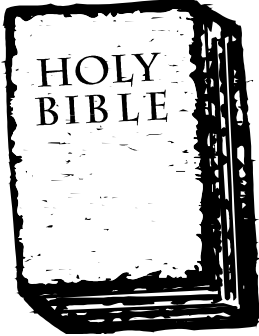


NCF Church Doctrine

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES



Scripture is the authority of Christian thought and life. We begin with the Scriptures because everything we know about God, the Church or even Christianity has its roots and basis in the Bible. There would be no Theology or doctrine without the Scriptures. Can you imagine what Christianity would be like without an official rulebook? Every belief would have to be based on man's experience or speculative thoughts. There would be so many disputes concerning how God wants us to live and who God "really" is that Christianity would turn into nothing more than an opinion, mixed with inconceivable truth and lies.

But for every dispute and every opinion, we have a final, authoritative word. We have the answer to the age-old question, "How do you know?" The answer is "the Bible tells me so!"

What does NCF believe about the Bible?

1. *It is God's Revelation*

God reveals Himself primarily in two ways:

- a. **Natural Revelation** = Creation (*Romans 1:18-21 "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven...that which is known about God is evident within them...for since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse..."*)
- b. **Special Revelation** = Scriptures (*Sam. 23:2 "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me and His word was on my tongue."*)

Creation offers a general idea of what God is like, the Bible offers specific, objective knowledge of God and His truths.

2. *It is inspired by God*

The Bible is God-breathed, God inspired.

2 Tim. 3:16-17 “All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

2 Peter 1:20-21 “...but know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

The Bible is a written record of God’s spoken words. He uses this method to reveal things about Himself and His creation. The Bible is written by ordinary men, therefore bearing different styles, vocabulary and personalities. However, these men received the words to write through God’s intervention. God both directly communicates His word and directly guides the words and thoughts of the writers, divinely affecting every choice of every word.

i.e. Moses penned the first five books of the Bible. The Ten Commandments were spoken directly to him from God. But the history of the people of Israel, such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were passed on by oral and written traditions and records. Thus, Moses was informed by man, not directly by God. But as Moses recorded that which he personally experienced or witnessed, that which man told him and that which God told him, God, through the Holy Spirit, was personally involved and sovereignly superintended Moses’ writings, insuring every word is accurate and trustworthy. Thus, we can confidently say that the Bible is God’s word, God’s letter, and God’s book to man.

3. It is complete

Because every word in the original Bible comes from God, it is completely God’s Word. The promises are God’s, the history is God’s, the genealogies are God’s, the prophecies are God’s and the proportions and weights and measures are God’s. The Bible does not merely contain sections of God’s truth mixed in with man’s account; rather all that it contains is equally God’s. It is not only completely God’s Word; likewise, God’s Word is complete. It needs nothing added or taken away. God’s actions and words have *“granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence...” (2 Peter 1:3)*

Acts 20:20 “...how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable and teaching you publicly and from house to house...”

Acts. 20:27 “For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.”

John 15:15 “...all things I have heard from my father I have made known to you.”

Rev. 22 18-19 “I testify to everyone who hears the words of prophecy of this book; if any one adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the Holy city, which are written in this book.”

4. It is Inerrant

Because every word in the original manuscripts of the Bible is God’s truth, every word is absolutely true and accurate, reflecting the pure nature of God. Therefore, the Bible has no errors in it (inerrant). It is reliable, infallible and authoritative.

Jesus says in John 10:35 “that the scriptures cannot be broken.”

Psalms 119:89 “Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven,”

Psalms 119:40 “Thy word is pure.”

Conclusion: The Bible is God’s special revelation to man.

Every word is God-inspired.

The Scriptures are complete both in truth and scope.

The Scriptures are inerrant.

These four truths concerning the Scriptures make the bible the absolute authority of Christian thought and practice.

GOD

Who is God? Simply put, He is a spiritual, divine person who is eternal, sovereign and all sufficient. He is one in number, but also three distinct persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – who are one in essence, or substance, and equal in all things.

One plus one plus one = One?

