

NORTH STREET CHRISTIAN CHURCH



DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Prepared by Pastors and Elders
July 2004

Introduction

This statement of doctrine has been developed in order to promote a clear understanding of the basis of our teaching and preaching. The only true doctrine is that which is understood in light of a proper interpretation of the Bible as the Word of God, therefore we are ready to stand to be corrected concerning any doctrinal teaching that does not align properly with Scripture.

View of Scripture

The Bible is the written revelation of God to man. It is the only infallible, trustworthy rule of faith and practice for the New Testament Church. The Bible is verbally inspired by God and inerrant in its original form as the authors were guided along by the Holy Spirit to write exactly what God desired to be written. In doing so, the personalities and writing styles of the authors were retained as the recorded Word of God was composed.

The proper method of interpreting and presenting Scripture is from a literal view, accepting the Scripture as it presents itself. Every text must be considered from a historical and grammatical perspective before proper interpretation and application can be made. As the Bible is studied, the Holy Spirit gives the student the needed enlightenment to have proper understanding.

There is only one proper interpretation of a passage of Scripture although there may be various proper applications. The true meaning and intent of a Scripture is the preacher's/teacher's primary goal. Appropriate application can be made only after understanding the text and its context properly.

Related Scripture:

II Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:12; Matthew 5: 18; John 7:16-18; John 10:35; John 16:12,13; John 17:17

The Fullness of God

There is only one true God. He is infinite, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, sovereign and immutable. He is one in essence, having existed eternally in His fullness as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Only He is to be revered and is worthy of worship and obedience.

God the Father

The Father is the first person of the Godhead. He orders all things according to His divine will for His own purpose and according to His grace. He is sovereign in creation, sustenance, redemption and judgment; He is the Father of His Son Jesus Christ and to mankind and all creation. He is the author of salvation for mankind being the Spiritual Father only to those who are believers. He adopts as His own those who come to Him through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Related Scripture:

Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 103:19; Psalm 145:8,9; Ephesians 1 :4-6; Ephesians 4:4-6; Romans 8: 4; II Corinthians 6:18; I Peter 1:17; John 1:12; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9

God the Son

Jesus is the second person of the Godhead. He is equal with God also existing eternally. Through His Son, God the Father created all things and by Him all things continue to exist and operate. In the incarnation, the Son accepted the essential characteristics of humanity yet retained His deity. He is the only one who has ever existed and could ever exist as the perfect God-Man.

He was born of God's seed through a virgin named Mary. He lived a sinless life and died an atoning death. He resurrected on the third day and now has ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God in dominion over all. He will come again to receive His bride, the Church, unto Himself.

Redemption for all who believe was accomplished through the shedding of His blood on the cross. His death was voluntary, substitutionary, and redemptive. His resurrection from the grave was literal and physical confirming His deity and guaranteeing a future resurrection for all believers.

Jesus will return to the earth to receive His bride, the Church unto Himself at the Second Coming and will return in glory to establish a millennial reign on earth. Jesus is the one through whom God will judge all mankind, believers and unbelievers. He is the mediator between God and man; the Head of his body - the Church; the coming King of all Kings; the final judge.

Related Scripture:

Isaiah 7:14; Psalm 2; Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5;2; Matthew 1:23-25; 25:14-46; 28:6; Luke 1:26-35; 24:38-39; John 1:1-14,29; 5:23; John 8:58; 10:30; 14:9,10; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 3:21,26; 4:23-25; 5:8-11; 8:34; I Corinthians 3:10,15; I Corinthians 15; II Corinthians 5:14,15; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:9-23; I Thessalonians 4:13-5:11; Hebrews 1&2; Hebrews 9:16-28; I Peter 2:21-25; Revelation 20.

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead. The Spirit possesses all of the attributes of the personality and deity of God. He is equal with the Father and Son and has existed and will continue to exist eternally. The Holy Spirit is the indwelling presence of God in the life of every believer. The Spirit serves as a Comforter and Guide enabling the Christian to lead a Godly life. He has had a sovereign work in creation, incarnation, written revelation and salvation.

The Holy Spirit began a work in the Church Age at Pentecost when He came to indwell the life of every believer for the building up of the Body of Christ on earth. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He lives to glorify Jesus Christ and transform those who believe into the image of Christ.

It is the Holy Spirit who regenerates the believer from the moment of salvation when the believer places his/her faith in Christ for eternal life. The Spirit indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers and seals the believer. The Holy Spirit produces fruit in the lives of faithful followers. The fruit of the Spirit, by which all believers are known is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control.

The Holy Spirit also administers gifts to the Church. Every believer has at least one gift to be used in God's service. The gifts are properly used to glorify Christ by being implemented in redeeming the lost or in building up believers in the faith. There is no Biblical evidence that the miraculous gifts were granted in general beyond the Apostolic era although miracles by God are still possible and do occur.

Related Scripture:

John 15:26; 14:16,17; Acts 5:3,4; 13:2; Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 14:25; 3:16; 6:19; Romans 15:16; John 14:26; I Corinthians 12:3; John 16:13; I Corinthians 6:11; Romans 11:33,34; Acts 7:51; I Corinthians 2:14; Galatians 5:22-26; I Corinthians 12; Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:11-16

Salvation and Obedience

Salvation for mankind is essential because of man's spiritual condition. Man was created by God in His image and likeness. He was created free of sin with intelligence, volition, self-determination and moral responsibility. God's intention was the man should glorify Him and live in fellowship with Him enjoying the pleasures of His Divine Will.

