

## **What we believe**

God, our Creator, has made himself known to mankind. He wants people to know him as well as to know about him. To that end he has given us the Bible, a book of sixty-six smaller books. In it we discover all we need to know about God. In particular in the Bible we find the following vital truths.

### *God*

God is one. He is the living, true and eternal God. He alone rules over all as the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is the Creator and Preserver of all things. He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each being the same in substance and equal in glory and power. God is free, independent and sovereign. He does all things in conformity with the purpose of His will.

### *Jesus Christ*

The Son is the eternal Word of God. Without laying aside his eternal deity, he took to himself human nature. He was conceived as a man, Christ Jesus, in the womb of a virgin called Mary. He was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth. When he was about 30 years of age he began to travel around Galilee teaching about God and his kingdom. He performed many miracles. He also taught in Judah and Jerusalem. Some 3 years later, after proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God, he suffered and was crucified. His death is the one unrepeatable sacrifice for our original guilt and actual sins. He suffered and died for us. In so doing he satisfied God's justice. As a result God's wrath is turned away from those who believe. On the third day after his burial he rose physically from death. Forty days later he ascended to heaven. There he reigns. He will personally return to judge all people on the last day.

### *The Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. He convinces us of our failure to do God's will. He shows us that we are by nature hostile to God. He helps us to see we deserve to experience the eternal displeasure of God in hell.

He leads us to know we can enjoy forgiveness and be accepted by God. He convinces us that the only way to be accepted by God is to have the perfection of Jesus Christ reckoned as ours. And he shows that only those who have faith in Jesus Christ are accounted righteous by God.

### *Mankind*

The first man, Adam, was created by God as a distinct being, different from other living beings. The first woman, Eve, was formed from and for Adam. Mankind (as male and female) enjoys the special and unique status of being created in God's image. Our chief calling is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever. God has entrusted to us the responsibility to care for, explore and enjoy his creation. He has ordained that sexual intimacy with another may be enjoyed only within lifelong, monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Human life, as God's gift, is to be respected and cared for from conception to the grave.

### *The fall*

Due to the disobedience of Adam and Eve, and because Adam represents all who descend from him, mankind is fallen from the state of innocence in which he was created. As a result we are accounted sinful and guilty in the eyes of God. This state is aggravated because we break the commandments of God each day. Mankind is thus subject to God's wrath and condemnation. Alienated from God, we suppress his truth and are hostile to his law.

### *The Bible*

The Holy Scriptures, as originally given, were divinely and verbally inspired. They never lead people astray. They are completely reliable. They are the defining and final authority in all matters of faith, conduct and practice.

### *The Church*

God has a people who belong to him, each of whom was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. The Church is the body of Christ to which

all true believers of every generation belong. God's people are called to worship him, to serve him in the world, to proclaim and defend his truth, to exhibit his character, and to demonstrate the reality of his kingdom. His people are set apart to lead holy lives. They follow the teaching of the apostles.

### *The New Birth*

Unless a person is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God (*John 3:3*). This miracle of regeneration is a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit. As a result of it a sinner can turn away from what is wrong and have faith in the Lord Jesus (*Acts 20:21*) as the only way of salvation.

### *Eternal Security*

All who are spiritually united to Christ through regeneration are eternally secure in Him because there is 'no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus' (*Romans 8:1*).

### *Resurrection*

There will be a bodily resurrection of all on the day of judgment. On that day the Lord Jesus Christ 'will judge the living and the dead' (*2 Timothy 4:1*). Then all believers will go to be with the Lord for ever (*1 Thessalonians 4:17*). All others will be 'punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power' (*2 Thessalonians 1:9*).

### *New Heavens and Earth*

God's kingdom will be seen in its final state when he creates a new heaven and a new earth from which evil, suffering and death will be excluded, and in which he will be perfectly glorified for ever. This will happen when Jesus Christ personally returns to judge the living and the dead.