

Immanuel Bible Chapel

Doctrines & Statement of Beliefs

Doctrine & Statement of Beliefs Summary

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 reads “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”
- Doctrines can be grouped three ways for better understanding.
 - **Matters of first importance** – these are key doctrines that pertain to the faith and are non-negotiables (heresy v/s faith). Doctrines that are essential to the gospel & salvation.
 - **Matters of the local church** – these are key doctrines that pertain to church practices & preferences that we hold to at IBC. Doctrines that are essential for the practice of the local church.
 - **Matters of conscience** – these are some preferences that we will not divide the church over. Other beliefs that are non-essential to our gospel witness & ministry collaboration.

Section 1 – Matters of first importance

These are the doctrines that are essential to the gospel & salvation. These are generally agreed to by everyone who considers themselves to be Christians (the universal church).

1. **THE BIBLE** - The whole Bible is the Word of God and is inspired of God. It is inerrant in the original documents, and the only rule of authority in all matters of faith and practice (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21).
2. **THE GODHEAD** - There is one living and true God, eternally existing in three Persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each equal in person and deserving obedience (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14).
3. **JESUS CHRIST** - The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He is born of a virgin, sinless and perfect. He died as the substitute for the entire human race as a sin-bearer, was buried, rose bodily from the grave and ascended to the Father's right hand, where He ministers as our Great High Priest. He will come again to rapture His Church and subsequently return to reign on the earth (John. 1:1, John 1:14; Romans 3:24-25; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Romans 8:3).
4. **THE HOLY SPIRIT** - The Holy Spirit is fully God. He regenerates, indwells, baptizes and seals all true believers in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit enables believers to live godly

and serve faithfully. (John. 16:8; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 5:18-20).

5. **MAN** - Each member of the human race is fallen, sinful in both nature and practice. Apart from God's salvation man is lost eternally. Sin is a violation of God's Law or disobedience of the revealed will of God. The penalty of sin is death. (Genesis 2:16-17, Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 3:23 and 6:23; Romans 5:12).
6. **SALVATION** - Salvation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and entirely apart from law keeping or good works. Redemption is wholly by the blood of Christ. Repenting of their sins and believing on the atoning work of Christ saves sinners. Every person who truly believes on Christ and rests on His finished work as the only righteous ground on which a Holy God can forgive his sins is saved. (Ephesians 2:8-10, Titus 3:5, Hebrews 9:22, Romans 10:9-10). God loves all mankind (John 3:16, 1 John 2:2), Jesus Christ died for all (2 Corinthians 5:14-15), and God desires all to be saved (2 Peter 3:9).
7. **ETERNAL SECURITY** - Every true believer possesses eternal life. They are justified, sanctified and sealed with the Holy Spirit for all eternity. However, believers can lose fellowship with God, joy, power, testimony and rewards because of sin. (John 10:27-29, 2 Timothy 1:12, Philippians 1:6).
8. **BODILY RESURRECTION** - There will be the bodily resurrection of the saved and unsaved. The saved unto eternal life and the lost unto eternal and conscious judgment (John 6:39, Romans 8:10-11 and 8:19-23, Revelation 20:13-15).

Section 2 – Matters of the local church

These are beliefs that are essential for the practice of the local church.

1. **DOCTRINAL SOURCES** – While we acknowledge that all Scripture (Old Testament & the New Testament) is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17), our primary source of church doctrine is based on the New Testament epistles. Primary doctrine/teaching for the church is derived from the Epistles. (i.e. doctrine from the Epistles, examples from Acts, principles in the Gospels, and illustrated in the Old Testament.)
2. **CHURCH** - The universal Church is made up of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ from Pentecost to the Rapture (i.e. end of the Church Age).
 - The local church is made up of like-minded believers who meet together for worship, teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, prayers and evangelism (Acts. 2:1-47).
 - Believers are united to Christ and one another by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Church is not an organization but a living organism, known as the Body of Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22, Ephesians 3:6, 1 Corinthians 12:13)
 - The New Testament Church follows the pattern of Acts 2:42.
 - The Church and Israel are two distinct groups of people (Romans 9-11).
3. **CHURCH ORDINANCES** - There are two ordinances, Believer's Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.
 - **Baptism** signifies our identification with Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and our walk in the newness of life with Christ. There is nothing special about the water in and of itself. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 8:36-39)
 - i. Prior to being baptized, the person requires an understanding of their own sinful nature, and the salvation provided by the Lord Jesus' death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-5).
 - ii. People who have a clear testimony of salvation may be baptized (Acts 8:36-39). Young people are strongly encouraged to wait until they can clearly articulate this understanding (i.e. age of accountability usually between 9-12 years of age).
 - The **Lord's Supper** is a time of remembrance at which believers worship the Lord and show forth His death until He comes (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
 - i. Following the example of the early church, we observe the Lord's Supper every Lord's day (Acts 20:7).
 - ii. People who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ and have obeyed Him in baptism are welcome to partake in the Lord's Supper.

