

Cityview Bible Church 2017 Doctrinal Statement

The Bible

We believe that the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments that comprise the Bible are the inspired and inerrant Word of God. We believe that the Holy Spirit supervised the writers of the Bible in what they wrote so that, using their own unique personalities, the very words recorded in the original manuscripts are the direct revelation of God. We believe the Bible not only contains the Word of God but actually is God's Word and, therefore, is the complete and final authority for belief and behavior. As such, it can be completely trusted. We believe that inspiration and inerrancy extend equally and fully to all parts of Scripture: (2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:21, 1 Cor. 2:13, John 17:17).

God

We believe that there is only one true and living God, an infinite Spirit who is the Maker and Supreme Ruler of the universe. We believe the Bible reveals Him to be holy, sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, immutable and full of love, justice, goodness, mercy and truth. The one true God exists eternally as three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe these members of the Trinity are coequal in essence, having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections, but are distinct in personhood, executing different but harmonious functions (Mark 12:29, John 4:24, Matt. 3:16-17, Matt. 28:19, 2 Cor. 13:14).

Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ has existed eternally as the Son of God. At a specific point in time, Jesus became a man (the incarnation) in order to reveal God and redeem humanity. We believe He was supernaturally conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, Mary. In His incarnation, He forever possesses both full deity and full humanity in such a way that the properties of each nature are fully retained and undiminished by the union. We believe Jesus died on the cross as a substitute for sinful humanity, was buried, rose bodily from the tomb, ascended into Heaven where He ministers on the behalf of those who have trusted in Him, and someday will come again for His own (John 1:18, 8:58, Matt. 1:23, Col. 1:15-17, 1 Tim. 1:15, 3:16).

Holy Spirit

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is equal with God the Father and God the Son in terms of divine being, but distinct from the Father and the Son in His personhood. We believe the Holy Spirit actively ministers to the world. This ministry includes restraining evil, convicting the unsaved of sin and bestowing God's goodness on mankind. We also believe He ministers to every believer in Jesus Christ in numerous ways: regenerating, sealing, indwelling, baptizing into the Body of Christ, and the giving of spiritual gifts. Other ministries to believers include filling, assuring, teaching, guiding and comforting (Acts 5:3-4, 2 Thess. 2:3-9, John 16:7-11, Matt. 5:45, Tit. 3:5, Eph. 1:13, 1 Cor. 6:19, 12:13, Eph. 3:20, 1 Cor. 14, James 5:14, Eph. 5:18, Rom. 8:16, 14, John 16:13, 7).

Creation

We believe that God, according to His sovereign will and for His own glory, created the heavens and the earth without the use of pre-existent material. We also believe that all living things came into being by the creative act of God and not by a random process. Creation has an existence distinct from Him and yet is always dependent on Him (Gen. 2:4, Prov. 16:4, Acts 17:24, Col. 1:16-17).

Humanity

We believe that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God and in a state of innocence. Through deliberate disobedience, humanity fell from its sinless state and as a consequence lost its fellowship with God and became subject to spiritual and physical death. We believe that through Adam's transgressions the entire human race has inherited a corrupt nature, which is prone to do evil and unable to please God (Gen. 1:26-27, 3:24, Rom. 5:12, Eph. 2:1-3).

Sin

We believe that sin is anything contrary to the character and commands of God. Every person is alienated from God because of their depraved nature as well as their personal sin. Everyone is completely incapable of meriting salvation and avoiding the judgment of God. This sinful nature is never fully eradicated in this life, even for those who have trusted in Christ alone for salvation. It remains until the end of life on earth. However, we believe God has made provision for forgiveness of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ and victory over sin through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 3:10, 23, 6:23, Eph. 4:18, 1 John 1:8-10, Gal. 5:16-17).

Salvation

We believe that salvation from the penalty and power of sin is available through faith in Jesus Christ alone. This salvation was made possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus. On the cross, Jesus became sin for us and died in our place. There is nothing a person can do to earn their salvation (including good works, moral achievement or religious status). The one and only condition for salvation is personal faith in Jesus Christ as one's own substitute for sin and savior from sin. At the time of salvation, a person is spiritually regenerated, sins are forgiven, God's righteousness is imputed, and he/she is declared righteous in the sight of God. This salvation is complete and a present possession of all believers which remains his/hers forever. All who have trusted Christ as Savior are kept secure and will never lose their salvation (1 Pet. 1:18-19, 2 Cor. 5:21, 1 Pet. 2:24, Eph 2:8-9, Tit. 3:5, Eph. 4:32, Rom. 5:1, Rom. 8:38-39).