God is comprehensible in some things and incomprehensible in others. The person of God challenges our minds as we discover that His authoritative Word reveals that He is one, completely unified deity, and yet three, distinct persons. We call this the Trinity. This word is not found in the Bible, but is biblical in the sense that it expresses

clear biblical teaching. The Bible presents God as three distinguishable persons, commonly referred to as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

THE TRINITY

The O.T. axiom is this, “*Hear O Israel: the Lord our God is one God*” (Dt. 6:4). This insistence on the oneness of God was important to stress to the O.T. believers because of the idolatrous polytheism they were surrounded with by other nations. Yet, in the midst of insisting God is One are hints of His plurality.

*Gen. 1:26 “Let Us make man in **Our** image.”*

Gen. 3:22 “Behold, the man has become like one of Us.”

Isa. 6:8 “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’”

The N.T. axiom is “*I and the Father are one*” (Jn. 10:30) and “*the Lord is the Spirit...*” (2 Cor. 3:17)

The N.T. reveals three distinctive persons in one God-head (Matt. 3).

The Father is God

*Mt. 6:8-18 “Our **Father** who art in heaven, Hallowed by Thy Name...”*

*Gal. 1:1 “Paul, an apostle (not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and **God the Father**, who raised Him from the dead...)”*

The Son is God

*Jn. 1:1-18 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**...in Him was life and the life was the light of men...and the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth...”*

*Titus 2:13 “...looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of **our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.**”*

The Spirit is God

Acts 5:3-4 “But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land? ...Why is it that you conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God.’”

1 Cor. 2:10-12 "For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God."

THE GOD-MAN: JESUS CHRIST



The Scriptures not only teach that Jesus is fully God, but that He is also fully man. He is God incarnate, meaning, God in human flesh. He was begotten by the Father and born of the Virgin Mary, thus having two distinct natures, the nature of man and the nature of God, yet these natures never commingle, rather they remain distinct. Therefore, the two distinct natures remain one person. He is the man Jesus and the God Jesus.

Because He was begotten by God, He was born with the nature of man, meaning he had a body, mind and soul, yet his human nature was not sinful. His heart and mind were not bent on doing evil. Even as man, with man's limitations, He remained fully holy, pure and unblemished. As a man Jesus eats, sleeps, cries, bleeds, etc. As God He heals the sick, forgives sins, calms the storm and raises from the dead.

His divine nature

- Eternal (*Jn. 17:5, 24*)
- Omnipotent (*Mt. 8:27*)
- Omniscient (*Luke 6:8*)
- Supernatural conception. God is His Father. (*Luke 1:35*)

His human nature

- Began in time (*Gal. 4:4*)
- Was subject to human limitations, ie: hunger, pain, sorrow, growth, etc. (*Heb. 2:17, 4:15, etc.*)
- Died a physical death

His uni-personality

-Acts 20:28 “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseer, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

CREATION, FALL AND THE STATE OF MAN

CREATION

We believe that man is created by God and in the image of God. He is in no way self-made nor the product of chance.

Gen. 1:26 “Let us make man in Our image, according to our likeness...”

Gen. 2:7 “Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

THE FALL

We believe that man, attempting to assert his independence of God, willfully rebelled against God, making him unrighteous, unholy and unfit for God’s presence. God, therefore, removed man from His presence. Thus, man is separated from God.

Adam, mankind’s representative, performed the original act of sin, but the tragic event involved the entire human race, as all men sinned in Adam’s sins.

Rom. 5:14 “Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.”

MAN’S STATE

The extent of this sin is not only universal, but also individual, affecting the whole or total man, namely his will, mind and emotions, leaving him totally deprived. He is in total bondage to sin and therefore cannot please God, nor remove himself from God’s wrath. He is in desperate need of mercy, grace and salvation.

Isa. 64:6 “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like filthy garments; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities like the wind, take us away.”

Jer. 17:9 "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?"

Rom. 3:10-13 "There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands. There is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless. There is none who does good. There is not even one."

Rom. 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

SALVATION



We believe that salvation comes to man by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Eph. 2:8-9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

We believe that God elects and calls those that, through the enlightening and illuminating work of the Holy Spirit, believe in His Son as their personal Savior.

Eph. 1:4 "Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him."

The result of this action is the gift of eternal life, freedom from the bondage of sin, a restored relationship with God, a positional standing in righteousness, and all the resources needed to persevere and live a pleasing and godly life in Christ.

Jn. 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

Rom. 3:24 "...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus."

Gal. 3:26 "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."

Rom. 6:6-7 "...knowing this, that our body of sin might be done away with that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin."