4. **CHURCH ORDER** - The supreme authority of the Church is the Lord Jesus Christ. The Sovereign Lord appoints all the Church leadership, gifts, order, and discipline (1 Peter 2:5,9 & 1 Peter 5:1-5, Ephesians 4:11-12, Titus 1:5, 1 Timothy 3:1-13).
 - The local church is autonomous and free from external control.
 - There is plurality of Elders in the church, men who meet the scriptural qualifications. They are recognized as Christ's under-shepherds.
 - Each local church has deacons to serve the practical needs of the local church.
 - We believe in the priesthood of all believers.

5. **SECOND COMING OF CHRIST** - The personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to rapture His Church is imminent.
 - This will be followed by the great tribulation and the millennial reign of Christ. Then comes the eternal state, where the unsaved will suffer eternal punishment but the saved obtain the eternal blessings (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, John 14:1-3, Matthew 25:31, Revelation 20:1-7, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53).
 - The rapture will occur prior to the start of the seven-year tribulation period (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11). The church will not pass through the tribulation since Paul explains that the church will be spared from God's wrath to come (1 Thessalonians 5:9, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, Romans 5:9, Romans 8:1). However, the primary goal of this knowledge of the end times is edification (1 Thessalonians 5:11) and not contention.

6. **MARRIAGE/FAMILY** - Marriage is a creation of God and not men.
 - God established marriage as the union of one biological man and one biological woman, to be a life-long covenant and to serve as the foundation of healthy families and societies.
 - Sexual involvement with any person outside of the context of marriage is prohibited by God in scripture (Genesis 2:21-24, Exodus 20:14, Leviticus 18, Proverbs 5:18-19, Romans 1:18-27, Hebrews 13:4).
 - Marriages will be conducted when both the groom & the bride agree with institution of marriage as detailed in the Bible, and either is a member of Immanuel Bible Chapel, and after consulting with the elders.
 - Children are a blessing from the Lord, and life begins at conception (Genesis 1:28, Psalms 127:3-5, Mark 9:37, Psalms 139:13-16, Jeremiah 1:5, Isaiah 49:1, Galatians 1:15-16).
 - Divorce & Remarriage – Marriage is an eternal covenant until death, and divorce is permitted only under very limited circumstances (i.e. adultery, abuse or other physical danger). Remarriage after divorce has to be handled in much prayer, and much caution (Deuteronomy 24:1-4, Malachi 2:16, Mathew 5:32, Luke 16:18, Mark 10:9-11, 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, Mathew 19:9).

7. **GENDER IDENTITY** - God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature

of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person (Genesis 1:26-27).

