



# What We Believe

## The Bible is our Foundation

At Heritage our beliefs are grounded upon the truth found in the Bible.

We believe the Bible to be inerrant, infallible, and authoritative for all of life.

Therefore, we cherish the Scriptures and seek to proclaim that we all are sinners, yet God in His infinite love has made a way for us to be saved through faith in His Son, Jesus.

You can read details about our beliefs in this document.

## I. BIBLIOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that God has revealed Himself to man both generally and specially. Nature is the product of God's general revelation,<sup>1</sup> by which He communicates His existence and work as Creator. Scripture is the product of God's special revelation,<sup>2</sup> by which He communicates to man the truth about Himself that would have otherwise been eternally unknown – His nature, His character, His purpose for mankind, and His plan of redemption. The Scriptures are the product of the verbal,<sup>3</sup> plenary<sup>4</sup> inspiration of God, resulting in the original autographs being inerrant, infallible and authoritative. The Holy Scriptures in their entirety, down to the very words of the original autographs, were given by divine inspiration. Inspiration was that work whereby God by His Spirit, through human writers utilizing their distinct personalities and literary styles, gave us His Word. The inspiration of Scripture is attested to by Scripture itself,<sup>4</sup> by Jesus Christ,<sup>5</sup> and by the character of God.<sup>6</sup> Those sixty-six books, thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament, have their place in the Bible on the basis of their inspiration and were recognized and submitted to as inspired and canonical by the Church. God also works in the illumination<sup>7</sup> (making it understandable) and preservation (maintaining a trustworthy copy) of His Word. The Scriptures stand as our final standard for faith and practice.

*1 Psalm 19:1; 2 Romans 3:11, Ephesians 1:9; 3 2 Peter 1:21; 4 2 Timothy 3:16; 5 Luke 24:44-45; 6 Hebrews 6:18; 7 Ephesians 1:17-18*

## II. THEOLOGY/PROPER: THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

We believe in the one and only living and true God; His divine essence is invisible,<sup>1</sup> incorporeal and personal Spirit;<sup>2</sup> His divine nature is undivided and indivisible. There exists three eternal Persons<sup>3</sup> in the one divine essence, known respectively as the Father,<sup>4</sup> Son,<sup>5</sup> and Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup> He is self-existent, self-sufficient, life,<sup>7</sup> eternal,<sup>8</sup> infinite, omnipresent,<sup>9</sup> omnipotent,<sup>10</sup> omniscient,<sup>11</sup> wise, immutable,<sup>12</sup> sovereign,<sup>13</sup> incomprehensible,<sup>14</sup> inscrutable,<sup>15</sup> holy,<sup>16</sup> righteous,<sup>17</sup> just,<sup>18</sup> true,<sup>19</sup> faithful,<sup>20</sup> good,<sup>21</sup> long-suffering,<sup>22</sup> gracious,<sup>23</sup> merciful,<sup>24</sup> and loving.<sup>25</sup>

*1 Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Deuteronomy 4:15; 3 Exodus 3:14; 4 Romans 1:7, John 6:27; 5 John 10:31-38, 1 John 5:20; 6 Acts 5:3-4, 1 Corinthians 3:16; 7 Genesis 2:7, Psalm 84:2; 8 Isaiah 57:15; 9 Psalm 139:7-12; 10 Matthew 19:26; 11 Psalm 147:5; 12 Malachi 3:6; 13 Psalm 33:8-11; 14 Isaiah 55:9; 15 Job 33:12; 16 Isaiah 6:1-5; 17 Psalm 145:17; 18 Isaiah 61:8; 19 Psalm 119:16; 20 Deuteronomy 7:9, Psalm 119:90; 21 Psalm 145:9; 22 Exodus 34:6; 23 Romans 5:15; 24 Psalm 103:13-14; 25 Jeremiah 31:3*

### III. CHRISTOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal, pre-existent Son of God.<sup>1</sup> Although pre-existent, Jesus emptied Himself at the appointed time<sup>2</sup>, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, the lowest description of man, and became incarnate<sup>3</sup> by miraculous conception<sup>4</sup> and virgin birth,<sup>5</sup> for the purpose of redeeming sinful men.<sup>6</sup> He is fully God<sup>7</sup> and fully man;<sup>8</sup> perfect deity and humanity. He lived a sinless human life,<sup>9</sup> and then offered Himself a sacrifice by dying on the cross<sup>10</sup> and shedding His blood, in full substitution and as a sufficient atonement<sup>11</sup> for the sins of all men – but an efficient atonement<sup>12</sup> only to those who believe. He was buried and on the third day, He arose bodily<sup>13</sup> from the dead, alive forevermore. He later ascended bodily into Heaven<sup>14</sup> where at the right hand of the Father,<sup>15</sup> He now intercedes for those who believe in Him.

