

BRIEF DOCTRINAL SUMMARY

*Please note that this is mostly taken from the Heritage Baptist Church constitution that I prepared in 2007 when we organized the church. I have added a few edits to more clearly reflect my personal convictions.

SECTION 1 - THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe in the Divine inspiration of the very words of every part of the sixty-six canonical books of the Old and the New Testaments of the Bible (from Genesis to Revelation) in the original languages. (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21; 1 Thessalonians 2:13)

We believe in God's promise to preserve His Words. The Bible says, "Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever." (Psalm 119:152) Also, "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psalm 12:6-7). We believe that the Lord has preserved the Old Testament in the Masoretic Hebrew Text and the New Testament in the Textus Receptus Greek Text. We believe that the King James Version (or Authorized Version) of the English Bible is a true, faithful, and accurate translation of these preserved texts. The translators did such a fine job in their translation task that we can without apology hold up the Authorized Version and say, "This is the WORD OF GOD!" Furthermore, we believe that the Scriptures are the final and complete revelation of the will of God to man, and are the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried. (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21)

SECTION 2 - GOD, THE FATHER

We believe in the one true God, the creator and supreme ruler of heaven and earth, who in essence is a spirit. He is perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, and measureless in power. He exists eternally in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt.28:18-30; 1 John 5:7). We believe that God created the universe in six literal 24-hour days, and reject evolution and Theistic Evolution in all of its forms as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen.1-2; Exod.20:11)

SECTION 3 - GOD, THE SON

We believe that Jesus Christ is God manifested to man in the flesh. He is the eternal son of God, and equal in power and glory to God the Father. He willingly took upon Himself our human nature. Being conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary, He died upon the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sin of the world. He rose from the dead with a glorified body and ascended into Heaven, where He is now interceding as our High Priest. We believe His second coming to be literal, bodily, personal, and visible. The dead in Christ shall rise first, the living saints shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David and Christ shall reign a thousand years on the throne of David until He hath put all enemies under His feet. (John 1:1; 8:46; 2 Pet.2:21-22; Eph.1:7; Phil.2:6-11)

SECTION 4 - GOD, THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person; equal with and of the same nature as God the Father, and God the Son. The work and ministry of the Holy Spirit involves the restraining of Satan; Convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He leads men toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation; regenerates all believers, and gives them His own nature. He indwells, seals, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and comforts, all believers. It is the privilege and duty of all Christians to be filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit. (John 14-16; Eph.1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18)

We believe the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to every believer for the purpose of edifying the local church. We believe the sign gifts given in the New Testament (Speaking in tongues, Apostles, healing, etc.) were temporary, and were never the common or necessary signs of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. The

deliverance of the body from sickness and death will not be known until the great resurrection day, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (Rom.12:3-8, 1 Cor.1:22; 13:8; 14:21-40)

SECTION 5 - SATAN / ANGELS

We believe that Satan is a created being who once was holy and enjoyed the Heavenly honor as one of the highest angels in Heaven. Because of his pride, he was cast out of Heaven, and took with him one third of the angels of Heaven being sealed unto eternal damnation. Satan is now the prince of the power of the air, the god of this world, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. His destiny is final defeat at the hands of Jesus, and the judgment of eternal justice in the lake of fire. (Isa.14:12-15; Ezek.28:12-19; Rev.20:2,7,10)

The angels of Heaven which chose not to follow Satan were sealed unto eternal holiness, and continual service to our God, for which they were originally created. We will stand with them before Christ throughout all eternity. (Rev.5:9-14)

SECTION 6 - MAN

We believe that man was created as the crown of God's creation, and given dominion over all the works of creation. He was created with an eternal soul and made morally and physically perfect in the image of God. Man voluntarily disobeyed God and fell into sin and is now lost, spiritually dead, totally depraved in his natural state. (Gen.1:26; 3:7-10; Rom.5:12)

SECTION 7 - SALVATION

We believe that salvation is wholly of grace through the finished work of Jesus Christ the Son of God; who by His death and shed blood made atonement for our sins, bearing them in His own body on the Cross. He arose bodily from the grave showing Himself alive to His disciples and others, then ascended up to Heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God as our faithful, interceding high Priest, and judge. (1 Cor.15, Heb.4:14-16) We believe that in order for sinners to be saved they must be born again by the Holy Spirit of God. This is not accomplished by works or self-righteousness; but through a conscious realization of our sins penalty, Christ's sacrifice, and a personal acceptance and repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. When a person is saved, the Holy Spirit indwells them and makes them a new creation in Christ. There is a definite change that takes place in their soul, which is revealed by their changed life and works. (John 3:3-8, Eph.2:8-10)

We believe in righteous living and good works: not as a means of salvation in any sense, but as its proper evidence and fruit; and therefore as Christians we should obey the Word of our Lord, seek the things which are above, walk as He walked, accept as our solemn responsibility the duty and privileges of bearing the gospel to a lost world; remembering that a victorious and fruitful Christian life is possible only for those who in gratitude for the infinite and undeserved mercies of God have presented themselves wholly to Christ.

