

What We Teach

A. The Scriptures

1. Origin

The Bible is the written revelation of God made up of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. The Word of God is an objective (Ex. 17:14), propositional revelation (I Thess. 2:13), every word inspired by God (II Tim. 3:16) and in the original documents absolutely inerrant and infallible (Isa. 40:8).

2. Infallibility

The Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice given to mankind (Matt. 5:18; John 10:35, 16:12-23, 17:17; I Cor. 2:3-13; II Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; II Peter 1:20-21, 3:15-17).

3. Inspiration

God gave His written Word through a process of dual authorship in which the Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that through their individual personalities and different styles of writing they composed and recorded God's Word to mankind (II Peter 1:20-21, 3:15-16) without error in whole or in part (Isa. 30:8, 40:8; Matt. 5:18; II Tim. 3:16).

4. Interpretation

While there may be several applications to any given passage of Scripture, there is but one interpretation which is to be found as one diligently applies the grammatical-historical (literal/normal) method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17, 16:12-15; I Cor. 2:7-15; I John 2:20).

B. The Living And True God

1. Triune God

There is only one living and true God (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 45:5-7; I Cor. 8:4) who is an infinite, intelligent Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes (ie. omniscience; omnipresence; omnipotence; self-existence; infinity; immutability; etc.), one in essence but eternally existing in three persons Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Ps. 139:8; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14) - each equally deserving the same worship and obedience (Acts 17:24-29; I Cor. 8:6; Rev. 19:10).

2. God the Father

a. Person

God the Father - The Father - the first person of the Trinity possesses all the divine attributes. He relates as Father to: creation (Job 38:4-7; Acts 17:29; I Cor. 8:6; James 1:17); mankind (Ps. 103:13); Jesus Christ (II Cor. 11:31); and believers (John 3:16, 20:17; I Peter 1:23).

b. Works

God the Father - the first person of the Trinity orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; Eph. 1:4-11). He is the absolute and highest ruler of the universe, and He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Job 1:6; Psalm 103:19; Isa. 45:5-7; Rom. 11:33-36). He is creator of all things (I Cor. 8:6). His Fatherhood denotes a spiritual relationship within the Trinity. He is the sovereign Father of mankind but He is the spiritual Father only to believers in God's provision for salvation (John 1:12; Eph1:3-6; Heb. 12:5-9). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass. He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (I Chron. 29:11). He does this so as in no way to be the author and approver of sin (John 8:40-44), nor to abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (I Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from all eternity those whom He would have as His own (Eph. 1:3-6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

3. God the Son

a. Person

God the Son - Jesus Christ - the second person of the Trinity possesses all the divine attributes and in these He is co-equal with the Father and is of the same nature and co-eternal with Him (John 10:27-39, 14:9). The second person of the God-head laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of heavenly co-existence with God to assume in His incarnation the place of a servant; however, He did not divest Himself of His divine attributes (Phil. 2:5-8). He represents the fusion of humanity and deity into an indivisible oneness (Micah 5:2; John 14:9-10; I John 5:20; Jude 25). He was virgin born (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:25; Luke 1:26-35) and is God incarnate (John 1:1,3,14,18). The purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, to redeem men from sin, and to rule over God's kingdom (Psalm 2:7-9; Isa. 9:6-7; Mark 10:45; John 1:29; I Peter 1:19, 2:24).

b. Works

The Lord Jesus Christ is the person through whom God the Father created all things (I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16). He accomplished the salvation through His death on the cross; this death was voluntary, vicarious (substitutionary), propitiatory (fully satisfied all God's righteous demands), and redemptive (Rom. 3:25, 5:8; Eph. 1:7; Titus 2:14; I Peter 2:24). Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God both confirmed the deity of Christ and accepted the sacrificial work of Christ on the cross as an atonement for our sins. Through Christ's bodily resurrection, God guaranteed a future resurrected life for all believers (John 5:28-29, 10:10, 14:19; Rom. 1:3-4, 4:25, 6:5-10; I Cor. 15:17,20,23). He will return to receive the Church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the Rapture. When He returns with His Church in glory, He will establish His kingdom in its millennial manifestation (John 14:2-3; Acts 1:9-11; I Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20). He is the one through whom God will judge the living and the dead (John 5:22-23; I Cor. 3:10-15; II Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15). He is both the mediator between God and man (I Tim. 2:5) and the coming universal King (Isa. 9:6).

4. God the Holy Spirit

a. Person

God the Holy Spirit - The Holy Spirit - the third person of the Trinity possesses all the divine attributes and in these He is co-equal with the Father and is of the same nature and co-eternal with Him (Acts 5:3-4; Is. 6:8-9; Jer. 31:31-34; Acts 28:25-26; Heb. 10:15-17).

