

CORNERSTONE BAPTIST CHURCH

Doctrinal Position

PREAMBLE

Cornerstone Baptist Church is a group of born-again, Bible believing people, who are united together as a part of the body of Christ. Our purpose is to glorify God in all of the ministries of this body. To uphold the great doctrines of the faith, Cornerstone Baptist Church teaches: a FUNDAMENTAL approach to the Holy Scriptures, a BAPTISTIC approach to the Church and its ordinances, a DISPENSATIONAL approach to God dealing with man, the DOCTRINES OF GRACE as God's means of bringing salvation to man, and personal EVANGELISM to show our faithfulness to the Great Commission.

ARTICLE I THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe the Holy Bible, consisting of the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, to be the plenary, verbally, inspired Word of God. The Holy Bible is inerrant in the original manuscripts and is to be interpreted literally. The Holy Bible is authoritative, infallible, God breathed, and our sole authority for faith and practice. (II Timothy 3:16,17; II Peter 1:20,21; Matt. 5:18).

ARTICLE II THE GODHEAD

We believe that there is only one true God, triune, and eternally existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each Person of the Godhead is identical in essence, equal in power and glory, and having the same divine attributes and perfections, yet exercising them in varied offices (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 14:7-12; John 16:7; II Cor. 13:14).

A) God the Father

We believe that God the Father is the First Person of the Trinity; that the Father sent and commissioned the Lord Jesus Christ and they in turn sent and commissioned the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Father chose the elect, loved His chosen ones enough to send His Son, and bestows eternal life to those whom He has chosen and loved (Eph. 1:4; John 3:16; John 5:24).

B) God the Son

- 1) We believe in the absolute Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who became man without ceasing to be God, having been miraculously conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He do the will of God, reveal God, and be able to redeem sinful man (Matt. 1:18-20; John 1:1-2; John 1:14,18; Luke 1:35; I Tim. 3:16).
- 2) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Holy Scriptures, while never ceasing to be Deity. As a substitutionary sacrifice He shed His blood that all who receive Him by faith are justified (Rom. 3:24-26; Rom. 4:25; Rom. 5:1; I Cor. 15:3-4; II Cor. 5:21).
- 3) We believe in the literal, physical, and bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; in His bodily ascension into heaven; and His present life at the right hand of the Father interceding for us as our Great High Priest (Matt. 28:5-6; Acts 1:9; Heb. 4:14-16; Heb. 7:23-25; I John 2:1-2; I Cor. 15:12-19).
- 4) We believe, that by His finished work of the Cross, Jesus Christ has procured for every believer Eternal Redemption, Eternal Salvation, and Everlasting Life (John 19:30; I Cor. 15:12-19; Acts 1:9; Heb. 9:24).
- 5) We believe in "that blessed hope" (Rapture), which is the PERSONAL, PRETRIBULATIONAL, PREMILLENNIAL, and IMMEDIATE return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for His own, the church (I Cor. 15:51-53; I Thes. 4:14-17; Titus 2:13; I John 3:2-3).

C) God the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son, and of the same essence and nature; that He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment; bears witness to the truth; is the agent of the new birth; and that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, and helps the believer (John 14:26; John 16:7-11; Rom. 8:14-27).

ARTICLE III SATAN

We believe Satan is a real being with a distinct personality who was once in the very presence of God, but because of self-exaltation, he fell and drew a multitude of angels with him. He is now the god of this world and the prince of the power of the air. Satan has access to God the Father in Heaven, but is God's enemy. He accuses the Saints, and he fathers all false religions and cults today. After the Millennium, he will suffer final defeat and be cast into the Lake of Fire forever (Ezek. 28:11-19; Isa. 14:12-15; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; Job. 1:9-12; Rev. 12:10; II Cor. 11:3-4,12-15; Rev. 20:10).

