

THE DOCTRINAL STATEMENT OF C3 CHURCH

Introduction:

The leaders of C3 Church have developed this Doctrinal Statement for its members and those considering membership to establish an understanding of the beliefs we hold regarding our faith in God. We are a non-denominational Church with a leadership structure resembling the New Testament – possessing an Overseer, Board of Directors, Lead Pastor, and other church leaders. We have strong adherence to the Bible, paying close attention to the cultural context and specific genre with which each section of Scripture is written – refusing to fall victim to quoting out of context or otherwise being content to misrepresent the Word of God out of convenience or laziness. Neither the leadership of C3 Church nor its members claim to be perfect. Rather, we strive to follow closely the One who is – Jesus. The following then, while not an exhaustive list of all that we hold to be true, nevertheless highlight many things that we believe are clear in God’s Word.

The Holy Trinity

We believe that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit exist together as one God in three persons. The three persons of the Trinity exist eternally (without beginning or end) and are equally God.

God the Father

We believe in the one true, holy and living God, who is the Creator, and the Preserver of all things visible and invisible. We believe that God is Holy¹ and that He has always existed.

God the Son, Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus Christ was fully God and man. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who existed before creation. He is God made flesh, the only Son of the Father, who was born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit².

Jesus Christ paid for the sins of humanity when he was put to death on the cross; He overcame death by his resurrection; He is the eternal Savior and Mediator who now prays for us; we believe Jesus ascended into heaven and that he will return to judge all men at the last day. We now have a peace with God (righteousness) because we are reconciled through the sacrifice of Jesus.³

¹ Psalm 145:17; 1 Samuel 2:2; Isaiah 6:1-4; Revelation 4:8

² John 1:1-4; Colossians 1:16-17; Matthew 1:18

³ 1 Peter 3:18

God the Holy Spirit

We believe in Holy Spirit who is one in being with the Father and the Son. He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He leads us through faithfulness to the gospel into the fellowship of the Church. He comforts, sustains and gives strength to the faithful and guides them into all truth. Holy Spirit, according to God's Word, is sent from the Father and the Son.

The Church

We believe the Christian Church is a Universal Church that is made up of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ. It is the fellowship in which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are shared according to Christ's instructions. Under the discipline of Holy Spirit the Church exists for worship, the building up of believers and the sharing of the Gospel with the world.

We believe Holy Spirit gives gifts to each believer to help build the church⁴. Not all believers will share in the same gift⁵, but when we come to believe in Jesus we are given a gift(s) by Holy Spirit that serves as a demonstration⁶ of our being true children of God. We believe that the purpose of the local church is found in representing the life, ministry, and love of Jesus Christ in a world in sore need of all three.

The Bible

We believe the Bible is Holy and that it reveals everything necessary for our salvation. It is to be received through Holy Spirit as the true rule and guide for faith and life. Whatever is not revealed in or established by the Bible is not to be made an article of faith nor is it to be taught as essential to salvation. We believe that the 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books of the traditional protestant cannon are inspired and authoritative scripture. While we believe that the "Apocryphal" or "Deuterocanonical" Old Testament books may not be inspired scripture, we nevertheless hold these books to be of great value inasmuch as they are often quoted in the Bible and were in fact included in all English Bibles up until the mid-1800's.

Original Sin

Original sin comes from Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We believe man is fallen from righteousness and, apart from the grace of Jesus Christ, is unable to live a life of holiness; rather, he is always inclined to choose evil. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. In his own strength, without divine grace, man cannot do the good things that are pleasing and acceptable to God.⁷ Once receiving salvation however, man is responsible is free to exercise his will for good as he is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ 1 Corinthians 12:7

⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:6-11

⁶ Ephesians 1:13

⁷ Romans 3:10-18

Good Works

We believe good works are the necessary fruits of faith and naturally follow salvation; but good works do not have the ability to remove our sins or to avert divine judgment. We believe good works, pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, spring forth from a true and living faith, for through and by them faith is made evident.

Free Will

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God. We believe that we have no power to do good works acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ.

Reconciliation

We are seen as righteous before God only through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe that we are right before God by our acceptance of Jesus through faith.

We believe God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. The offering Christ freely made on the cross is the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, redeeming man from all sin, so that no other satisfaction is required.

We believe that when we come to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior we are washed clean from our sins, adopted by God.

Sanctification

We believe sanctification is that process through which we are not only delivered from the guilt of sin, but are saved from its power, and are enabled through grace, to love God with all our hearts. We believe sanctification is the work of God's grace through which we are enabled to live in accordance with God's will, and to strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

We believe this experience does not deliver us from the infirmities, ignorance, and mistakes common to man, or from the possibilities of further sin. The Christian must continue on guard against spiritual pride and seek to gain victory over every temptation to sin. He must respond wholly to the will of God so that sin will lose its power over him.