*1 John 8:58, John 1:1-3; 2 Philippians 2:6-7; 3 John 1:14; 4 Matthew 1:20; 5 Matthew 1:22-23, Isaiah 7:14; 6 Genesis 3:15, John 3:16-17; 7 John 5:22-23, John 8:58, John 1:1-3; 8 Hebrews 2:14-18, Matthew 4:2, Matthew 8:24, Matthew 26:29; 9 Hebrews 4:15; 10 1 Corinthians 15:3; 11 1 Timothy 2:6, 1 Timothy 4:10, Titus 2:11, Hebrews 2:9, 1 John 2:2; 12 John 17:9, 20, 24 Ephesians 1:4, 7 2 Timothy 1:9-10; 13 1 Corinthians 15:4, Matthew 28:5-6; 14 Acts 1:9-11; 15 Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 1:13, Hebrews 10:12-13*

### IV. PNEUMATOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe the Holy Spirit is a divine Person,<sup>1</sup> equal with God the Father and God the Son, having the same divine nature and partaking of the same divine essence.<sup>2</sup> The Holy Spirit actively ministered in the OT<sup>3</sup> through creation, revelation and in a special, selective manner with men. The Holy Spirit actively ministered in the NT<sup>4</sup> in all aspects of Christ's life, from His birth to His death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit now has a prime ministry in salvation as He calls,<sup>5</sup> convicts,<sup>6</sup> and regenerates<sup>7</sup> the unbeliever. He indwells,<sup>8</sup> baptizes,<sup>9</sup> convicts,<sup>10</sup> gifts,<sup>11</sup> controls,<sup>12</sup> teaches,<sup>13</sup> guides,<sup>14</sup> assures, and prays<sup>15</sup> for believers.

*1 Acts 13:2, 1 Corinthians 2:10-12, Romans 15:30, John 14:26, Romans 8:26; 2 Acts 5:3-4, 1 Corinthians 12:11, Acts 13:4, John 3:3-8; 3 Genesis 1:2, Psalm 33:6, Micah 3:8, Genesis 6:3, Judges 13:25, Psalm 51:11; 4 Luke 1:35, Luke 3:21-22, Luke 4:16-21, Hebrews 9:14, Romans 8:11; 5 Acts 13:2; 6 John 16:8-11; 7 Titus 3:5; 8 John 14:16-17; 9 1 Corinthians 12:13; 10 1 John 3:20; 11 1 Corinthians 12:4; 12 Romans 8:6-9; 13 1 John 2:27; 14 Romans 8:14; 15 Romans 8:26-27*

## V. ANGELOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF ANGELS

We believe in the existence of created beings called angels. These spirit beings<sup>1</sup> are generally invisible but have some unknown form.<sup>2</sup> They are persons.<sup>3</sup> They are basically superior to man, yet inferior to God. There are holy, elect angels<sup>4</sup> and unholy, fallen<sup>5</sup> angels (demons). The elect angels minister<sup>6</sup> on behalf of God to the nations of the world and to believers. The fallen angels chose to follow<sup>7</sup> Lucifer (Satan). Satan now uses his gifts and abilities to oppose God at every level and by every possible means. The fallen angels<sup>8</sup> assist Satan in his scheme. Eventually, Satan and all the fallen angels will be cast into the Lake of Fire for eternity.<sup>9</sup>

*1 Luke 24:37-39; 2 Luke 24:4; 3 Job 38:7, Daniel 10:11, Revelation 22:16, 1 Peter 1:12; 4 Ezekiel 28:14, Isaiah 6:2-7, Daniel 12:1, Daniel 8:16, Revelation 5:1; 5 Matthew 8:16, Ephesians 6:12, Isaiah 14:12-14; 6 Revelation 1:1, Revelation 8-9; Hebrews 1:14, Luke 16:22; 7 Genesis 1:31, Revelation 12:4; 8 1 Timothy 4:1, 1 John 4:1, 3 Matthew 12:42-45, Mark 5:1-5, Matthew 4:24; 9 Revelation 20:10, Matthew 25:41*