The Church

We believe that the Church is a family composed of people who have placed their faith in Christ alone as Savior. The Church began on the day of Pentecost and will continue its distinct purpose until Christ's return. We believe that the Church exists in both a universal aspect, as the Body of Christ, and in a local assembly of believers in Jesus Christ. We practice water baptism by immersion, and the Lord's Supper, which we believe to be a memorial of Christ's death. Both are open to all believers (1 Cor. 12:13, Acts 2:1-4, 1 Thess. 4:13-17, Col. 4:16, Eph. 4:7, Heb. 13:17, Matt. 28:19-20, 1 Cor. 11:23-28.)

Marriage and Sexuality

Marriage is a picture of Christ's relationship with His Bride – the Church. It is defined from the beginning of Scripture as a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman. God designed sexual intimacy for a marriage relationship and does not endorse or condone it in any other context (1 Thess 4:3-5, Eph 5:22-23, Gen 2:24, Matt 19:4-5).

Angelic Beings

We believe that God created an order of spirit beings (without physical bodies) known as angels, before the formation of the world and for the purpose of worshipping and serving Him. Angels possess individual personalities and are intelligent and powerful. They are inferior to God but superior to humans. These angels (also known as elect or holy angels) carry out the will of God by ministering to humankind (Col. 1:16, Heb. 1:6, 2 Pet. 2:11, Isa. 14:12-15, 1 Pet. 5:8, Eph 6:12, Heb. 1:14).

Satan and Demons

We believe Lucifer was one of the highest ranking of all the angelic beings, but he sinned through pride and rebelled against God, thereby becoming Satan (or the adversary) (Isa. 14:12-20). We believe that Satan's declared purpose is to oppose the plan of God and to promote his own evil designs by deceiving and attacking humanity (2 Cor 4:4, Rev 20:3, Acts 5:3). In carrying out his work, Satan is aided by other fallen angels known as demons or evil spirits (Eph. 6:11-12). We believe these demons can influence and tempt people, exerting a greater degree over unbelievers (Matt 4:24).

Dispensations*

We believe that God accomplishes His purposes in the world through and for humanity under varying dispensations or administrations. These administrations are sometimes referred to as the age of the Mosaic Law (former times); the Age of Grace (the present time); and the future millennial kingdom (the time to come). We believe that these dispensations helpfully articulate the various covenants found in Scripture but that dispensations are not different ways of salvation. Rather, they are ways of life which test the obedience of man to God's revealed will during a particular time. We believe that it is necessary to observe the dispensational distinction in order to properly understand the teaching of the Scriptures (1 Cor. 10:32, Eph. 1:10, 3:2, Gal. 4:2, Luke 12:42, Heb. 12:22-23).

Future Things*

We believe that the next major event in God's prophetic calendar is the Rapture of the Church. The Rapture will occur when living and dead believers are caught up to meet the Lord and receive rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Following the Rapture, a seven year period of Tribulation (or distress) will commence upon the earth at which time God's wrath will be poured out on mankind. God's millennial kingdom will be ushered in by Jesus Christ when He returns to the earth in power and glory to rule sovereignly over the world for a thousand years. The unsaved dead of all ages will be raised after the millennium to face the final judgment also known as the Great White Throne Judgment. Those who have not trusted in Jesus alone for their salvation will be cast into the lake of fire where there will be eternal and conscious punishment. We believe that the redeemed of all ages will exist in an eternal state of joy and bliss in the new heavens and new earth where they will worship and serve God forever (John 14:3, Heb. 10:37, 2 Cor. 5:10, Matt. 24:21-31, Rev. 20-22).

**Strict agreement with this doctrine is not required for membership at Cityview Bible Church; however, we affirm these beliefs as taught in Scripture and have established them as official positions of our Church.*