



Doctrinal Statement

At Heritage Christian Fellowship we respect that people hold a variety of doctrinal positions. With the assumption and aim that we are all continually submitting ourselves to Scripture, we will over time come to more and more doctrinal unity. However, it is important for all Christians to affirm the essential Christian doctrines that have been affirmed by the Church since the Apostles. We desire to see our members heartily affirm the following doctrinal statement, but if they cannot affirm every point, please speak to the elders about what differences you may have in your membership interview.

Orthodoxy:

The Bible

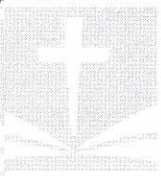
The Bible is the Word of God. The Holy Scriptures are inspired by God (God-breathed), not only in the general sense, but in every word. The Bible is without error and infallible as originally given. Being the written revelation of God, it is the divine, final, and complete authority in all matters pertaining to mankind, salvation, and the church. For the purposes of our faith, practice, doctrine, policy, and discipline, the eldership, being under the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, bears the responsibility of being the final interpretive authority on the meaning of Scripture and its application at Heritage Christian Fellowship. (Zech. 7:12; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:3-4, 19-21; Heb. 4:12-13)

God

There is only one true God who exists in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are equal in divine perfection, co-eternal, and execute distinct but harmonious offices. God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is holy, sovereign, and personal. God knows all things, is everywhere present, and is all-powerful. God is love, gracious, and merciful, and in every way good. God is spirit, self-existent, and transcendent. Being the Creator of all things, it is in Him that we live and move and exist. (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 34:6-7; Lev. 11:44; Isa. 9:6, 44:8, 45:5; Jer. 23:23-24; Dan. 4:35; Matt. 3:16-17; John 4:24; Acts 17:24-28; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Tim. 1:15-16; 1 John 3:20; 4:8; Rev. 4:11)

God the Father

God the Father is the first person of the Trinity (Godhead) who orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. He is faithful to all His promises, works all things together for good for those who love Him, and in His unfathomable grace gave His Son Christ Jesus for mankind's redemption. It was He who sent His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus, to be the Savior of the world, raising Him from the dead, glorifying His Son, and seating Him at His right hand. Recognizing the authority of God the Father, God the Son obeyed the Father in all things. It is also by God the Father that the Holy Spirit has come to dwell in us. God the Father being the only Sovereign, upholds, governs, and oversees all creation and creatures, for all exists for His glory. (Matt. 6:25-32, 28:18; Mark 16:19; Luke 22:39-42; John 1:14, 3:16, 8:27-29, 11:42, 12:49-50, 17:18-23, 14:16-17, 26; 15:26, 16:26-28; Acts 1:4, 2:22-24, 33, 3:13-15, 5:30-31, 10:39-41, 13:28-34; Rom. 8:11, 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:3-14, 18-23, 4:6; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 3:1; 1 Thess. 1:9-10; Heb. 1:3, 2:9, 10:12; 1 Pet. 1:20-21; 1 John 4:14)



God the Son

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, fully God and fully man. As God incarnate, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He therefore lived a sinless life and perfectly fulfilled God's law, imputing this righteousness to those who believe. He glorified God by saving mankind from their sin, taking our sins upon Himself, and dying on the cross under the punishment of God as the atoning sacrifice. Having been raised from the dead, He ascended into heaven and is at the right hand of God where He ever lives to make intercession for His saints. Christ is the only means whereby mankind can be forgiven of their sins and their guilt removed. At the appointed time He will return bodily in power and glory to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate His redemptive purpose. (Matt. 5:17; Luke 1:26-33, 2:6-7; John 1:1-3, 5:22-29, 14:6; Acts 4:12, 17:31; Rom. 3:21-26, 8:11,34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 1:15-18; 2 Thess. 2:7-10; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 2:21-24; 1 John 3:5)

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God, possessing all the characteristics and attributes thereof. The work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to convict men in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment, and to regenerate the sinner. The Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into the body, indwells the believer, and guides the believer into all truth. He instructs and empowers the believer for godly living and service. He is the One who imparts spiritual gifts to the body as He wills for the edification of the body and for various works of ministry in the world. These gifts are to be earnestly desired and practiced in love. (John 14:16-17,26, 16:7-15; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 6:19, 12:7-13; Titus 3:4-6; 1 John 2:27)

The Creation

The creation (all material things, all mankind, and all angels), exist for the purpose of manifesting the glory of God. He created the physical universe (including mankind), in six literal days. God rules over the entire creation, being the rightful owner and proprietor thereof, bringing all things into conformity with the purpose of His will. (Gen. 1:1-2:3; Ex. 20:11; 1 Chron. 29:11-13; Ps. 148; Prov. 16:4; Isa.42:8-12; 1Cor.8:6; Eph. 1:9-11; Rev. 4:11)