## VI. ANTHROPOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

We believe in the literal Genesis account of creation. We believe that man came into being through the creative act of God. Man is the crowning part of God's creation, in that he was created in God's image<sup>1</sup> and was given dominion over all the rest of creation.<sup>2</sup> The image of God is personhood. Man's nature is material<sup>3</sup> (the body) and immaterial<sup>4</sup> (the soul and spirit). He fell from his original state of perfection<sup>5</sup> through willful disobedience.<sup>6</sup> As a result, his nature was corrupted,<sup>7</sup> death was introduced to the world,<sup>8</sup> and the sin nature was passed down to his posterity.<sup>9</sup> All men are in one of two categories of existence – either saved or lost.

*1 Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 9:6; 2 Genesis 1:28-30; 3 Genesis 2:7; 3:19; 4 Genesis 2:7, Psalm 3:2, Genesis 41:8, 2 Timothy 4:22, Hebrews 4:12; 5 Genesis 2:16-17; 6 Genesis 3:6; 7 Romans 8:1-14; 8 Genesis 5:5, Genesis 3:23-24; 9 Romans 5:12*

## VII. HAMARTIOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

We believe that sin is a failure<sup>1</sup> to conform to the divine standard<sup>2</sup> of (and/or the transgression of) God's law.<sup>3</sup> It entered the universe when Lucifer rebelled against God.<sup>4</sup> It entered the world when Adam and Eve chose to disobey God in the garden.<sup>5</sup> All men have inherited the sin principle from Adam<sup>6</sup> and all are totally depraved.<sup>7</sup> The basis of ultimate and complete victory over sin is found in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup> Those who believe in Christ are justified from their sin, but sin is not dead in them until it is removed at their glorification.<sup>9</sup>

1 Romans 5:20-21, Romans 6:1-2, 6-7; Romans 7:17-18; 2 Deuteronomy 19:15, John 1:29; 3 Matthew 7:23, 1 Timothy 2:14; 4 Isaiah 14:12-14, Revelation 12:1-4; 5 Genesis 3:1-7; 6 Romans 3:9-18, Romans 8:2, Romans 5:16; 7 Romans 3:10-12, Psalm 14:1-3, Psalm 53:1-3; 8 Romans 5:1, 9 9 1 Corinthians 15:50-53

## VIII. SOTERIOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

We believe that because of sin,<sup>1</sup> its results,<sup>2</sup> and the character of God,<sup>3</sup> all of mankind needs salvation. This salvation was sufficiently<sup>4</sup> provided for all of mankind through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ but efficiently<sup>5</sup> applied only to those who believe. Salvation is wholly the work of God's grace,<sup>6</sup> God's mercy,<sup>7</sup> and is completely apart from works.<sup>8</sup> All three members of the Trinity are involved in salvation. The Father planned it,<sup>9</sup> the Son purchased it,<sup>10</sup> and the Spirit preserves it.<sup>11</sup> A saved person has been converted and justified as God has declared him to be righteous.<sup>12</sup> A saved person is sanctified as he grows to be more like Christ.<sup>13</sup> A saved person will be glorified when he reaches his eternal home.<sup>14</sup> The sinless Christ is the sinner's substitute, whereby reconciliation is made with God on his behalf,<sup>15</sup> redemption is made from the slavery of sin,<sup>16</sup> regeneration makes him alive,<sup>17</sup> and he is adopted as a child of God with all its rights, privileges, and responsibilities.<sup>18</sup> All this is possible through the atoning death of Christ. The benefits of His atoning death are for all who by faith assent to the facts of the gospel,<sup>19</sup> exercise repentance toward God,<sup>20</sup> and place their trust in Christ and His atoning work.<sup>21</sup> This salvation is evidenced by one's fellowship with God and His people,<sup>22</sup> one's obedience to God,<sup>23</sup> one's love for God's people,<sup>24</sup> one's confession of Jesus,<sup>25</sup> one's being made new,<sup>26</sup> and one's works of righteousness.<sup>27</sup> Salvation is secure as it is based in the very character, promises, power and deeds of God so that the true believer cannot lose his salvation and will be preserved until his glorification.<sup>28</sup>