ARTICLE IV THE DISPENSATIONS

We believe that proper Biblical interpretation allows for seven basic divisions of time, known as dispensations. In each of these time periods God discloses to man certain responsibilities. At the close of each dispensation God reveals the failure of men and the faithfulness of God to continue His everlasting plan. The dispensations are as follows:

- A) Innocence (Gen. 1:1)
- B) Conscience (Gen. 4:1)
- C) Human Government (Gen. 8:15)
- D) Promise (Gen. 12:1)
- E) Law (Ex. 19:1)
- F) Grace (Acts 2:1)
- G) Millennium (Rev. 20:4)

ARTICLE V CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be literally accepted; that the six days of creation in Genesis were literal twenty-four hour days; that God uniquely created all life, "each after its own kind"; that man was created in God's own image and after His own likeness, and did not evolve from any lower form of life; and that all men are descended from the historical, fallen Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race (Gen. 1:1-2; Gen. 1:26; Heb. 11:3; Col. 1:16-17; Psalm 33:6-9; Rev. 4:11).

ARTICLE VI SALVATION BY GRACE

We believe that God in eternity past knew that all mankind would find itself in a hopeless and sinful condition. God provided the plan to bring man back to Himself (Rom. 8:28-30).

A) Total Depravity

We believe that man, in the person of the first man, Adam, was created in innocence, but by voluntary transgression fell into sin, thus plunging all mankind into condemnation and death. As a result, all persons are now born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and are willful sinners; and so are without excuse before God (Gen. 3; Rom. 3:10; Rom. 5:10-19).

B) Unconditional Election

We believe that God, in sovereign grace, and apart from any consideration of foreseen human merit or responsibility, chose some before the foundation of the world to be recipients of His grace in Christ (John 1:13; Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-6).

C) Irresistible Grace (Salvation)

We believe that as the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is preached to all nations, the elect ones are caused to hear this Gospel and their hearts are opened by the Holy Spirit, so that they freely and gladly receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. This salvation is solely by grace through faith and is not earned nor made more secure by any works, however good (John 6:37,44; John 6:65; Eph. 2:8-9).

D) Particular Redemption

We believe that the substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus Christ was specifically for the elect (John 10:15,26-28; John 17; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 5:25; 1 Peter 3:16,18). We believe that the death of the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished what it was intended to do; save all His people from their sins by the shedding of His blood for many (Mat. 1:21; Heb. 9:12; 1 Peter 1:18-20; 2 Peter 2:21). The extent of the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ is expressed in the statement, sufficient for all. The intent of the Atonement is expressed in the statement, efficient

only for the elect (John 11:51-52; Heb. 9:10-14). The death of the Lord Jesus Christ made salvation available to all men, it actually secured the salvation of the elect (Matt. 22:28; 26:28; John 3:16-18; Rom. 5:15,19; 2 Cor. 5:18-21).

E) Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that the salvation of every believer is secure for all eternity from the moment of regeneration. This security is guaranteed to each believer by the fact that the life received is eternal and everlasting by the keeping power of God, by the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, and by the interceding ministry and advocacy of Christ (John 10:28-29; John 17:11-12; Rom. 8:35-39; Eph. 1:13; Tit. 3:5; I John 2:1).

F) Sanctification

- 1) We believe that immediate, positional sanctification is that act of God whereby believers are, at the instant of salvation, eternally set apart as belonging to Him by redemption, hereby being placed in the family of God as children, joint heirs with Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:14-17; Heb. 10:10-14).
- 2) We believe that progressive sanctification is the process by which we are made partakers of His holiness according to God's will; that it is progressive; that it is begun at salvation; that it progresses as the believer is yielded to the Holy Spirit's control; that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, self-examination, watchfulness, and prayer (John 17:17; Rom. 6:1-14).

ARTICLE VII THE CHURCH

A) The Universal Church

We believe that in Acts 2 the church of our Lord Jesus Christ was established on the day of Pentecost for the distinct purpose of glorifying God in this age. This church was manifest first as a universal body consisting of all New Testament believers and, since that time, of all additional true believers in Jesus Christ throughout the age. These true believers in Jesus Christ form a "body" for service in this world and will become His "bride" in

the glorious Kingdom. Jesus Christ is the sole Head of this body as revealed in the Holy Scriptures by the apostles. Just as Jesus Christ created the church at Pentecost through the Holy Spirit, He will consummate His marriage by coming for the church at the Rapture (Acts 2:1-13; Acts 2:41-47; Romans 16:25-26; I Cor. 12:12-28).