8. **SIGN GIFTS** - Miraculous gifts (tongues, healing) were primarily for the authentication of Christ and the Apostles during the early church age (i.e. Pentecost, Acts 2:1-4).
 - However, since the canon of the Bible is complete, certain gifts are not fully active at this age (1 Corinthians 13:8-13).
 - This does not mean we intend to limit God. God can in His will and perfect wisdom choose to grant these miraculous gifts during this church age. However, this manifestation should solely be for God's glory and done decently & in order (1 Corinthians 14:40).
9. **SPIRITUAL GIFTS** – All believers are given gifts to exercise for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of Body of Christ. These gifts are different from the sign gifts mentioned in Acts 2:1-4 (Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-13, 1 Peter 4:10-11, Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Corinthians 14:40).
10. **ROLES OF MEN & WOMEN IN THE CHURCH** - Following the creation account in Genesis, men & women are created equal (Genesis 1:26-28) but in complimentary roles and different functions within the church.
 - The corporate teaching in the church is primarily the responsibility of men (1 Timothy 2:8-15). Women are welcome to participate in other teaching ministries such as Sunday School, Ladies Bible Study, One-to-One discipleship ministry.
 - The picture of the creation order is depicted in the uncovered head of men, and the covered head of women which is a testimony to the angels (1 Corinthians 11:2-16).
 - As the Holy Spirit leads, women are encouraged to wear a head-covering.
11. **CREATION** – Creation is as detailed in Genesis 1.
12. **GIVING** – In the New Testament, there is no prescribed amount, but a guidance to excel in giving (2 Corinthians 8:1-7), and to be a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:6-10).
13. **RULE OF INTERPRETATION** - The primary rule of interpretation is literal. We hold to the dispensational point of view in our understanding the scriptures.
 - This is a method of interpreting the Bible that divides God's work and purposes toward mankind into different periods of time. (Acts 2:1, Ephesians 1:10, Ephesians 3:2). There are seven dispensations identified. They are Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, Promise, Law, Grace, and the Millennial Kingdom. In every dispensation the way of salvation is by faith.
 - God has revealed different dispensations (i.e. periods of time) to teach rules governing life and relationship with Him (Hebrews 1:1-2). We are currently in the dispensation of grace (i.e. the church age)

Section 3 – Matters of conscience

These beliefs that are non-essential to our gospel witness & ministry collaboration

As we consider Christian liberty, we must keep in mind that

- some things might not build up (1 Corinthians 10:23-33)
- some things might stumble other children of God (Romans 14)
- we should be careful not to misuse our liberty (Galatians 5:13)
- we should not use these differences as a source for strife, contention, and sowing discord (Proverbs 6:19)

Some common examples....

- Bible Versions
- Baptism in a lake v/s in an indoor Baptismal
- Leavened Bread v/s Unleavened Bread for the Lord's Supper
- Single Cup v/s Individual Cups for the Lord's Supper
- Grape Juice v/s Wine for the Lord's Supper
- Using guitar or drums during church services
- Dress codes for church attendance
- Home School v/s Christian School v/s Public School

Section 4 – Membership Privileges & Responsibilities

Privileges of Membership at IBC

- Collective worship (1 Corinthians 11:23-32 - The Lord's Supper)
- Instruction in God's Word (Ephesians 4:12)
- Collective prayer (Acts 2:42)
- Serving* with other believers (1 Corinthians 3:9)
- Giving (Matthew 6:19-20, Romans 12:13, 2 Corinthians 9:7, Ephesians 4:28)
- Support during times of trouble (Philippians 2:4)
- Fellowship with believers (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- Fellowship with like-minded believers worldwide (1 Corinthians 1:2)
- Counsel from godly men concerning your personal and assembly life (Proverbs 15:22, Hebrews 13:7)

(Service Opportunities - Sunday School Ministry, Nursery, Caring for the sick/need, Hospitality, Building and grounds maintenance, Visitation, Gospel work, Tract distribution, Preparation & Clean-Up for functions)

Responsibilities of Membership at IBC

- Maintain a vibrant personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ (Colossians 3:16, 2 Timothy 2:13-14)
- Maintain personal testimony (2 Timothy 2:19, Titus 2:12)
- Exercise your own spiritual gift(s) (1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Peter 4:11)
- Endeavour to help keep the unity of the Spirit (Psalm 133:1-3, Ephesians 4:2-3)
- Share in expense and fellowship with commended workers at home and abroad (Romans 15:27, Galatians 6:6, 1 Timothy 5:18)
- Regular attendance at the meetings of the assembly, including the prayer and worship meetings (Acts 2:42, Hebrews 10:25)
- Mutual help, exhortation, and edification (Galatians 6:2)
- Demonstrate love to others (John 13:34-35, 1 Peter 4:8, 1 John 3:16-18)
- Share in the ministry of hospitality (Romans 12:13, Hebrews 13:2)
- Share in the work of the assembly, physical and spiritual (Galatians 6:10)
- Seek and then follow the godly counsel of the elders concerning your life (Hebrews 13:7 & 17)