We believe Salvation is an eternal gift of God; that is, it can never be lost or taken away. We are fully forgiven and declared righteous in the eyes of God at the moment of salvation, and sealed for all eternity. We realize this doctrine is basic and essential to true Christianity, and will recognize any false presentation of the Gospel as the work of Satan. (John 6:37-40; Gal.1:6-9)

SECTION 8 - THE CHURCH

We believe that the church is a congregation of immersed believers (Acts 10:46-47, Romans 6:3-6, I Peter 3:21) associated by covenant of faith and fellowship in the Gospel (Romans 12, Hebrews 10:23-25); that each church has the absolute right of self-government (Matthew 18:18-20) and is answerable only to God, her Administrator, and the Lord Jesus Christ, her Head (Ephesians 5:23-24); that in all matters of membership, policy, discipline, and benevolence the will of the church is sovereign. (Matthew 18:18-19)

The work of the ministry, the fellowship and edification of believers, and the evangelism of the world are the responsibility and the central purpose of the church. (Acts 2:41-47, Mat.18:18-30, Eph.1:22-23; 4:10-13) We believe that there are only two church ordinances; baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water and the church is vested with the authority to baptize. (Romans 6:3-6, Acts 8:36-39, Colossians 2:12, I Peter 3:18-21) We believe that participation in the Lord's Supper is symbolic of the Lord's vicarious death and is to be shared in only with members of the church. (I Corinthians 11:23-24, Luke 22:19-20, I Corinthians 10:16-17).

SECTION 9 - THE ETERNAL STATE

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men; the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to eternal damnation. The souls of the saved, at death, are absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when Spirit, Soul, and Body will be reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. The souls of the unsaved, at death, remain in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (John 3:36, 1 Cor.15:50-57, 2 Cor.5:8, Rev.20:11-21:8)

SECTION 10 - LAST THINGS

We believe that at any moment the Lord will return to catch away all born again believers both living and dead in Christ. No man can know the time of this the first resurrection. After the rapture of the believers, will come the seven years of tribulation in which God will pour out His wrath on the unbelieving world. This time will be marked by unrestrained wickedness, the man of sin or "antichrist" being revealed, and Israel as a nation turning back to God. At the close of the tribulation, Satan will be bound for 1,000 years and the saints will reign with Christ. Satan will then be loosed for the time of his final judgment, the Great White Throne Judgment will then take place. God will create a new Heaven and earth where we who are saved will live eternally with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (1 Thes.4:16-18, 2 Thes.2:1-7, Rev.20-22)

SECTION 11 - SEPARATION

We believe in Biblical separation which applies to three areas:

- 1) Governmental (State) separation. The State cannot license or dictate to the Church matters of faith and practice and obedience to God's Word. Nor does the Church dictate to the State matters of governing it's people. We believe that God has created all authority and has established three basic institutions to administer His authority: 1) The Home, 2) The Church, and 3) The Government or State. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and are to be governed by His Word. No institution has the right to infringe upon the other. (Rom. 13:1-7)
- 2) Ecclesiastical (Church) separation. The Bible clearly instructs us to oppose and separate ourselves from all forms of apostasy and heresy. We reject the unscriptural philosophy of the modern ecumenical movement (joining of all churches into one body regardless of doctrinal differences). (Rom. 16:17; 2 Cor. 6:11-7:1; 2 John 9-11)
- 3) Personal Separation (holiness). In separating ourselves unto God, we are separating ourselves apart from the world. As Christians, we are to pattern our thinking and conduct according to God's standard of holiness rather than the trends, philosophies, and styles set by the world. (2Cor.6:14-18, 1Pet.2:7-16)

SECTION 12 – SANCTITY OF THE HOME

We believe in the sanctity of the home as instituted by God in the garden of Eden (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:21-25), consisting of marriage between one man and one woman (Hebrews 13:4, I Corinthians 7:1-5), united by love and Christian Faith, and that this marriage bond is intended by God to be a lifelong commitment that man should not put asunder (Matthew 19:3-9, Mark 10:1-12; Ephesians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:18-20; Titus 2:1-8, I Peter 3:1-7). According to Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:31-33, fornication (sexual uncleanness) is scriptural

ground for allowing (though not mandating) divorce (I Corinthians 7:10-16, 27). Moreover, children are to be desired from this union of husband and wife and brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Genesis 3:20; 9:1; Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 22:6). We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. The purposeful ending of that life is therefore murder. (Psa.139:13-16)

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman and that fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexual, bestiality, incest are an abomination to God.

(Gen.2:24-25, Lev.18, Rom.1:26-29, I Corinthians 6:9-11)

We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses die. The only grounds for divorce allowed by Scripture is for a marriage broken by immorality. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the Church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the office of Pastor or Deacon. (Mat.19:3-12; Rom.7:1-3; 1 Tim.3:2,12)

CONVICTIONS AND STANDARDS SUMMARY

I do believe that practical separation requires that we apply Biblical principles to every area of our lives and from those principles set standards to avoid sinning against God or damaging our testimonies. I believe that it is the duty of the Pastor to set the example and to instruct as to the “why’s” behind his standards and allow the people to apply the principles of God’s Word to their own lives and set their own standards. I also believe that certain standards should be set by the church for those who will occupy positions of leadership.

As to my specific convictions, I believe ladies should look like ladies and men like men. I also believe that women should dress modestly. My wife and daughter wear loose-fitting skirts, dresses, and culottes that go below the knee and avoid tops that are tight or low cut.

I believe the we should be careful as to what we watch on TV. I believe it is important to filter what we allow into our lives by way of internet. I also believe that “Christian Rock” in all its forms is inappropriate for worship and Rock Music in general is an unholy influence to be avoided in all its forms.

This obviously is a very brief summary. I will be glad to clarify any of these statements or answer questions about other areas of concern.