

WYLIE BIBLE CHURCH DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

This doctrinal statement expresses the basic theological beliefs of the leadership and membership of Wylie Bible Church. It is the basis for the theological qualifications of Pastor, Elders, Deacons, pastoral staff, Sunday School teachers and missionaries supported by the church.

Section I: THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the words of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments are inspired by the Spirit of God and recorded accurately by human authors. Therefore, they are without error in the original writings. We believe that the Bible is the final and supreme authority in all matters of Christian doctrine and practice. It is to be interpreted according to the normal usage of language in its historical and literary context. (Matt. 5:18-19; Jn. 10:34-35; 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21).

Section 2: THE TRIUNE GOD

We believe in one God who eternally exists in three equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are one God having precisely the same nature and attributes but are distinct in office and activity. (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 63: 8-11; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3).

Section 3: THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that the eternal Son of God became man without ceasing to be God and lived on earth as the sinless person of Jesus Christ. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man.. (Lk. 1:26-35; Jn. 1:1,14,18; 10:30; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 1:1-3, 8; 2:14).

We believe that Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice, that He was buried, and that His literal, physical resurrection from the dead on the third day guarantees our salvation. We believe that He ascended into Heaven and now lives as the risen Lord seated at the right hand of God the Father. There, as High Priest, He fulfills the ministries of intercession and advocacy with the Father on behalf of all believers. He is also preparing an eternal dwelling place for them. (Jn. 14:2-3; Acts 1:9-11; Rom. 3:24-26; 4:25; 5:8; 8:34; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 4:14-16; 7:23-25; 10:11-14; I Pet. 1:18-19; 3:18; I Jn. 2:1-2).

Section 4: THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God, the third Person of the Trinity. He possesses the same nature and attributes as God the Father and God the Son. (Ps. 139:7; Jn.. 15:26; I Cor. 2:10-11; II Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:30).

We believe that, in relation to the world, He restrains evil to the measure of God's will and that He convicts it in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. (Jn. 16:7-11).

We believe that, in relation to individual believers, the Holy Spirit, at the moment of salvation, regenerates them, baptizes them into the Body of Christ, seals them unto the day of final redemption, indwells them permanently to enable them to live the Christian life, and gives spiritual gifts to them. (Jn. 3:5-8; 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 6:19; 12:4-13; Eph. 1:13-14; Titus 3:5).

We believe that the Holy Spirit continues to work in the life of the believer by interceding for him, giving assurance, exercising control, and producing spiritual fruit in his life. (Jn. 16:13-15; Rom.. 8:14,16,26-27; Gal. 5:22-23).

We believe that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, the church universal, the Body of Christ, was created at Pentecost. He now acts to maintain the unity of the church and to equip believers for service through the exercise of

the spiritual gifts given to them. We believe that the gifts of speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were given as authenticating signs of new revelation from God in the early church.. The gift of tongues was never the normal nor necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Spirit. (Acts 2:1-4; I Cor. 12:4-13, 27-31; 13:8; 14:20-25; Eph. 4:3-16; Heb. 2:3-4).

Section 5: ANGELS, FALLEN, AND UNFALLEN

We believe that angels are spirit beings who occupy different orders and ranks. God created them sinless but they presently exist in both a fallen and unfallen state. The former includes Satan and his angels known as demons and the latter consists of good angels who serve God. (Eph. 6:11-12; Heb. 1:13-14; II Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6; Rev. 12:7-9).

We believe that Satan, who was originally Lucifer, the highest ranking angel, by his own choice, sinned through pride and became the enemy of God and His people. Thus, with God's permission and to serve His higher purposes, Satan was the responsible originator of sin. He led the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, into sin and subjected them and their posterity to his power. Although he was judged at the cross he continues to rule as the god of this world but ultimately will be cast into the Lake of Fire for eternal punishment. (Gen. 3:1,19; Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:12-19; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 20:10).

Section 6: CREATION

We believe that God created the heavens and the earth and all things in them. Everything continues to exist by His power. (Gen.1, 2; Col. 1:16-17).

Section 7: MAN

We believe that man was created an innocent being in the image and likeness of God. However, through Satan's temptation, the first man sinned, bringing both physical and spiritual death, which is separation from fellowship with God, to himself and the entire human race. As a result of Adam's sin, all men were made sinners and have inherited a sinful nature, that is, a natural predisposition to sin, and, thus, all men commit personal acts of sin in thought, word, and deed. As sinners, all men are alienated from God and are in need of salvation by the grace of God. (Gen. 1:26-27; 3:1-9,19; 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-20; 5:12-19; Eph. 2:1-3).

