He sees fit. Every spiritual gift is equally valuable to the church. Some gifts are public like teaching and preaching. Others may be more subtle such as mercy, administration, hospitality, or cheerfulness. All gifts should be exercised with discernment, but not prohibited, so that their end goal is always to glorify Christ and to build up His church.

Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 12:6-11; I Corinthians 14:3-4; I Thessalonians 5:19-22; I Peter 4:10-11; I John 4:1.

Baptism:

We believe that baptism is an external, symbolic proclamation of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. It is also a sign and seal of membership into the covenant family of God. Thus, baptism should be administered to converts who have publically acknowledged their faith in Christ and the members of their households (including infant children of believers). Since a particular mode (sprinkling or immersion) of baptism is not commanded in Scripture, we believe that we should allow some freedom as long as it is done in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Matthew 3:25; Acts 16:33; Romans 6:1-11; Colossians 2:10-11.

Lord's Supper:

We believe that the Lord's Supper commemorates the atoning death of Jesus and proclaims His sacrificial love for believers, that we experience His mysterious presence in the Lord's Supper, and that we look forward to communing with Jesus in the new heaven and the new earth.

Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 19:9.