Man

Mankind, male and female, are distinct from all other living creatures, being created in the image of God. Therefore, mankind is of surpassing value before God, this being manifested in the price paid for his redemption and when created by God was holy and good. Mankind is under God's authority and is accountable to God for his actions, speech, thoughts, and motives. (Gen. 1:27; Eccl. 12:13-14; Ezek. 18:3-24; Luke 2:14; John 3:16; Rom. 2:16, 3:19; Heb. 4:12-13)

Sin

Mankind forfeited his original state of righteousness by willfully sinning against God. Sin is either a transgression of God's law or His character. Beginning with Adam and Eve, all have sinned, bringing death (physical and spiritual) on the human race. God holds mankind accountable to pay the debt of their sins—death. Since mankind's nature is corrupt, he naturally desires to do what is contrary to God's will. Mankind is completely incapable of delivering himself, in whole or in part, from either his guilt or corrupt nature. In this condition, mankind is under God's wrath and is liable to all of the miseries of this life, to



death itself and to the pains of hell forever. (Gen. 3:6, 8:21; Ezek. 18:20; Eccl. 12:13-14; Jer. 17:9; Matt. 25:46; Rom. 3:9-12,19-23, 5:12-21, 6:23, 7:7-13, 8:6-8; Eph. 2:1-3; 2 Thess. 1:8-10)

Salvation

God is sovereign in all things, which includes the salvation of men. In eternity, God the Father, knowing that all men, if left to themselves, would reject Him, and coming under His judgment would die in their sin, by an act of His own will graciously determined to save a people for Himself. Being a free gift of God, salvation from sin is offered to all men, which God Himself provided by His grace (alone), through the granting of faith (alone), because of the redemptive work of His Son, Christ Jesus (alone), to His glory (alone). In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. Regeneration is the divine act of God whereby the sinner is granted the capacities needed to repent and exercise saving faith. Justification is an act of God whereby He declares the sinner righteous based on the merits of Christ and imputes that perfect righteousness of Christ to the sinner. Sanctification is the work of God in which the believer cooperates with God in the practical outworking of his/her new birth. Glorification is the work of God, which is the consummation of one's salvation whereby the believer is given a glorified, spiritual body that is immortal and no longer subject to sin. The believer lives in this state of glory thereafter, forever, world without end. (John 3:3-6,14-21, 6:37,44,65; Rom. 3:19-30; 8:28-30; Eph. 1:4,11, 2:1-10, 3:10-11; Phil. 1:29, 2:12-13; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; 2 Tim. 1:9-10, 2:25)

The Lordship of Christ

The Christian life has at its core the desire to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, always being eager to honor and please God. This is accomplished by the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer as they walk by faith. Christians are God's instruments to lead others to a saving knowledge of Christ and to nurture and disciple them to maturity. Christians live always and continually striving against sin and by God's grace are being transformed progressively into the image of Christ. Self-sacrificing love to God and others, humility, joy, the desire to seek peace, the ability to forgive others as Christ has forgiven them, are among the fruit which are to be evident in the true Christian's life. Genuine faith will produce good works, although they in no way merit salvation. (John 20:28; Rom. 6:12-23; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 5:22-24; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:10-12, 3:12-17; Heb. 13:21; James 2:14-26; 2 Pet. 1:5-9; 1 John 3:21-24)

Man's Eternal Future

The Lord Jesus Christ will one day return visibly and bodily to the earth with His powerful angels and all mankind will be resurrected and face God's judgment. The present heavens and earth will be destroyed, and a new heavens and earth created. Those who have not been saved will be eternally damned for their sins in the lake of fire, the penalty demanded by divine justice for sin. Those who have been saved will live eternally in the presence of God, worshipping and enjoying Him. (Matt. 24:29-31, 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Rom. 6:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Heb. 9:27; 2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 20:12-15)



The Ordinances

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of the church that we observe. Christian baptism by immersion is the public testimony of a believer's faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life. It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ. The Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination, private confession of sin, and the recognition of our need for divine grace. (Matt. 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:1-23; Acts 2:38-42, 8:36-39; Rom. 6:1-11; 1 Cor. 11:20-34)

The Church

The Church is the universal body of Christ, those who by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and who upon repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus have been baptized into Christ, the only Savior from sin and who are unified in submission to His Lordship and the Word of God, the Bible. At the same time the Church is comprised of autonomous local gatherings of believers who are governed by Christ in accordance with His Word through the service of its officers, the elders and deacons, and accountable to all its members. The Church assembles for the purpose of instruction in the Holy Scriptures, prayer, fellowship, worship, exhortation, encouragement, and the observance of the ordinances. The Church is responsible to propagate the Kingdom of God in the world, through evangelism and discipleship, by the Spirit and through the preaching of the Word, being the only voice of the Gospel message to the nations of the world. The Church is the bride of Christ, endowed with all the gifts and privileges afforded to her by Christ, the head of the Church. She eagerly awaits her triumphant victory when she will be united to Christ forever at His second coming. (Mat. 28:19-21; Acts 4:12, 15:19, 20:21, 20:28; Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:13,27; Eph. 4:7-12, 5:32; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; 1 Pet. 3:15, 5:1-4; Rev. 19:7-8)