1. He possesses "intellect" (I Cor. 2:10-13), "emotion" (Eph. 4:30), "will" (I Cor. 12:11).
2. He is co-equal (Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 12:4-6; II Cor. 13:14).
3. He is eternal (Hebrews 9:14).
4. He is omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-10).
5. He is omniscient (Isaiah 40:13-14).
6. He is omnipotent (I Cor. 12:11).
7. He is truth (John 16:13).

b. Works

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute God's will in relation to mankind. He was sovereignly active in creation, in the incarnation and in the written revelation. He is sovereignly active in the work of salvation (Gen. 1:2; Matt. 1:18; John 3:5-7; 2 Peter 1:20-21). The work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father, as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17, 15:26), to initiate and to complete the building of the body of Christ, which is His Church (I Cor. 12:13). His activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ by enabling man to know God, and transforming believers into Christ-likeness (John 16:7-15; II Cor. 3:18; Eph. 2:22). He is the supernatural and sovereign person in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13), indwelling, sanctifying, instructing, empowering for service, and sealing them for the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 1:13-14). He indwells every believer from the moment of salvation (Rom. 8:9; I

Cor. 12:13). He fills the believer to the capacity that those born of the Spirit are willing to obey His will (Eph. 5:18; I John 2:20-27). He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth as revealed in Scripture (John 16:13). He administers spiritual gifts to the Church for the perfecting of the believer. He does this to glorify Christ and to implement His work of both redeeming the lost and building up believers in the faith (John 16:13-14; I Cor. 12:4-11; II Cor. 3:18). He is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the maturing of believers. Certain gifts such as speaking in tongues (unlearned languages) and the working of sign miracles are no longer necessary for the Church today. With the completion of Scripture there is no need for miraculous sign gifts to authenticate the Apostles' doctrine (I Cor. 12:4-11, 13:8-10; II Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-12; Heb. 2:1-4). God is still all powerful, and still performs physical miracles such as bodily healing, but He does so through the prayers of the saints rather than through those who claim to have the gift of healing (Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:7-12; I Cor. 13:8-10; II Cor. 12:12; James 5:14-15).

C. The Human Race

1. Creation

Man was directly and instantly created by God at the time of Creation. Man was created in God's image (Gen. 1:26-27; Col. 1:16; James 3:9).

2. Purpose

Man was created with divine intention that he should glorify God and enjoy His fellowship (Isa. 43:7; Rev. 4:11). Man was created as a rational being, free of sin, possessing intelligence, will, and moral responsibility to God (Gen. 1:26-28, 2:15-25).

3. Fall

Adam, the first man, willfully disobeyed God's direct command and ate of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15-17, 3:1-7; I Tim. 2:14). This act brought the penalty of spiritual and physical death upon the human race (John 3:36; Rom. 5:12,23, 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3).

4. Present State

Adam's sin is imparted to all mankind in that all inherit the sinful nature of Adam, being his descendants. All men are sinners by nature, by divine declaration, and by choice (Ps. 14:1-3; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:9-23, 5:12; James 2:10) Adam's disobedience brought the wrath of God upon mankind and separation from Him (Gen. 3:17-19; Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 5:12-18).

5. The sacredness of human life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions and stages, including the pre-born, the aged, the physically or mentally impaired and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps 139)

D. Salvation

1. Salvation is the gift of God's grace on the basis of the redemption offered through Christ's shed blood and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Eph. 1:7, 2:8-10; I Peter 1:18-19).

The Christian receives a three-fold Salvation:

- a.** Past - Saved from the penalty and the guilt of sin (Col. 2:13-14).
- b.** Present - Saved from the power of sin and its dominion over the believer (Rom. 6:6-7,11, 8:2-4; Gal. 1:4; I Peter 2:24).
- c.** Future - Saved from the very presence and effects of sin (Rom. 5:9-10; Heb. 9:28; I Peter 1:3-5).

2. Regeneration is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which man, alienated from God by sin, is:

- a.** Given spiritual life (John 3:3-6; Rom. 8:16; Eph. 2:1,4-5; II Peter 1:3-4).
- b.** Enlightened in spiritual understanding (Rom. 12:2; I Cor. 2:12-14; 2 Cor. 4:6).
- c.** Renewed in his will (Rom. 12:1-2; Phil. 4:13; Titus 3:5).
- d.** Assured a glorified body (I Cor. 15:50-54; Phil. 3:21).

3. Election is the sovereign act of God, before the foundation of the world, in choosing individuals to salvation (Eph. 1:4; II Thess. 2:13). The purpose of election is for:
 - a. Justification (II Thess. 2:13; I Tim. 6:12).
 - b. Sanctification (John 17:17,19).
 - c. Glorification (Rom. 8:29-30).
 - d. Peace (I Cor. 7:15; Col. 3:15).
 - e. Fruitfulness (John 15:16).
 - f. Holiness (Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4).
 - g. Witnessing (Acts 9:15, 22:14-15).
 - h. Service (Eph. 2:10).