Section 8: SALVATION

We believe that salvation is a free gift of God. On the basis of the substitutionary, sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, sinful man receives salvation through personal faith in Him. We believe that the death of Christ is sufficient for all men but only effective for those who God has chosen for Himself from eternity past. Designed into His sovereign choice is the necessity for the human response of faith. Whoever, by faith, trusts the Lord Jesus Christ as His personal Savior is put in a right relationship to God. Thus, man is justified by God's grace through faith apart from any works at all. Every true believer, once saved, is kept secure in Christ forever by the power of God who cannot fail. (Jn. 1:12; 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 10:27-30; Acts 13:38-39,48; Rom. 5:1-2, 9-11; 6:22-23; 8:1-2, 28-30, 33-39; Eph. 2:8-10; I Pet. 1:3-5; I Jn. 2:2).

Section 9: SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification involves three aspects whereby a believer is set apart from sin unto God.

First, sanctification is positional in that the believer has been set free from sin as an enslaving power at salvation and is, at the same time set, apart unto God in Christ for living a life of obedience that calls forth His approval. (Rom. 6:17-23; I Cor. 6:11; II Cor. 5:17; Heb. 10:10).

Second, sanctification is progressive because the believer is constantly confronted by temptations to sin from the

world system around him, Satan's schemes, and by his own sinful nature which can never be eradicated in this life. Consequently, there is a need, in his daily experience, for spiritual vitality and growth, that is, movement toward greater conformity to the character-qualities of Jesus Christ. This is accomplished by reading God's Word and obeying it in dependence upon the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. When a believer sins, he is to acknowledge it to God, claim His forgiveness, and turn from the sin. (Jn.17:17; Rom. 8:12-14; II Cor. 3:18; Gal. 5:13-15; Eph. 6:10-18; I Thess. 4:3-8; I Jn. 1:5-2,15-17).

Third, sanctification will be fully complete when the believer is taken to be with Christ. Then he will be set apart from the presence of sin forever and will be fully conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. (I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 10:14; I Jn. 3:1-3; Jude 1:24-25).

Section 10: THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church, in its universal expression, is the body and bride of Christ, a spiritual organism made up of all believers in Jesus Christ in this present age regardless of organizational affiliation. Historically, the Church began at Pentecost and each believer is placed into it by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. In God's plan for human history, as revealed in the Scriptures, the Church is a new and distinct entity from the nation of Israel. (Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:1-4; I Cor. 10:32; 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:8-11; 5:25-27).

We believe that the local church is an assembly of people who have professed belief in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. They have voluntarily joined themselves together in one locality under a plurality of biblically qualified leaders for the purpose of worship, study of God's Word, observance of the ordinances, fellowship, evangelism, and the equipping of believers for serving God and His purposes in the world. (Acts 2:42-47; 20:17,28; I Cor. 1:1-2; II Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 4:11-16).

Section 11: THE ORDINANCES OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Jesus Christ instituted the ordinance of water baptism which He commanded to be observed by all believers. Water baptism is a symbolic rite that pictures a believer's identification with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and signifies outwardly his entrance into the Body of Christ. We believe that the mode of baptism should be by immersion. We believe that infants should not be baptized, but parents are encouraged to dedicate them to the Lord in an appropriate ceremony before the local congregation. (Matt. 28:19-20; Rom. 6:1-4; Col. 2:11-12).

We believe that Jesus Christ instituted the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, which He commanded to be observed by all believers as a memorial of His death until He returns. The elements (the bread and the cup) represent the body and blood of the Lord respectively. We believe that every believer has a right to partake of the Lord's Supper but that this should be preceded by proper self-examination. (Mat. 26:26-30; Lk. 22:14-20; I Cor. 11:23-26).

Section 12: THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the personal, imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ for believers, both living and dead, who will be caught up to be with Him forever. This event, the Rapture, is the Blessed Hope for which we constantly look. It will be followed by the Tribulation, a seven-year period of judgment on the whole earth which will culminate in the return of Christ to the earth with His people. At that time, He will set up His Millennial Kingdom on earth in which He will reign in righteousness and peace for one thousand years. (Dan. 9:26-27; Zech. 14:4-11; Matt. 24: 15-31; Acts 1:11; I Cor. 15:51-54; I Thess. 4:13-18; Titus 2:13-14; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

Section 13: THE ETERNAL STATE

We believe that, at death, the soul of the believer in Jesus Christ goes immediately into His presence. It remains there in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the believer's body at Christ's coming for the Church when soul and

body, reunited and glorified, will enjoy life with God forever. (Dan. 12:2; Lk. 16:19-27; 23:43; II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; I Thess. 4:13-18; I Jn. 3:2).

We believe that, at death, the soul of every unbeliever goes immediately into conscious misery in Hades. It remains there, separated from God's presence, until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the Millennium when the unbeliever's body is resurrected and reunited with the soul. He is then judged and cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to experience conscious torment and be punished with everlasting separation from the presence of God. (Dan. 12:2; Lk. 16:19-26; Jn. 5:22-29; II Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 1:6-7; Rev. 14:9-11; 20:11-15).