

OUR CITY

CHURCH

BELIEFS

The Bible—the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments—is unique among written works in the world and is inspired by God. Written by dozens of authors from three continents over 1,500 years, it maintains an internal consistency while reflecting the backgrounds, styles and vocabularies of its authors. The scriptures speak with the authority of God expressed through the unique personalities of men and women. We seek to interpret, contextualize and live out this story today as the Holy Spirit makes the Bible alive to each of us. We hold that the Scriptures provide daily and ultimate guidance for our individual and corporate lives. There are no other writings similarly inspired by God.

THE BIBLE

Our City Church's core beliefs are derived from Scripture (the Old and New Testaments of the Bible). We believe the truths set forth here are essential to understanding the work of God in the world. God's presence is historically revealed through the Bible and is confirmed by the consistent witness of prophets, priests, kings and ordinary people. The Bible spoke clearly to people 'then and there,' but it also speaks to those of us 'here and now' through His Spirit.

GOD

We believe there is one true, holy God, eternally existing in three equal Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the beginning, God demonstrated His power and beauty by creating the world and everything in it. Through His divine power and providence, God continues to sustain His creation, operating within history to fulfill His redemptive purposes.

SALVATION (THE GOOD NEWS)

Scripture teaches that God reveals Himself. It further teaches that we are created in His image to live in fellowship with Him and in relational harmony with each other. It also makes clear that humanity has defied Him by going their own independent way, resulting in alienation and the inability to please God. Scripture refers to this condition as sin. This fall from grace took place at the beginning of history and since then all people have suffered the consequences and need redemption—to be bought back and saved from sin, error and evil.

The tendency to 'miss the mark' with God, the choice to turn from God's loving guidance, affected standing with God and broke the intimacy of relationship with Him. Additionally, this condition brought about disease and, ultimately, death. The Bible teaches, both from a physical standpoint and a spiritual one, humankind suffers the corruption of our nature because of our sin.

The Good News—what the New Testament calls 'the Gospel'—is that a perfect and holy God did not abandon us to our own destruction, but instead promised to provide a way of restoration and redemption. That Way took on flesh in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary. He died a substitutionary death on the cross as payment for our sins. He was raised from the dead as witnessed by hundreds and evidenced by the birth and flourishing of the Christian church.

Then and now, His suffering, death, burial, and resurrection bring hope for all humankind. Because of Jesus, sin and death have been defeated and the promise of forgiveness and eternal communion with God are freely available. No amount of good works or human effort can restore us, but God can! It is only by God's free grace that we are saved from our state of alienation. This grace is appropriated by a change of heart toward God's leadership in our lives, and by faith that Jesus has forgiven us. Each person can receive salvation by repentance through faith. And even that faith is a gracious gift from God. God's Word assures believers that He will continue His saving work in them forever. From beginning to end, it is grace that makes people whole again.

When the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, He regenerates the heart and permanently indwells those who confess Jesus Christ as their Savior. The witness of the Holy Spirit affirms them as children of God. The Spirit then empowers them with gifts, convicts, guides, comforts, counsels and leads them into truth through a life of worship and expressions of faith through service.

JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the central figure of the Bible and of human history. He is the foundation of Our City Church. The church is a global and local expression of Jesus Christ.

Scripture teaches the second person of the Trinity took on a human body (the Incarnation) by miraculous conception and virgin birth. He lived in obedience to God the Father, voluntarily paid the price for the sins of all people by dying on the cross as their substitute and satisfied divine justice, bringing salvation to all who trust in Him alone. After His physical death, Jesus Christ rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father as the only intercessor between God and humans. He promises to return to earth, personally and visibly, to fulfill history and the eternal plan of God.

THE EMPOWERED LIFE (THE HOLY SPIRIT)

Those who are in relationship with Jesus, who model his lifestyle, are called to live in holiness and obedience. This is only possible with God's help. The Holy Spirit applies Christ's work by making us aware of our need to be saved. He renews and indwells believers upon salvation providing assurance and the gifts that propel the church forward. The Holy Spirit makes the Bible come alive and brings about the actions that produce spiritual results.

HUMAN DESTINY

We believe human activity has eternal consequence and that death seals the destiny of each person. The Scriptures teach that every human being will be resurrected and judged. That judgement will be final. Those who have chosen God will continue to be in fellowship with Him while those who die outside of fellowship with God will continue in that state forever. The sobering reality of eternity, both eternal life in Christ, and eternal death apart from Him, adds urgency to our work and witness in the world.

THE CHURCH

All who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are in relationship with Him. Scripture uses the analogy of the human body to suggest the church and its members function as an organic, living entity.

The church exists wherever God's people meet regularly in obedience to Christ. We believe in the church with a small 'c;' the local gathering of believers. We also enthusiastically support the church with a big 'C.' That is the worldwide community of people who love Jesus and are doing good work every day. We will sacrificially and generously support our sisters and brothers around the world. What we are part of is so much bigger than what we do locally. The church is cared for and led by elders and leaders who are called to serve as Christ served. The greatest among us should seek to serve the most in humility and joy.

FAITH & PRACTICE

In all matters of faith and practice, Scripture is the final authority. In matters where Scripture is silent, believers should conscientiously seek to be led by the Holy Spirit, conscience and wise counsel.

BAPTISM & COMMUNION

Our City Church observes two biblical sacraments rooted in the lifestyle and teachings of Jesus Christ and practiced historically by the church. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward change. Being baptized is a public commitment of faith and desire to model the life of Christ who was buried and raised into a new life.

Communion, also known as the Lord's Supper or eucharist, is the practice of taking bread and wine to commemorate the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Jesus called Himself 'the bread of life' and being in relationship with Him is the spiritual source of our lives. The early Church celebrated Jesus by taking communion daily.