Election does not obscure the individual's opportunity and responsibility to believe in Christ as his Savior (John 3:16-18).
4. Justification is the judicial act of God by which He accounts and declares righteous the sinner who puts his faith in Christ.
 - a. Man's personal righteousness cannot be the ground for justification (Rom. 3:10, 20-23; Gal. 3:10).
 - b. Justification is a gift of God's grace received by faith (Rom. 3:24,28, 5:1, 8:33; Eph. 2:8).
 - c. The purpose of justification is:
 - i. Freedom from condemnation and wrath (John 5:24; Rom. 5:9, 8:1).
 - ii. Spiritual life (Rom. 5:18,21).
 - iii. Peace with God (Rom. 5:1).
 - iv. Heavenly inheritance (Titus 3:7; I Peter 1:4).
 - v. Eternal glory (Rom. 8:30).
5. Sanctification is the believer being set apart for God. It includes cleansing and purification (I Cor. 1:2, 6:11; II Cor. 6:17, 7:1; Eph. 1:4).
 - a. The believer positionally is perfect before God through the body and blood of Christ (I Cor. 1:30; Heb. 10:10).
 - b. The believer practically is engaged in a process of growing toward maturity in Jesus Christ. This is accomplished through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives by which we:
 - i. Reckon ourselves dead to sin (Rom. 6:6,11).
 - ii. Present our bodies a living sacrifice to God (Rom. 12:1).

Practical sanctification is inseparable from the use of Scripture, prayer, meditation, self-examination and confession of sin (II Cor. 13:5; I John 1:9).
6. Security of the believer is God's guarantee of our final salvation.
 - a. God is able to keep His own (II Tim. 1:12; Jude 24-25).
 - b. God wills to keep His own (John 10:28-29; Rom. 8:28-39; I Thess. 5:23-24; I Peter 1:3-5).
7. Separation is a life pleasing to God (II Cor. 5:9, 6:17). It includes separation from apostasy, worldly and sinful practices. (Rom. 12:1-2; I Cor. 5:9-13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11).

E. The Church

1. The Universal Church consists of all those who, in this present dispensation, truly believe on Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1:2). It is the body and bride of Christ (Romans 12:5; I Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 1:22-23, 5:23,30; Rev. 21:2,9-10) which Christ loves and for which He gave Himself (Eph. 5:25). The Church began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the Rapture (I Cor. 15:15-47; I Thess. 4:13-18).
2. The purpose of the Church is to glorify God (Eph. 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Eph. 4:13-16) through instruction in the Word (II Tim. 2:2,15, 3:16-17), through fellowship (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25; I John 1:3), through keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42) and by preaching the Gospel to the entire world (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8, 2:42).

3. The propagation of the Church is through the faithful witness of its members by their lives and ministry as they obey the command to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). Believers are to pray (Matt. 9:38), send (Rom. 10:15; Phil. 4:15-18), and go (Matt. 28:19; John 4:35) in response to God's calling.
4. The supreme authority of the Church is the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18; I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18).
5. The local church is an established fellowship of believers as taught and defined in the New Testament (Acts 14:27, 20:17, 23-32; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5; Heb. 10:25). It is 5 autonomous (free from any external authority or control) with the right of self-government and with freedom from interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Acts 13:1-4; I Cor. 3:9; Titus 1:5; I Peter 5:1-4). Each local church, through its elders' interpretation and application of Scripture, determines matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government (Acts 15:19-31, 20:28; I Cor. 5:4-7; I Peter 5:1-4).
6. The leadership of the local church is entrusted to the biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly. These leaders are called elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers in Scripture) (Acts 20:17; Eph. 4:11) and deacons and must meet biblical qualifications (I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-5). These leaders lead or rule under the authority of Christ (Acts 20:28; I Thess. 5:12; I Tim. 5:17-22) in their direction of the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Heb. 13:7, 17).
7. The discipline of sinning members of the congregation is to be conducted in accord with scriptural standards and is to be administered by the elders (Matt. 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; I Cor. 5:1-13; II Thess. 3:6-15; I Tim. 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16; II John 10).
8. The ordinances of the church are baptism and The Lord's Table (Acts 2:38-45).
 - a. Christian baptism (by immersion) is the testimony of the believer. It symbolizes our union with Him in death to sin and in resurrection to a new life (Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:1-11). We teach and practice baptism by immersion for believers, however, the mode of baptism shall not be made a condition of fellowship.
 - b. The Lord's Table is the commemoration of the broken body and the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord's Table is open to all Christians, and participation should be preceded by solemn self-examination. The Lord's Table proclaims Christ's death until He comes again (I Cor. 11:23-28). It was instituted and commanded by Him (Luke 22:19-20).
9. The teaching of the church regarding Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality
 - a. God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) Each person's biological gender is designed by God, and reflects God's intended gender expression and identity for that person.
 - b. The term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) God also intends the beauty of sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. God has called His people to sexual purity. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.)
 - c. While it is sin not to follow God's plan for marriage, gender and sexuality, God, in His great love, grace and compassion, offers redemption and restoration to all who truly repent and turn to Him for mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. The church, as Christ's representative, is to follow His example. Therefore, hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any person is to be repudiated and is not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Snohomish Community Church. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31; John 8:3-11)