The sin of Adam, as he disobeyed the revealed Word of God, caused man to lose his innocence and incurred upon man the penalty of spiritual and physical death. Because of man's sinful state, and no longer being perfect, he became subject to the wrath of God. Man would be hopelessly, spiritually lost without God's divine intervention because he has no ability to save himself from spiritual death. Man's salvation is wholly the work of God's grace through His chosen solution of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. All men are sinners by nature, choice and divine declaration.

Man can be saved only on the merit of the saving work of Christ and not on the basis of any human works. When a person comes to God through the redemption offered through Jesus Christ, he/she does so in response to God's call through the Gospel wherein He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies. God has made the provision, and by His choice, God calls man out of the world's condemnation. Each man is responsible for his own coming to God in faith accompanied by repentance and obedience. Upon man's acceptance of Christ's atoning work and provision for eternal life, he is supernaturally regenerated by God's Holy Spirit. A person is saved when God makes the pronouncement that it is so.

The issue of salvation is best made clear when a person considers his/her response to the question Jesus first asked to His disciples, "Who do you say the I am? " (Matthew 16) Our genuine response to this question is not simply a matter of morality or lifestyle but one of eternal destiny as well. Salvation is not an issue of having a Church membership, or of having repeated the sinner's prayer; or of following a rote formula. Jesus is the only valid object of saving faith. The Scripture teaches that He is God; He is Holy; He is the Savior; He is Lord and that He is ultimately the Judge. With a person's whole heart the question He asked must be answered individually. When Jesus is genuinely accepted as Savior and Lord, a believer's life is regenerated and brings a changed spiritual condition which results with a change in thinking, feeling, and actions.

Related Scripture:

Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Romans 10:9,10; Ephesians 2:5 & 8-10; John 3:16

In searching the New Testament, examples are not found of true believers who are obedient to Jesus Christ as Savior yet disobedient to Him as Lord. The Scripture teaches that all who practice Biblical faith are obedient as a result of having believed. The response to the gospel of Christ, found in the New Testament, includes faith, repentance, public profession of Christ, obedience to Christ in Christian baptism and faithful Christian living. Faith is the belief and trust that Jesus is the way to eternal life. Repentance is turning from the sin life toward God, forsaking the world's ways. Baptism is a visible, God chosen, God commanded response of faith. Faithful Christian living is the result of a transformed life, wherein obedience to Christ and doing good works in His name give the Christian the primary purpose of their new existence.

The security for eternal life is found in the immutability and integrity of God and not in man's efforts. Salvation does not give the believer a license to sin. Only those who are faithful to the end are saved.

Related Scripture:

Hebrews 13:15,16; Ephesians 2:10; Romans 12:9-21; John 15:8; Philippians 2:12,13; II Timothy 3:17; James 2:14-26

"Simple assent to the gospel, divorced from a transforming commitment to the living Christ is by biblical standards less than faith, and is less than saving, and to elicit only assent of this kind would be to secure only false conversions." -- J.I. Packer

"It is the idea -- where did it come from? - that one can be a Christian without being a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. It reduces the gospel to the mere fact of Christ's having died for sinners, requires of sinners only that they acknowledge this by the barest intellectual assent, and then assures them of their eternal security when they may very well not be born again. This view bends faith beyond recognition - at least for those who know what the Bible says about faith and promises false peace to thousands who have given verbal assent to this reductionist Christianity but are not truly in God's family."

- -James Montgomery Boice

The Church

The pattern for the Church today is best understood by studying the Church of the New Testament. The Church of Jesus Christ has no need to identify with a denomination, brotherhood, fellowship or teachings of any fallible man. The Church is to be locally organized beneath the leadership of qualified elders and deacons who use the Scripture only for all doctrine and practice.

Related Scripture:

Matthew 28:16-20; Acts; Ephesians 4:11 – 16; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:1-16; Titus 2:1-9; The New Testament

Recommended Reading: *The Master's Plan for the Church*, MacArthur

In pattern of the Church of the New Testament there are two ordinances to be observed. They are the Lord's Supper and Christian baptism.

The Lord's Supper is the act by where we remember the gospel of Jesus Christ. The early Church participated in the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week and from house to house. In this remembrance there is the looking back to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There is communion with Christ as we take time to examine ourselves and to seek Him. There is proclamation to the world that we still believe and submit to Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. Of course the bread and juice hold no spiritual power. They are the chosen elements whereby we remember our God and His message – the highest revelation being His Son Jesus the Christ.

Related Scripture:

Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19,20; I Corinthians 11:23-34; Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 10:16

Baptism, as previously mentioned, is a visible, God chosen, God commanded response of faith. It is expedient for every believer in fulfilling his/her response of belief in Christ as Savior and Lord. It is the natural ongoing obedience for the person who has repented of their sin and has yielded to Jesus Christ as Savior/Lord. It is presented in the New Testament (in the Book of Acts especially) as that act which identifies a person as a believer in Jesus Christ.

It is by immersion only. Pouring water or sprinkling water for baptism was not practiced in New Testament times. It symbolizes death, burial and resurrection thereby identifying the believer with Jesus Christ and giving testimony of death to sin and resurrection to new life. It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ.

Related Scripture:

Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 2:38-42; Acts 8:36-39; Acts 9:10-19; Acts 16:11-15; Acts 16: 25-34; Romans 6:1-11

Life After Death

We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost. The saved are raised to eternal, conscious life in Heaven. The lost are raised to eternal torment in Hell in conscious separation from God. We believe in the bodily, personal, premillennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Related Scripture:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:34; John 14:2; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Revelation 2:7; Matthew 8:11; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 13:49-50; Mark 9:47-48; Luke 12:5; Revelation 21:8.