

EVANGELICAL BERGTHALER MENNONITE CONFERENCE DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

2.1.1 GOD

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having the same nature, attributes and perfection (Rom. 1:20; Matt. 28:19; Deut. 4:35; Jn. 17:5).

2.1.2 JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the Personality and Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; who was begotten of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is truly God and truly man (Jn. 1 : 1, 14; 10:30; Matt. 1:20; Lk. 1:30-31; Phil. 2:5-7; 1 Tim. 3:16; Col. 1:19).

2.1.3 HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit, and that He is the source and power of all acceptable worship and service, the infallible Interpreter of the infallible Word, Who indwells every true believer and is ever present to testify of Christ, seeking to occupy us with Him and not with ourselves or our experiences (Jn. 15 :26; Acts 5:3-4; 1:8; Rom. 8:8,9; 26-27; 1 Cor. 2:12-14; 3:16; 12:13; Jn. 16:13-14).

2.1.4 THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God," by which we understand the whole book called THE BIBLE; that it is inerrant in the original writing and that its teaching and authority is absolute, supreme and final and that the Holy Spirit guided the holy men of old in all that they wrote (2 Tim. 3 : 16; Deut. 4:2; 2 Pet. 1:21).

2.1.5 SATAN

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, "that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world" (Rev. 12:9; Eph. 6:11-12; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 20:10).

2.1.6 THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in the image of God and after His likeness, as stated in the Word of God, but the whole human race fell in the fall of the first Adam. Not only was his moral nature grievously injured by the fall but he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7,8). Therefore, he cannot see nor enter the kingdom of God until he is born again by the Holy Spirit. And we further believe that no degree of reformation however great, no attainment in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies however useful, no baptism or ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but that a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God is absolutely essential to salvation (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3; Jn. 3:3, 6-7; Titus 3:5).

2.1.7 THE SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ became the sinner's substitute before God and died as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sin of the whole world. We also believe that He was made a curse for us, dying for our sins according to the Scriptures, No repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolution, no sincere efforts, no submission to rules and regulations of any church can add in the very least to the value of the precious blood or to the merit of that finished work wrought for us by Him, Who tasted death for every man (1 Jn. 2:2; Heb. 2:9, Gal. 3:13; Rom. 3:25; 4:4-5; 5:8; Col. 1:13-14, 20-21).

2.1.8 THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST

We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of Jesus Christ; that His body was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures and that He ascended into Heaven and sits on the right hand of God as the believer's High Priest and Advocate (Lk. 24:39; Acts 1: 10-11; Eph. 4:10; Heb.1:3; 1 Jn. 2:1).

2.1.9 SALVATION OF SINNERS

We believe that all mankind is lost in sin (Rom. 3 : 10-18, 23), but that all may be saved by conversion (Matt. 18:3 ; Acts 3 : 19, 1 5:3), which involves repentance from sin (Matt. 3:2, 4:17, 9:13; Lk. 5:32, 13:3; Acts 3:19, 17:30, 20:21) and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ (Mk. 1:15; John 1:12, 3:15-18; Acts 16:31; Rom. 4, 10:9-14), with the result being an ever growing walk of obedience to the Lord (Mall. 7:2 1; Lk. 6:46-49; Rom. 2: 5-10, 6: 16-18; Gal 5:7; Heb. 5:9; Eph. 4:1-3).

2.1.10 THE BELIEVER'S JUSTIFICATION AND UNION WITH CHRIST

We believe that Christ, in the fullness of the blessings He has secured by His death and resurrection, is received by faith alone and that the moment we trust in Him as our Savior we pass from death into everlasting life, justified from all sin, accepted before the Father according to the measure of His acceptance, loved as He is loved and made one with Him. At the time of acceptance of Christ as Savior, He comes to dwell within the believer and to live out His life of holiness and power through him (Heb.9: 15; Jn. 5:24; Rom. 3:28; 4:3; 23-25; Eph. 1:3; Jn. 17:23; Gal. 2:20; 4:6-7; 5:16; Acts 1:8).

2.1.11 ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

We believe that the Scriptures teach that believers may have assurance of their own salvation (Jn. 11:26; 1 Jn. 5:9-13; Rom. 8:16; 2 Cor. 13:5).

2.1.12 BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

We believe that all born-again believers should experience a water baptism signifying their being born again spiritually by dying with Christ and being raised to new life in Christ (Rom. 6:3-5; Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:44-48; Gal 2:20).

2.1.13 THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe in a communion service, repeatedly observed, whereby the Lord Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on our behalf is remembered through partaking of bread, representing His body broken for us and the partaking of the fruit of the vine, representing His blood shed for us (Mart. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

2.1.14 CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe that all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ are called into a life of separation from worldly and sinful practices and should abstain from such amusements and habits as will cause others to stumble or bring reproach upon the cross of Christ. Believers are created in Christ Jesus unto good works." As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household offaith" (Gal. 6: 10; 1 Jn. 2:15-16; Rom. 13:14; 14:13; 1 Cor. 10:31; Eph. 2:10; James. 4:4).

2.1.15 HOMOSEXUALITY

We believe that homosexuality is a grievous sin (Lev. 18:22; 20: 13; Rom. 1 :27; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. I : 810), and any church member taken with this vice must confess and forsake this sin or be excommunicated from the fellowship of believers (1 Cor. 5).

2.1.16 SANCTITY OF LIFE

We believe that abortion is entirely unscriptural in every case because scripture teaches that at the moment of conception the entire person comes into being (Song of Solomon 3:4; "...conceived me..."), the personal pronoun me being a reference to the person who possesses all the parts; body, soul and spirit (1 Thess. 5 :23). Lk. 2:2 1 says of Jesus that, "before He was conceived. . . " It was the Person of Jesus Christ, referred to the personal pronoun He, that was conceived. The personal pronoun He is reference to the entire person and his possessions; body, soul and spirit, (1 Thess. 5:23; Ex. 21:22 - 24). Thus, abortion at any time after conception is murder; murder being the premeditated termination of a person's life for any reason which is not sanctioned by God (Ex. 20: 13).

2.1.17 EVANGELISM

We believe in the evangelization of the world; that the supreme mission of the people of God is to preach the Gospel to every creature (Mall. 28: 18-20; Mk. 16: 15; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor.5:18-19).

2.1.18 THE CHURCH

We believe that the church is composed of all those who truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The Church is the body and bride of Christ. We further believe that every believer, whether Jew or Gentile, is baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit and having thus become members of one another we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, loving one another fervently, with a pure heart (Eph. 1:22-23; 2: 19-22; 1 Cor. 12:22-27; 1:10-13; Rom. 12:4-5; Eph. 4:3-6; 5:32; Phil. 2:1-5; Gal. 5:13-15).

2.1.19 DESTINY OF THE BELIEVER AT DEATH

We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming, when the re-united soul and body shall be with Him forever in glory (Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Lk. 16:22,25; Phil 1:23; 1 Thess. 4:15-18; 1 Cor. 15:42-45).

2.1.20 DESTINY OF THE UNBELIEVER AT DEATH

We believe that the souls of the lost after death remain in torment until the final judgement at the great white throne, when soul and body re-united at the resurrection shall be cast "into the lake of fire" which is the "second death," to be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1:8-9; Lk. 16:22-24; 27-28; Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20: 5, 11-15).

2.1.21 THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the personal return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that the coming again of Jesus Christ is the "blessed hope" set before us, for which we should be constantly looking. " Our citizenship is in heaven from whence we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Jn. 14:1-3; Titus 2:13; Phil. 3:20-21).