B) The Local Church

We believe that the universal church is manifest today through the local New Testament church, which is an assembly of baptized (by immersion) believers, bound together by a covenant of faith; worshipping together, teaching the Holy Scriptures, reaching the lost with the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, defending the faith, and engaging in spiritual fellowship; governed by His laws, while exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in the local church by His Word. The only biblical offices of the local church are that of pastor and deacon, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe that the local church has the absolute right of self-government directed by the Holy Spirit and it is answerable only to Christ, and, that in all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is the final authority. We believe that the local church is the only organization in this age appointed by God to implement His program for the spreading of the Gospel to all the world; that every Christian should be bound by Scripture to provide his complete cooperation to the ministry of their local New Testament Church (Matt. 18:15-20; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 5:29-32).

D) The Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are to be administered exclusively by the local church. Baptism is the total immersion in water of a true believer in Christ; is performed in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to publicly show forth the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection; and is a scriptural prerequisite to membership. The Lord's Supper is the partaking of bread and the fruit of the vine as symbols of Christ's body and blood, commemorating His suffering and death for us and reminding us of our continual benefit; and, is to be observed on a regular basis continuing until our Lord returns for us. Participation should only be after careful self-examination by those who truly have trusted Jesus

Christ as their Savior and who have followed His command to be baptized (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 11:47; I Cor. 11:23-32).

D) The Spiritual Gifts

We believe that the redeemed are endowed with spiritual gifts; that these gifts are given to edify the church and are to be exercised in love to that end. We believe that temporary sign gifts were manifested during the Apostolic Age, such as speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, human direction of divine healing, and prophecy. These temporary gifts were given at a time when the Holy Scriptures were incomplete to confirm both the message and the messenger; that upon completion of the canon of Scripture, they ceased to exist (Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 4:7-8; I Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Cor. 14:22; II Cor. 12:12; I Cor. 13:8-12; Rev. 22:18-19).

ARTICLE VIII CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of human society, that magistrates are to be prayed for and conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in things opposed to the express will of our Lord Jesus Christ, through His teaching in the Holy Scriptures (Ex. 18:21-22; Dan. 3:17-18; Luke 20:21-26; Acts 4:19-20; Rom. 13:1-7).

ARTICLE IX MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. We further believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23,31; Genesis 1:27;)

We believe that homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography, in any form, are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex and are contrary to Holy Scripture. We further believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Genesis 19:5,13; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-30; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

ARTICLE X SEPARATION

We believe in the following Biblical doctrines of separation:

- A) The separation of the individual believer from all sin that may dishonor the Savior.
- B) Separation from any believer who walks in a disorderly manner so as to bring reproach upon our Savior or his church.
- C) Separation of the local church from all affiliation and fellowship with those who would deny the literal accuracies of the basic doctrines, which would include all association with any portion of the ecumenical movement.
- D) The strict separation of church and state. (II Tim. 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17; Luke 20:21-26; I Cor. 5:11; II Cor. 6:11-18; II Thes. 3:6,14,15)

ARTICLE XI END TIMES

We believe that at the close of the church age, Christ will gather His Saints to Himself in the air (Rapture). This event will be followed on the earth by seven years of great trouble and torment (The Great Tribulation), which will end with the literal and physical second coming of Jesus Christ to this earth for the purpose of establishing his one thousand year reign on the throne of David (The Millennial Kingdom). At the end of the Millennium, God will establish a new heaven and a new earth for all believers upon which we will dwell for ever and ever (Zech. 14:1-4; I Thess. 4:13-18; Acts 1:11; Rev. 19:11-16; Rev. 21:1-5).

ARTICLE XII HEAVEN AND HELL

A) HEAVEN

We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body, when reunited soul and glorified body shall be with Him forever in glory. (Luke 16:19-26; Luke 23:42; Rev. 21; Rev. 22:1-5)

B) HELL

We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the millennium, when reunited soul and body shall be cast from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power into the torment of the lake of fire forever and ever. (Luke 16:19-26; Rev. 20:11-15; Rev. 21:8)