



Doctrinal Statement

The following doctrines contained in the Holy Scriptures are adopted as part of the North Stonington Bible Church Constitution:

A. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe:

That all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. That the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God were moved to write the very words of Scripture.

That this divine inspiration extends to all parts of the Scriptures in the original writings and that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction and are sufficient (unmixed with human wisdom) to equip believers (Psalms 119:89, 152; Isaiah 40:8; Luke 24:27; Romans 15:4; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21).

B. THE GODHEAD

We believe:

That there is one, and only one, living and true God existing in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, eternal in being, the same nature, equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; II Corinthians 13:14).

C. JESUS CHRIST

We believe:

That as provided and purposed by God, and as pre-announced in the prophecies of Scripture, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to man, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the Virgin Mary and received a human body and a sinless human nature (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; John 1:14, 3:16; Philippians 2:5-8).

That the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross and that He arose bodily from the dead on the third day. That He ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of the Father, and that He is our only Mediator, High Priest, and Divine Advocate with the Father (Isaiah 53:4-5; John 19:30; I Corinthians 15:4, 20; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25, 8:1; I John 2:1-2).

That the imminent, personal, physical, and pre-millennial return of Christ will occur in two phases: first, at any time to complete the church age by rapturing all believers prior to the Tribulation, and second, at the end of the Great Tribulation when He shall return with His saints to establish the Millennial Kingdom (I Corinthians 15:51-57; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 19:11-16, 20:1-10).

D. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe:

That the Holy Spirit, the third person of the blessed trinity, ministers to mankind in the following ways:

- a) That the unbeliever is convicted of the sin of unbelief, of unrighteousness, and of judgment and is restrained from maximum evil (John 16:8-11; II Thessalonians 2:6-7).

- b) That at the moment of salvation the believer is permanently regenerated, baptized into the body of Christ, indwelt, and sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption (John 3:3-7; I Corinthians 6:19, 12:13; Ephesians 1:13).
- c) That the believer is commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), but the Holy Spirit is grieved or quenched by sin in the believer's life (Ephesians 4:30; I Thessalonians 5:19).
- d) That the filling of the Holy Spirit is restored by biblical confession of sin as provided by God's grace (I John 1:9). That the result is the fruit of the Spirit which becomes more apparent through spiritual growth (Galatians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:16; II Peter 3:18).
- e) That the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts on every believer at the point of salvation for the benefit of serving one another (Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:7, 11-12; I Peter 4:10-11). That the miraculous gifts demonstrated by the Lord and given to the apostles were temporary in nature and passed away with the completion of the canon of Scripture (II Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3-4; I Corinthians 13:8-10).

E. CREATION

We believe:

That the account of creation written by Moses over 3000 years ago is 100 percent accurate in the order of events. That God is the creator of heaven and earth and that His power and will are manifest in bringing the earth and all living things into existence. That the clearest and simplest rendering of appropriate Biblical passages is that the days of Genesis were comparable to our own 24 hour day, which reflect the temporal order of creation (Genesis 1-2; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17).

F. THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN

We believe:

That man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he voluntarily fell through eating the forbidden fruit. As a consequence of his disobedience the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted. Adam lost his fellowship with God becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and he became subject to the power of the devil. That Adam's death or (his depraved human nature) was imputed to the entire human race of man, the Man of Jesus Christ alone being excepted (Genesis 1:26-27, 3:1-6; Jeremiah 17:9; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:9-17, 23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-2; Hebrews 4:15).

G. SALVATION

We believe:

That the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the basis of His finished work on the cross (Romans 5:9; I Corinthians 15:1-4; I Peter 2:24).

That salvation is the gift of God brought to men by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious blood was shed for the forgiveness of our sins (John 1:12, 5:24; Ephesians 2:8-9; I Peter 1:18-19). We do not believe that discipleship is tantamount to salvation.

H. ETERNAL SECURITY

We believe:

That all who are born again through faith in Jesus Christ are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ. That the believer is secure forever yet disciplined when necessary by the Father as a beloved child. That God who cannot fail will in the end present every believer faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His son (John 5:24, 10:27-30; Romans 8:29, 35-39; I Corinthians 1:4-9; Hebrews 12:3-11; I Peter 1:3-5; Jude 24-25).

I. THE TWO NATURES OF THE BELIEVER

We believe:

That every saved person possesses two natures. That God provided for victory of the new nature over the old nature through identification with Christ in His death and the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. That all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural (Romans 6:1-13, 8:12-13; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10; I Peter 1:14-16).

J. THE UNIVERSAL AND LOCAL CHURCH

We believe:

That the Universal Church, which is the body and future bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again believers of this age irrespective of their affiliation with Christian organizations (Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:11-16, 5:25-27; I Corinthians 12:12-14).