2 Pet. 1:3 "...seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence."

THE CHURCH

We believe in the one true Church consisting of the total company of God's elect through the ages. Furthermore, we believe that presently on earth God's Church is visible and includes the people of God in the entire world. God's Church is mainly expressed through local congregations or "bodies."

We believe that the Church is the temple of God's presence and that she is God's foremost means of working in this world. As a result of God's presence there will be found within the church worship, prayer, praise, united testimony, fellowship, giving, teaching and preaching of the Scriptures and observance of the sacraments of the Lord.

We believe that God's Church is recognized by its unity in relationships, its holiness of life, its openness to all, its submission to the Scriptures, its preaching of Christ, its fulfillment of the Great Commission and the practice of the sacraments.

Ps. 95:7 "For He is our God And we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand."

Jn. 10:1-30 "...to him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear His voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out...I cam that they might have life and have it abundantly...and I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd...I and the Father are one."

Acts 1:8 "...but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

1 Pet. 2:4-10 "...the end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Rev. 7:9-11 "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying 'Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'"

THE SECOND COMING

We believe in the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church. We believe that this return will be decisive, sudden and glorious. We believe that at His coming Christ will complete the redemptive purposes of God across the ages, resurrect the dead, deliver the Church and eventually judge all people. Although many signs serve as indicators that Christ is coming back, nothing can remove the sense of surprise.

Mt. 24:12 “And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold.”

Mt. 24:21 “...for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.”

Mt. 24:44 “For this reason you be ready too; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.”

Jn. 5:28 “Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.”

Jn. 14:3 “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

Acts. 10:42 “And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God to judge the living and the dead.”

Other Scripture references: *Rom. 2:3-16, 1 Cor. 4:5, 1 Thess. 4:17, 2 Pet. 3:1-13,*

Jude 14ff, Rev. 6:9ff

THE FINAL STATE, FUTURE LIFE

We believe that as a result of man’s rebellion and as a form of God’s judgment all men will die. Though death is inevitable, it is not natural or terminal. Ultimately, man is an eternal being and will exist eternally in his resurrected body. Moreover, the Scriptures teach that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (*2 Cor. 5:8*). For the unbeliever, death results in his being cast into hell for the final day of judgment.

Mt. 5:29 “And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.”

Heb. 9:27 “And in as much as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”

Gen. 2:17

Rom. 5:12 “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.”

1 Cor. 15:38-58 “There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another...so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body.”

Rev. 14:11

JUDGMENT

We believe that all people will be judged accompanying the Second Coming of Christ. For the Christian, judgment will consist of the service of stewardship he performs after his salvation (*2 Cor. 5:10*). This judgment will be a fatherly judgment (*1 Pet. 1:17*). It will be exercised with compassion and understanding, yet also with strictness and firmness.

For the unbeliever, judgment will result in being cast into hell for eternal punishment. The basis of judgment is the unbelievers' rejection of the revealed will of God. Each person will be judged comprehensively and justly.

Scripture References: *Amos 5: 18ff, Mal. 4, Mt. 11:21*

Jn. 3:18 “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

Rom. 1:16-18 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel...for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith...for the wrath of God is revealed from the heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.”

Rev. 14:11 “Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our god, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.”

SATAN

We believe in the literal existence of Satan as evidenced in the Bible. Scripture reveals that Satan was created by God as a holy, beautiful, powerful, righteous spirit being, and before he fell, served as “the anointed cherub,” having the highest rank of all the angels. As a genuine person, Satan has personality traits. His intellect is obvious in his scheming to deceive (*2 Cor. 11:3*), his emotions are clearly involved in his rebellious desire to oppose God and conquer Christ (*Lk. 4:1-12*) and his will is exposed as he exposed as he appeals the will of Christ and persistently rebels against God (*Rev. 20:7-9*).

Today, after his fall, Satan is still powerful, but his power is limited and resisted by the Sovereign God. He retains some of His dignity, but is no longer holy. His current role in God’s plan is as ruler of fallen angels and ruler of the world system (*Mt. 25:41; Jn. 12:31*). Although Satan is defeated by the blood of Christ and awaits his destiny of eternal punishment, he continues tempting to sin, inciting persecution, preventing service, infiltrating the Church and promoting division. The elect, however, are enabled to resist and often overcome Satan’s tactics by exercising obedience in the power of God.