



1. The Scriptures Inspired

We have a high view of the Bible and recognize it as the “inspired” Word of God. The term “inspiration” is based on the Greek word *theopneustos* which communicates the idea of God “breathing out” His Word (2 Tim. 3:16). The Bible teaches that “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (1 Peter 1:21). Our understanding of inspiration is that the Holy Spirit guided human authors so that what they wrote in Scripture is accurate and without error (both the Old and New Testaments). They are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8,11; Galatians 1:6-9).

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent “I AM,” the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. There are absolute attributes of God and are so named because they are found exclusively in God. These attributes include omniscience (Ps. 139:1-6), omnipresence (Ps. 139:7-11), and omnipotence (Ps. 139:12-16). He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22; Mark 12:28-30, 32).

THE ADORABLE GODHEAD

(a) Terms Defined

The terms trinity and persons, as related to the godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from “gods many and lords many.” We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

(b) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

Christ taught a distinction of persons in the godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this

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distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

(c) Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Father which constitutes Him the Father and not the Son; there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore, the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11,21; Zechariah 14:9)

(d) Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation, and authority. Hence, no person in the godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30,32,37; 8:17,18).

(e) The Title, Lord Jesus Christ

The appellation Lord Jesus Christ, is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Romans 1:1-3,7; 2 John 3).

(f) The Lord Jesus Christ, God With Us

The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2,10,14; Revelation 1:13,17).

(g) The Title, Son of God

Since the name Immanuel embraces both God and man, in the one person, our

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Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title Son of God describes His proper deity, and the title Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title Son of God belongs to the order of eternity, and the title Son of Man to the order of time (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).

(h) Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ

Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title Son of God solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14,18,29,49; 1 John 2:22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

(i) Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28)

(j) Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son

Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the godhead except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2:8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).



3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

No other single individual has impacted the history of the world in general and western civilization in particular more than Jesus of Nazareth.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- a. His virgin birth. Jesus was born with the human nature of His mother and the divine nature of His Father. He did not inherit a sin nature that we inherit from our fathers because His Father was God. (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).
- b. His sinless life. He did not inherit a sin nature that we inherit from our fathers because His Father was God. The Scriptures are very clear concerning Christ and His absence of sin. Christ knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:2; Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
- c. His miracles. Although Jesus performed miracles, He was also subject to human limitations and experienced things like hunger (Matt. 4:2) and thirst (John 4:6). Even in doing miracles, He relied on the power of the Holy Spirit to do the will of His Father (John 5:19; Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- d. His substitutionary work on the cross. The Bible teaches that Christ's death was substitutionary in nature. Under the Old Testament law, animals were sacrificed as substitutes for people who were sinners. Jesus fulfilled this aspect of the sacrifice by dying as a substitute for Christians (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Rom. 5:8).
- e. His bodily resurrection from the dead. At the very heart of the Christian Gospel is the miracle of the resurrection of Christ. Although Jesus was certified dead and buried according to the custom of His time, three days later He was seen alive. (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- f. His exaltation to the right hand of God. Several weeks after His resurrection, Jesus ascended to His Father in heaven. This ascension marked the end of Christ's self-limitations, the glorification of Christ (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).



5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Bible teachers often use the word *conversion* when describing the salvation experience from a human perspective. Conversion refers to the personality change that takes place when a person becomes a Christian. This change embraces the total person, intellect, emotions, and will.

(a) Conditions to Salvation

Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

(b) The Evidences of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The Church and its Ordinances.

The Greek word *ekklesia*, translated "church" in the New Testament, was widely used in the first century to describe a group that was called out from the larger community for a specific purpose. In this general way, the word is used to describe a trade guild (Acts 19:32, 39, 41), a general gathering as in Israel in the wilderness (Acts 7:38), and a synagogue meeting (Matt. 18:17). But the word is also used in a more technical way to describe the gathering of the early Christians.

A local church is more than just a gathering of Christians. It must assemble for the right purpose, have the right authority, reproduce itself, have the right organization, and have the seal of God on its existence. A church may be described as an assembly of professing believers in whom Christ dwells, organized to carry out the Great Commission, administer the ordinances, and reflect spiritual gifts under the discipline of the Scriptures.



(a) Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).

(b) Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers “till He come!”

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20). We believe in the baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit by speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.

8. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews



12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15,16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

9. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- c. To be a channel of God’s purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).
- d. To be a people who demonstrate God’s love and compassion for all the world (Psalms 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

We exist expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).
- b. Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).



c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ and care for the poor and needy of the world (Galatians 5:22-26; Matthew 25:37-40; Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29; Galatians 5:22-26).

10. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), (3) building a Body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16), and (4) Meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalms 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

We have been given a spiritual gift to serve in ministry. The apostle Paul used five different Greek words to describe spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:1-7).

Pneumatikon (spiritual) describes the character of these gifts as spiritual (1 Cor. 12:1). *Charismata* (gifts) emphasizes God's free and gracious gifts (1 Cor. 12:4). *Diakonia* (ministries) describes gifts as opportunities for ministry (1 Cor. 12:5). *Energama* (activities) suggests that gifts are an endowment of God's power or energy (1 Cor. 12:6). *Phanerosis* (manifestation) describes gifts as an evidence of God working through us (1 Cor. 12:7).

There are three types of spiritual gifts. The miraculous gifts include such gifts as tongues and healing. The four enabling gifts, which each Christian appears to have to some degree, include discernment, faith, knowledge, and wisdom. These gifts enhance the task-oriented gifts (TEAM gifts). There are nine task-oriented gifts: evangelism (Eph. 4:11), prophecy (Rom. 12:6), teaching (Rom. 12:7), exhortation (Rom. 12:8), shepherding (Eph. 4:11), showing mercy (Rom. 12:8), serving (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28), giving (Rom. 12:8), and administration (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28).

11. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).



12. What we believe about Eschatology

The word “eschatology” literally means “the study of last things.” Therefore, it is fitting that this last study in what we believe should deal with what we believe about eschatology. Our “last study” in Christian doctrine will focus on “last things.”

As is the case with other doctrines, some Christians have minor differences of opinion concerning some of the more exact details of the interpretation of prophecy. But there are two areas in which all evangelical Christians agree concerning the return of Christ. The first is the certainty that He will in fact return. This is the basis for our hope as Christians. The second is that He may return at any moment, perhaps before you complete reading this chapter. This is the basis for our motivation in Christian service.

- The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church. While there are certain signs associated with the second coming of Christ, there appears to be no preconditions established for the rapture of the church. Although the word “rapture” does not occur in Scripture, it is described in both 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4. The word rapture means “caught away” and is used in the Latin versions of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

- The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).



- **The Final Judgment**

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11- 15; 21:8).

- **The New Heavens and the New Earth**

“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21,22).