That the Local Church is an assembly of believers meeting together in a specified location for the purpose of worship, Bible study, prayer, witnessing, fellowship, discipline, serving one another, and observing the church ordinances. That the autonomy of the local church is to be free from any external authority or control (Acts 14:27, 20:17, 28-32; Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 1:1-2; 5:4-7; I Timothy 3:1-15; I Peter 5:1-3).

K. CHURCH ORDINANCES

We believe:

That the Lord instituted only two ordinances for the church—water baptism and the Lord’s table.

1. Water Baptism

That baptism by immersion is the only form of water baptism commanded in the Scriptures; that it has “NO” saving power, it is for those who are already saved as a public testimony of their faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, we believe it is only for those who are old enough to believe and understand baptism as a command of our Lord (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41, 8:12, 35-38; I Corinthians 1:16).

2. The Lord’s Table

That our Lord instituted the ordinance of the Lord’s supper, which is commanded for all believers. That the bread and the cup, elements of the Lord’s supper, represent the physical and the spiritual death of Jesus Christ, respectively, to remind the believer that Christ died for all men and that He will come again to receive His own. That Scripture requires a partaker of the Lord’s supper be a believer in Christ and be in fellowship with the Father through confession of known sin. The North Stonington Bible Church offers communion to all believers (Luke 22:14-20; Matthew 26:26-30; I Corinthians 11:23-32).

L. THE GRACE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL BELIEVERS

We believe:

That all believers should seek to walk in such a manner so as not to bring reproach upon their Lord and Savior (I Timothy 3:7).

That the believer's walk must include biblical separation, though not isolation (Romans 12:1-2, 14:13; I Corinthians 5:9-13; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

That it is an obligation and a privilege of every believer to be a witness by an upright life and the use of the Scriptures (Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:20).

That believers have a responsibility to proclaim the gospel to all the nations and to baptize and teach new believers (Matthew 28:19-20).

That it is the responsibility of all believers to remember the work of the Lord in prayer and support it financially as the Lord has prospered them (I Thessalonians 5:17; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:7).

M. THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN

We believe:

That Satan is a real created being, a fallen angel, who is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:14-18).

That Satan, the Devil, is powerful enough to perform miracles, indwell unbelievers, influence believers, as he prowls around seeking someone to devour (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 22:3; Acts 5:3; I Peter 5:8).

That Satan will be finally and eternally punished in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:7-10).

N. DISPENSATIONS

We believe:

That the dispensations are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on the earth through man under varying responsibilities (I Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 1:10, 3:2, 3:9; Colossians 1:25).

According to Scripture, the only requirement for salvation is that man exercise faith in the provision that God has revealed both in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

That Covenant Theology, Hyper-Dispensationalism, and Progressive Dispensationalism are erroneous conclusions to a normal, grammatical, historical interpretation of the rightly divided Word of God (II Timothy 2:15).

O. ESCHATOLOGY—FUTURE PROPHETIC EVENTS

We believe:

That the future prophetic events are in the following order:

1. The Blessed Hope

That the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the air, to receive to Himself the dead in Christ and all believers who are alive at His coming. This event is known as the rapture of the church or the translation of the saints (I Corinthians 15:51-58; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14).

2. The Tribulation

That the rapture of the church will be followed immediately by the fulfillment of Daniel's seventieth week on earth. That the entire period of the tribulation will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of the tribulation the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15-21; Revelation 6:1-19:21).

3. The Second Advent of Christ

That the period of the great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth to set up His kingdom. That Christ will execute judgment on the nations, bind Satan and place him in the abyss, lift the curse that now rests on the whole creation, restore Israel to her own land and give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and bring the whole world to the knowledge of God (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:27-31; Romans 8:19-23; Revelation 20:1-3).

4. The Eternal State

That the souls and spirits of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence at death and remain there conscious until the resurrection of the body at His coming, then the soul and the new glorified body will be united with Him forever (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23, 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

That the souls of unbelievers remain after death in a conscious state of misery in Hades until the final judgment, the Great White Throne, at the close of the millennium (Luke 16:19-26).

That at the Great White Throne judgment the body and soul of the unbelievers will be reunited and sentenced to the Lake of Fire—not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction away from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power (I Corinthians 15:24; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15).

P. Homosexuality

We believe that while God loves those who have **chosen** a lifestyle of homosexuality, He forbids it as a practice and considers it sinful and falling short of His eternal purpose and design for mankind. We believe that mankind was created in the image of God, that God's purpose to reflect Himself in the personhood of mankind expressing the character of God and offering hope to those caught in grips of sinful lifestyles. Holiness, purity, and the righteousness of God are inherent qualities of God's eternal life made possible by the grace and mercy of God through Jesus Christ who died on the cross to forgive and take away the sin of the world. Eternal salvation is God's gift to all who will place their faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ.