

WELTEVREDEN CHAPEL

1. ARTICLES OF FAITH

Our position in relation to the Doctrines of the Christian Faith is as follows: -

1.1 God

We believe in the only true God, eternally existing in three persons as the incomprehensible Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; each possessing divine perfection and worthy of the same homage and obedience. He, as creator and sovereign ruler of the universe, is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works.

(Mark 12:29; Isaiah 45:22; John 15:26; Matthew 28:19; Revelation 4:11; John 1:3; Hebrews 1:1-3; Deuteronomy 32:4)

1.2 The Bible

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in their entirety to be the complete Word of God; given by inspiration of God as the Holy Spirit superintended the very words of the sacred writings; and that this inspiration extends fully to all parts of these writings, historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic. We further believe that the Scriptures, from first to last, centre about our Lord Jesus Christ, His Person and work, His first and second coming; and therefore every portion of both Old and New Testaments was ordained of God for our instruction. We fully accept the Scriptures as being inerrant in the original writings; essentially accurate as preserved; and the only infallible rule of faith and life. We believe that God's revelation is complete in the Scriptures and that no further or additional revelation is forthcoming until the return of Christ.

(1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 Corinthians 2:13; Luke 24:27; Luke 21:33; Psalm 119:105; Revelation 22:18-20.)

1.3 Man And Sin

We believe that man was directly created by God in His own image, holy and upright; that through the historic fall into sin, man came under God's condemnation, and that in consequence the whole human race is dead in sin and subject to His judgment: death and hell. We believe that this total depravity extends to every child of Adam because he is born into this world with a sinful nature. We further believe that no man seeks after God but suppresses the truth he knows about God and lives according to the dictates of his sin nature. We further believe that without God's provision for salvation in His Son, Jesus Christ, no one can enter the Kingdom of God; that no degree of reformation, no educational or political attainment, no cultural or philanthropic achievement, no

religious belief or practices, or ordinance, or anything else can give a sinner access to heaven.

(Romans 1:18-32; Genesis 2:7; Genesis 1:26; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1; Romans 3:10-12; John 3:18; John 3:5; Isaiah 64:6)

1.4 Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God; who became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary; and that He lived a sinless life that He might reveal God. We believe He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a Substitutionary sacrifice and full Propitiation for our sins, and that our redemption is made sure to us by His literal, bodily resurrection from the dead.

We further believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven in the presence of the Father and in the position of power and that, as the High Priest for His people, He fulfils the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate.

(John 1:1-2; John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-8; Luke 1:35; Hebrews 4:15; Romans 3:24,25; 1 Peter 1:3-5; Hebrews 4:14-16.)

1.5 Salvation

We believe that salvation from sin is a free gift offered by God through His grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed for the forgiveness of our sins; and that no repentance or penance, no resolution or sincere effort, no membership of any church, can in the very least add to the value of that precious blood or to the merit of the redemptive work accomplished at Calvary. We further believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love; because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ; because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life; because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven; because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God; because of the regenerating and abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all who are saved; - we, and all true believers, once saved shall be kept forever. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will discipline and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, Who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son.

(Ephesians 2:8,9; John 1:12; 1 Peter 1:18-23; 1 John 5:10-13; Romans 8:1; Romans 8:28-39; John 5:24; John 10:28; John 13:1; John 14:16-17; John 17:11; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2; Jude 24.)

1.6 The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Person of the Trinity who convicts men of sin and who alone enables a man to place a genuine trust in Jesus Christ, baptising him into the Body of Christ at the moment of saving faith, indwelling him for godly living, and forever sealing him to glory. We thus believe that every believer has the Holy Spirit completely and continually in his life from the moment of salvation. The present ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ, and to produce holiness in the life of the believer. We also believe that it is the duty of every believer to be continually controlled by the Holy Spirit as commanded by the Scriptures, thereby bearing the fruit of the Spirit and exercising such spiritual gifts as the Spirit may grant in His sovereign will.

(John 16:7-11; John 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:13-14; Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Corinthians 12:4-12; 2 Corinthians 3:18.)

1.7 The Christian Life

We believe that the Christian is called to live according to the Spirit and not according to his sinful nature. Because he has become a new creature in Christ and has been set free from the law of sin and death, he should cease living a sinful lifestyle and adopt a godly lifestyle, pursuing after holiness.

1.8 The Responsibility Of Believers

We believe that, among other things, God has appointed prayer; Bible reading, study, and memorization; worship; fellowship; giving; and witnessing as means of both service and growth for His children. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of every Christian to make disciples and to do the work of the ministry. We will give an account to the Lord for our service.

(James 5:16; Colossians 3:16; John 4:24; Hebrews 10:24,25; Acts 1:8; 2 Peter 3:18; Malachi 3:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Ephesians 4:11.)

1.9 The Church

We believe that the Holy Spirit incorporates all true believers of this age into the Church, which is Christ's body; and that as members of His body they are to demonstrate love for each other and to represent Him and spread His gospel throughout the world. We further believe that we are responsible for one another and, loving one another fervently we are to help our brothers and sisters in the Lord to grow to maturity in Him. We

believe that the Church cannot grow to maturity unless every member does his own part.

(Ephesians 4:1-16; Ephesians 2:18-22; Colossians 1:17-24; 1 Peter 1:22.)

1.10 The Ordinances

We believe that the Lord instituted two ordinances to be regularly and perpetually observed in the Church:

1.10.1 Baptism

Baptism is a rite and a responsibility instituted by Christ in which a believer is immersed in water to give testimony to the world and to the church that he has believed in Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. We believe that only confessing believers may be baptized and therefore do not practice infant baptism. We believe that immersion is the proper mode of baptism, and that pouring or sprinkling of water is permissible only in extreme cases such as the demands of the person's health. While baptism is not necessary for salvation, it is a command of the Lord Jesus Christ, and every true believer should be baptized.

1.10.2 The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a memorial to His death wherein the believer partakes of the two elements, bread and wine, which symbolizes Christ's body and shed blood, proclaiming His death until He comes. We believe that the church should observe this ordinance regularly and that every believer should partake after examining himself.

(Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:26-38; Acts 2:37-41; 1 Corinthians 11:23-36.)

1.11 Angels, Satan, And Demons

We believe in the personal existence of unseen spirits in the world who contend for the souls of men, some furthering the purpose of God, and others, under Satan, opposing the purpose of God. We believe that Satan is a created being, the originator of sin, and the archenemy of God and man. Because of the death of Christ, Satan is a conquered foe and the believer in Christ has been set free from his dominion. We are warned, however, that Satan seeks to destroy the believer's fellowship with God and his effectiveness in service and, being aware of his cunning and deceitful attacks, we must protect ourselves by living a godly life. The believer who has been influenced by Satan or his demons must cease from the sin, which gave them access to his life and confess the sin to God, Who will cleanse him from all unrighteousness and deliver him from this influence.

(Colossians 1:16; 1 Peter 5:8; Hebrews 1:7; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 12:9-12; 1 John 1:9; Ephesians 4:26; Ephesians 6:10-18.)

1.12 The Second Coming

We believe in the rapture of the Church; the imminent, personal second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth with all His saints to establish His kingdom.

(1 Corinthians 15:23,24; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:4,5.)

1.13 Heaven And Hell

We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgment when they will be assigned to eternal punishment in hell for their rebellion against God and rejection of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that the souls of believers pass immediately upon death into the presence of the Lord where they remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His Second coming, after which they remain with the Lord forever.

(1 Corinthians 15:12-21; 2 Corinthians 5:1; John 5:29; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 20:11-15; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.)

WHAT WE BELIEVE (SUMMARY)

THE BIBLE

We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; that every word in the original manuscripts is inspired by God and is without error; and that the Scriptures are of supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and life.

GOD

We believe in one God who eternally exists in three co-equal Persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. During His life on earth He was true man while retaining His absolute Deity, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. We believe in the literal physical resurrection from the dead of the Lord Jesus Christ; that He was bodily exalted to the right hand of God where He presently fulfills the ministry of intercession and advocacy, and provides our access to God.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Godhead. He convicts the world of sin; regenerates those who receive Christ as Saviour, baptises them at the moment of salvation into the Body of Christ, indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts on each one, and fills and empowers those yielded to Him.

MAN

We believe that man was created in the image of God, but in Adam's sin the human race fell and incurred not only physical but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. Mankind inherited a sinful nature causing all men to be born sinners.

SALVATION

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a substitutionary sacrifice acceptable to God. All who receive Him "by grace through faith" are justified on the basis of His shed blood. We believe that all true believers, once saved, are forever secure in their salvation and will ultimately be presented faultless in God's presence. We believe that true faith manifests itself in good works and that every believer is responsible to pursue Christ-likeness.

THE CHURCH

We believe in the invisible Universal Church and in its visible expression; the local church. The Church is a spiritual organism, the Body and Bride of Christ. We believe in two ordinances: The Lord's Supper, and Baptism by immersion of born-again believers.

THE FUTURE

We believe in the imminent second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the resurrection to eternal life or everlasting judgment of all men.