1 Psalm 51:5, Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 3:10-12; 2 Romans 5:12; 3 Hebrews 12:14, Romans 5:19, John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:21; 4 1 Timothy 2:6, 1 Timothy 4:10, Titus 2:11, Hebrews 2:9, 1 John 2:2; 5 John 17:9, 20, 24 Ephesians 1:4, 7 2 Timothy 1:9-10; 6 Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 2:11-15; 7 Romans 6:23, Titus 3:5; 8 Ephesians 2:8-10, Titus 3:5; 9 Ephesians 1:3-6; 10 Ephesians 1:7-12; 11 Ephesians 1:13-14; 12 Romans 3:24, Romans 5:1; 13 Ephesians 2:10-13; 14 Romans 8:30; 15 Colossians 1:20-21; 16 Romans 3:24, Ephesians 1:7; 17 Titus 3:5, John 3:3-7; 18 Ephesians 1:5, Galatians 4:5; 19 Acts 16:14, 32 20 Acts 17:30, Acts 20:21, Acts 26:20; 21 John 1:12, Galatians 2:16; 22 1 John 1:3; 23 1 John 2:3; 24 1 John 3:14; 25 1 John 4:15; 26 2 Corinthians 5:17; 27 1 John 2:29; 28 John 10:28-29 Ephesians 4:30, John 3:16, John 5:24, Romans 8:33-39

## IX. ECCLESIOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ needs to be understood in two senses, namely universal and local. In the universal sense,<sup>1</sup> the church consists of all those during this age who have been born of God's Spirit and have therefore been baptized into the body of Christ. In the local sense,<sup>2</sup> a church is a called-out, living assembly of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith, organized by NT principles, assembling regularly together, led by qualified pastors<sup>3</sup> who are supported by qualified deacons,<sup>4</sup> under the discipline of God's Word and the Headship<sup>5</sup> of Christ, and observing the ordinances. The ordinances are those commands of Christ given to the Church, specifically baptism<sup>6</sup> and the Lord's Supper.<sup>7</sup> They are an act of obedience, not the conveyance of grace. The purpose of the church is four-fold:<sup>8</sup> worship of God, fellowship with God and His people, edification of believers, and evangelization of the lost.

*1 Galatians 3:26-29, 1 Corinthians 12:13; 2 Acts 2:41-47, Acts 6:1-7, Acts 11:19-26, Acts 13:1-3; 3 1 Timothy 3:2, Acts 11:30, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Acts 20:28, Titus 1:5-7; 4 1 Timothy 3:8-13; 5 Ephesians 1:22-23; 6 Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:38, 41 Acts 8:38-39, Mark 1:5-10; 7 Luke 22:17-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-31; 8 Acts 2:41-47*

## X. ESCHATOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS

We believe in the pre-tribulational Rapture of the church,<sup>1</sup> in which all believers of the Church Age will be caught up by Christ to meet Him in the air.<sup>2</sup> They will then be judged and rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ.<sup>3</sup> The Church is the Bride of Christ,<sup>4</sup> who will be wed to Him in Heaven following the Rapture. Those left on the earth will undergo the seven years of the Great Tribulation.<sup>5</sup> This period will culminate with the battle of Armageddon<sup>6</sup> and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup> Christ will then establish His Kingdom for 1,000 years.<sup>8</sup> This period will conclude with Satan being loosed to lead a revolt with unbelieving children born in The Millennium.<sup>9</sup> Following The Millennium, God will judge all unsaved people at The Great White Throne Judgment.<sup>10</sup> The saved will spend eternity with God,<sup>11</sup> and the unsaved (with Satan and his fallen angels) will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.<sup>12</sup>

*1 Revelation 1:1, 3 1 Thessalonians 1:10, Matthew 24:14, Revelation 7; 2 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 3 Romans 14:12, 2 Corinthians 5:10; 4 Revelation 19:7, Revelation 21:9; 5 Daniel 9:24-27, Revelation 11:3, Revelation 12:6, Revelation 13:5; 6 Revelation 19:17-21, Zechariah 12:1-9, Zechariah 14:4; 7 Revelation 19:11-16, Matthew 24:16-30; 8 Revelation 20:1-6; 9 Revelation 20:7-10; 10 Revelation 20:11-15; 11 Revelation 21:1-10; 12 Revelation 20:11-15*