

Doctrine of The Church

I. **Doctrine of the Church (Ecclesiology)**

A. Nature of the Church

1. Christ is the head of the Church (Eph 1:22-23)
2. The church was built upon the foundation of the apostles (Eph 2:19-22)
3. There is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles (Eph 3:4-10)
4. The church is one body (1 Cor 12, Rom 12)
5. The church is distinct from Israel

B. Church Government

There are numerous forms of church government and they are as follows

1. Episcopalian
2. Presbyterian
3. Congregationalist
 - A. Single Elder
 - B. Plural Local elders
 - C. Corporate Board
 - D. Pure Democracy
4. No Government but the Holy Spirit

C. Baptism & The Lord's Supper

1. Baptism signifies a union with Christ but in practice denotes the action of washing or plunging in water. There are multiple interpretations as what Baptism means.

- A. Baptism is a means of saving Grace
- B. Baptism is a Sign and Seal of the Covenant
- C. Baptism is a Token of Salvation

2. The Lord's Supper

- A. Established by Christ
- B. Needs to be repeated in all Christian circles
- C. A form of proclamation
- D. Spiritual benefit to the partaker
- E. Restricted only to true followers of Jesus Christ
- F. Often practiced in the form of communion

D. Spiritual Gifts

1. The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts in the NT (1 Cor 1:7)
 - A. The gifts were meant for the Christian to perform his or her service in the church.
 - B. Instructions on Spiritual gifts are mentioned in Rom 12:6-8, 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28-30, and Eph 4:7-12.
2. The types of Spiritual gifts are working in miracles, healing, helpers, administration, and faith.

Doctrinal Statement

I believe that Christ has full ownership of the Church as here on earth according to Eph 1:22-23. I believe that the church was built upon the foundation the apostles set (Eph 2:19-22). I believe that the church is one body (Rom 12, 1 Cor 12) and that each member has a different function in the church. I also believe that the church and Israel are distinct. I do not believe in a spiritual Israel. I believe in a number of differing interpretations and practices on the government of the church. I personally believe that the congregational form of government is the most Biblical of all. But this is not to say that the other philosophies are completely unbiblical. I also believe that the follower of Christ needs be baptized which indicates that he is born again and has been washed from his sins. I do not believe that Baptism saves the Christian.

- I reject Baptismal Regeneration as taught by OneNess Pentecostals, Catholics and other groups.
- I rejected the Reformed view of Baptism being a Sign and Seal of the Covenant
- I believe that Baptism is by immersion only. I do not believe in sprinkling nor any other form for Baptism other than by immersion.

The Lord's Supper was established by Christ and told in all three synoptic gospels and also in 1 Cor 11. I believe that the Lord's Supper needs to be practiced by anyone professing to be a Christian as this is a form of a proclamation to the Lord and his death and resurrection. I believe the best way to practice the Lord's supper would be in communion as mentioned in 1 Cor 10. I believe that the Lord's Supper should be remembered once a month in the local church.

Spiritual Gifts are given to all believers. I believe that the spiritual gifts were meant for the believer to perform his or her services to the church and to the body of Christ. There are four passages in the NT that speak of the spiritual gifts and they are Rom 12:6-8, 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28-30, and Eph 4:7-12.

- I am a cessationist and believe that the apostolic sign gifts have ceased and are no longer in practice. Speaking in Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues, the working of miracles, the gift of healing, Apostleship, and Prophecy I believe are the most obvious of the sign gifts that ceased.
- I reject much of the Charismatic movement and believe that many so called "miracle workers" in that movement are frauds, and do not have the spiritual gift of healing that ceased in the 1st century with the closing of the Canon.

Separation I believe needs to be practiced by Christians serious about the Bible. There are three types of separation and they are from the world, from false teachers and from disobedient Christians. 1 John 2:15-17 teaches separation from the world, Gal 1:8-9 teaches separation from false teachers, and 2 Thes 3:14-15 teaches separation from disobedient Christians. Many New Evangelicals, Charismatics and such I believe are in disobedience to the scriptures so I therefore believe that separating from them in some areas is acting in accordance with the scriptures.

Bibliography: Erickson, Chapters 50-55, Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, Chapters 44-53, Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 579-92, Elwell, EDT 129-130, 135, 1135-1138, NDT (Baptism), Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, 650-56, Dabney, *Discussions: Evangelical and Theological "The Public Preaching of Women,"* 96-118