Sacraments

Sacraments ordained by Christ are not only evidence of a Christian's profession, but are also signs of God's good will toward us.

Water Baptism

Baptism is not only a sign of profession by Christians, but it also is a sign of new birth in the life of faith. The Baptism of young children is not a practice of C3 Church, however, we do celebrate and dedicate young children to be raised within godly homes and within the larger church family.

The Lord's Supper

We believe that "The Lord's Supper" is a sacred holy meal of bread and juice that symbolizes the body and blood of Christ. The Lord's Supper recalls the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and celebrates the unity of all the members of God's family. By sharing this meal, we give thanks for Christ's sacrifice and are nourished and empowered to go into the world in mission and ministry. At C3 Church we practice "open communion" - welcoming all to receive the sacrament who love Christ, repent of their sin, and seek to live in peace with one another.

Marriage

We believe a Christian marriage is one in which Christ is manifest through the marriage relationship between one man and one woman. A Christian marriage is not governed by the same principles which guide and govern a secular marriage. The Christian life, including the relationship of marriage, is a supernatural life. A Christian marriage does not just happen naturally; it happens unnaturally, supernaturally, as we obey the Scriptures and individually depend upon the grace of God. Christian marriage is based upon a God-given faith, hope, and love, which only the true believer possesses.

Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day

We believe the Lord's Day⁸ is divinely ordained for private and public worship, for rest from unnecessary work, and should be devoted to spiritual improvement, Christian fellowship and service. It is commemorative of our Lord's resurrection⁹ and is a symbol of our eternal rest. It is essential to the growth of the Christian Church, and important to the welfare of each believer.

We believe that "the Lord's Day" is a holy day and its importance is vital. We should remember the Lord's Day by devoting it to the Lord Jesus. We remember it by worshipping, knowing, fellowshiping with, and enjoying the crucified and risen Christ. We remember it as John did: by being in the Spirit; hearing Jesus' great Voice (the preaching of the gospel); and seeing Him (by faith) walking amidst the candlesticks (in the Church).

The most common way to observe the Lord's Day is by attending the worship services of Bible believing Church. On this day we are encouraged to exercise corporate worship of God that will often include such things as: prayer, reading of the Scriptures, singing, and perhaps sharing a meal together.

"The Lord's Day" is not to be confused with a 7th Day Sabbath requirement. We do not believe that Christians are bound to The Law of Moses and obligated to follow all of the 613 laws contained

⁸ Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2

⁹ John 20:1

within¹⁰, such as the observance of a Saturday sabbath¹¹. However, we do believe that Christians are called to and will naturally abide by the 10 commandments as originally given through Moses at Mt. Sinai.¹²

Worship Services at C3

Sunday services at C3 focus on worship, praise, and biblical instruction. Holy Spirit's manifest presence is always invited to any and all of our gatherings inasmuch as it is He who inspires believers, convicts of sin, and leads all of us into true worship of Jesus. Prophetic utterances and speaking in tongues, while in no way prohibited at C3, nevertheless must meet all biblical criteria. Whatever prophetic words that are given must follow all godly order and be passed by the leader of the service and approved before being shared with the wider gathering¹³. Additionally, while acknowledging that speaking in tongues is one of the gifts of Holy Spirit, we follow the biblical mandate that all those who speak in tongues have what they say interpreted and that both the one who speaks and the one who interprets do so without causing disorder.

Women in Leadership

Despite the ongoing debate within Christendom concerning the role of women in leadership, we find ample evidence of women occupying a variety of leadership roles¹⁴. Moreover, inasmuch as the writings of Paul are often quoted as being against women in leadership, let us point out that Paul is also found to commend the role of women in leadership – leading us to dig more deeply and having come to the conclusion that women are allowed in a variety of leadership roles at C3.

Tithes and Offerings

At C3, we will never ask to see your tax returns or condemn anyone for what they do not give by way of tithes or offerings. The standard of a tithe (tenth) of what we have received being given “back to the Lord” is a notion from the Old Testament. And although Jesus Himself commended the practice, He was quick to point out that everything we have (not just ten percent) belongs to the Lord. At C3, we believe one of the witnessed manifestations of Holy Spirit in the Bible is generosity. Ergo, we encourage members of C3 to exercise their faith by giving as Holy Spirit leads. That is, we see the tithe as a minimum gift and not a ceiling.

The Judgment and the Future State

We believe all men stand under the righteous judgment of Jesus Christ¹⁵, both now and in the last day. We believe in the resurrection of the dead; the righteous to life eternal and the wicked to endless condemnation.

¹⁰ Romans 10:4; Galatians 3:24; Hebrews 8

¹¹ Colossians 2:16

¹² Exodus 20

¹³ 1 Corinthians 14:26-33

¹⁴ Judges 4:4; 1 Corinthians 11:5; Romans 16:1, 7

¹⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10