F. Future Events

1. Death

At death there is the separation of spirit and body (II Cor. 5:8). A believer's spirit passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23). An unbeliever's spirit passes into Hades (Luke 16:19-26).

2. The Pre-Tributional Rapture

The Lord Jesus Christ will personally return to receive His Church from this earth (John 14:1-3; I Cor. 15:51-53; I Thess. 4:16; Titus 2:11-13). After the rapture the believers' works will be judged and rewards will be given (Rom. 14:10-12; I Cor. 3:11-15; II Cor. 5:10). The rapture of the Church immediately precedes the Tribulation period otherwise known as Daniel's 70th week (Dan. 9:24-27; Matt. 24:15-31; I Thess. 4:13-15, 5:1-11; II Thess. 2:6-8).

3. Tribulation

Upon the removal of the Church from the earth, the righteous judgment of God will be poured out on the unbelieving world (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 9:27; II Thess 2:7-12). At the close of the Tribulation period, Christ will return in glory to the earth (Matt. 24:15-31; Rev. 19:11-16). At this time the Old Testament Saints and the tribulation martyrs will be raised (Dan. 12:2-3; Rev. 6:9-11, 20:4-6).

4. Resurrection

All people will be bodily resurrected (Dan. 12:2; Rev. 20:11-15). The saved will be resurrected to eternal life (John 5:29; II Cor. 4:14; Rev. 20:6) and the unsaved will be resurrected to judgment and everlasting punishment (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29; Rev. 20:13-15). The spirit of the redeemed will be reunited with the resurrected body (Rev. 20:4-6) to be glorified forever with the Lord (I Cor. 15:35-44; Phil. 3:21; I Thess. 4:16,17). The spirit of the unsaved will be reunited with the resurrected body (John 5:20-29; Rev. 20:4-6) which is to judgment and eternal separation from God (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:41-46; II Thess. 1:7-9).

5. The Millennium

This thousand year period follows the Tribulation period. Satan is bound for 1,000 years and the Antichrist and the false prophet will be thrown into the lake of fire (Dan. 7:17-27; Rev. 19:20, 20:1-7). Christ will occupy the throne of David (Matt. 25:31; Luke 1:31-33) and will establish His kingdom on earth (Rev. 19:11-16). God's promises to Israel will be fulfilled spiritually and nationally (Deut. 30:1-10; Ezek. 37:21-28; Zech. 8:1-8). Israel will repent and enter into the land of blessing (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-32; Rom. 11:25-29). This millennial period will be characterized by long life, righteousness, harmony, peace and justice (Is. 11:1-16, 65:17-25; Ezek. 36:33-38). At the end of the millennium, Satan will be released, will bring a great rebellion, and will be defeated by the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 20:7-10).

6. Judgment

The saved will be judged after the rapture to examine the quality of their works (I Cor. 3:12-15). The unsaved will be judged at the close of the millennial period when they are resurrected after Satan is cast into the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). They will be judged by Christ at the Great White Throne judgment. Upon being judged they will be committed to eternal conscious punishment in Hell (Rev. 20:11-15).

7. Eternity

After the judgment of the unsaved and of Satan (II Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:7-15), the saved enter into eternal glory with God (Rev. 22:14). The earth will be dissolved (II Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth where only righteousness will be found (Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:1-22:5). The heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Rev. 21:2) to become the dwelling place of the saints where they will find fellowship with God and one-another (John 17:3; Rev. 21-22).

G. The Devil

There is a personal Devil, a being of great cunning and power. He is the prince of the power of the air and the prince of this world. He can exert vast power only so far as God will allow. He is actively involved in the spiritual battle for the soul of mankind, yet he will ultimately be cast into the Lake of Fire and shall be tormented day and night forever (Job 1:10, 12; Matt. 4:1-11; John 12:31, 16:11; II Cor. 4:4, 11:14-15; Eph. 2:2, 6:11-12; I Peter 5:8; Jude 9; Rev. 20:1-3, 7-10).