



Doctrinal Distinctives

These are doctrinal positions shared by all of the elders which reflect the preaching and teaching ministry of the church. However, adherence to these doctrinal positions is not required to become a member.

Baptism

We believe that baptism by immersion is the public testimony of one's personal repentance of sin and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Further, baptism is a symbol that a repentant believer has died to sin and is raised to new life, united to Christ. Because baptism is a symbol of Christ's work in uniting us to Him, it is Christ's work which cleanses us of sin and not the physical act of baptism. (Romans 6:3-14; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; Acts 8:35-38, Matthew 28:19-20)

Eternal Security

We believe that it is Christ's work, not our own, that both fully justifies us and secures us before God. Therefore, we believe that the individual to whom God has given salvation will never lose that salvation. What God has begun in us, God promises to complete. (Romans 8:38-39, Philippians 1:6)

Further, we believe that passages which, on the surface, seem to indicate the possibility of losing one's salvation (such as John 15:6, Hebrews 3:6, 14, Hebrews 6:4-6, and 2 Peter 2:20-21) are actually intended to be warnings that illustrate the requirement of the believer to persevere and exhortations to aid the believer in perseverance. Finally, since it is the Holy Spirit who keeps us persevering, individuals who turn their back on God and fail to return to Him give evidence that they were never genuinely saved in the first place. (1 John 2:19, 2 John 9)

God's design for sexuality

We believe that Scripture teaches that God designed humankind, male and female, as two distinct sexes (Genesis 1:27-28, Matthew 19:4, Mark 10:6). Further, gender and gender roles, are intimately linked to the Creation of humankind, not an individual's preferences or cultural norms (Genesis 2:18, 21-24, Ephesians 5:22-33, 1 Timothy 2:12-14). Therefore, because a person's biological sex is given to them by God at conception, so is the expression of gender that accompanies that biological reality.

We believe that Scripture, in the Old and New Testaments, teaches that God designed human sexual relations to only be experienced between one man and one woman in the relationship of covenant marriage (Genesis 2:24, 1 Corinthians 7:2). Further, physical intimacy outside of marriage is expressly forbidden (Hebrews 13:4). Consequently, we believe that a marriage relationship between two men or two women would violate the teachings of Scripture (Romans 1:26-27). Because marriage is restricted to one man and one woman and because sex outside of marriage is sinful, there is no God ordained outlet for same-sex sexual relationships.

However, in the same way that we would endeavor to counsel and disciple an individual struggling with unbiblical heterosexual temptations (e.g. pornography, adultery, fornication, etc.), we would also commit to walk alongside an individual struggling with same-sex attraction through counseling and discipleship. We would encourage someone who struggles with same-sex attraction to resist the temptation to act on their desires. Finally, we believe that, irrespective of the nature of the temptations to which an individual is prone, there is no sinner beyond the hope offered through the Gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Leadership of the Church

We believe that God has called men to the leadership of the Church of Christ specifically to the office of elder and in the areas of oversight, shepherding, teaching, and preaching (1 Timothy 3:1-7). This does not mean that the spiritual gifts of teaching, exhortation, or leadership are limited to men (Romans 12:6-8). Because of this diverse giftedness, God has not restricted women from any role of service in the church except one in which the woman would have ongoing teaching or administrative authority over men.

Sanctification of Believers

We believe that the Scriptures teach that God desires and enables increasing spiritual maturity for Christians (Philippians 2:12-13; Romans 12:1-2). We also believe that this growth takes place in the context of the local church (Ephesians 4:10-16; 2 Peter 1:5-8). Though we will continue to grow in Christlikeness, we believe that our sinful nature itself will not be eradicated in this life (Romans 7:21-25). Consequently, we will not reach the point of “sinless perfection” until we see Christ face to face, and enter into His presence for all eternity (2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 1 John 3:2).

Speaking in Tongues for Today

We believe that the manifestation of “tongues” (“glossolalia”) in the New Testament was the supernatural enablement of people to speak to others in known languages which they themselves did not know, as a sign to unbelievers (Acts 2:4-11; 1 Corinthians 14:18-22). Further, we believe that Romans 8:23-27 is descriptive of the intercessory role of the Holy Spirit and is not prescriptive of how Christians should pray. Therefore, we do not believe that Scripture encourages Christians to seek, in worship or prayer, the experience of speaking in words or sounds which they do not themselves understand.

The Sufficiency of Scripture

We believe that the Canon of Scripture, which is limited to the 66 books of the Bible, is sufficient for all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). Further, we believe that while God does reveal Himself in creation (Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20) and through the conscience (Romans 2:14-15), His Scriptural revelation is fully complete. Consequently, we do not believe that God speaks today through “prophets” or “apostles”, giving new truth which is authoritative for others.

The Question of Healing for Today

We believe that passages such as Isaiah 53:5 and 1 Peter 2:24, which link “healing” to the work of Christ on the cross, are speaking of spiritual, not physical healing. Therefore we do not believe that it is always God’s will for a Christian to be healed of a physical ailment. However, we do believe that God can, and does, still grant supernatural physical healing on occasion today (James 5:14-15).