

Life Christian Centre

What we believe

We believe in

- the holy love of God the Father;
- salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, received as a free gift from God; and
- the power of the Holy Spirit to transform human lives, empower believers as Jesus' witnesses, and operate through spiritual gifts, which glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our beliefs are explained in more detail below. These beliefs are not necessarily arranged in order of priority, and the Scriptures listed and quoted are not exhaustive, but examples only.

There is one true eternal God

There is one true God, who has always existed and will always exist. He exists as three Persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. These three Persons in one God are referred to as the Trinity. God created and sustains all things. There are no limits to God's awesome love, power, wisdom and goodness. God is totally holy and separated from sin.

God is present everywhere (omnipresent), has all power (omnipotent), and knows all things (omniscient). He is sovereign. He is unchanging. God is love. He is good, merciful, just and faithful.

[Gen 1:1; Deut 6:4; Deut 33:27; 1 Chron 16:34; Ps 66:7; 90:2; 104:24; Prov 2:6; 3:19; Jer 10:12; Mt 19:17; 28:19; Jn 14:15-23; Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 12:4-6; 2 Cor 13:14; Eph 1:3-14; 2:18,22; 3:9,14-17; 4:4-6; Col 1:15-17; Jas 3:17; 1 Jn 4:8,16; Rev 1:4-8; 4:8-11]

Ps 90:2 Before the mountains were born
or you brought forth the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Mt 28:19 [Jesus said:] "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ^{Mt 28:20} and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Human beings are created in God's image

God created human beings in His own image. He created people to enjoy relating to Him in the spiritual dimension. People were also created with minds and wills, free to choose whether they would obey God and enjoy fellowship with Him or not. Sadly, human beings chose to go their own way and turned away from God - they sinned. Fellowship with God was broken and human beings could no longer relate freely to God.

Every human being is a sinner and every sinner deserves to die. We cannot help ourselves. We can never put ourselves right with God by our own efforts. We can never reach God's perfect standard of righteousness. There is only one way we can be saved and that is through appropriating the benefits of the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf. This is the only way that human fellowship with God can be restored.

[Gen 1:26-27; Gen 3:1-9; Isa 53:6; 59:2; Jn 3:16; 17:3; Acts 4:12; Rom 1:16-17; 3:23; 5:6-8; 6:23; Eph 2:8-9; 1 Jn 1:3]

Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

Rom 3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ^{Rom 3:23} for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

God the Father

The First Person of the Trinity is God the Father. He is the Creator of all things and the source of all fatherhood. He is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ and of all people who through faith in Jesus Christ are born again and become members of His family.

God the Father is Spirit, and He is to be worshipped in Spirit and in truth.

His love is shown supremely in that He gave His only Son, Jesus Christ, for the redemption of humankind.

[Gen 18:14; Ps 139:1-12; Lam 3:22-23; Mt 6:9; 11:27; 24:36; 26:53; Lk 1:37; 10:21-22; 11:2,12; Jn 3:16; 4:8-10,23; 5:16-27; 8:12-59; 10:29-30; 13:1; 14:6,10-11; 17:6; 20:17,21; Acts 1:7; 1 Cor 8:6; 2 Cor 1:3; Eph 1:1-8; 3:14-15; Gal 4:6; Jude 1]

Mt 6:9 [Jesus said:] "This, then, is how you should pray:
" 'Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.' "

Jn 20:17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' "

God the Son

The second Person of the Trinity is God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the eternal Son of God the Father. He existed before all things. The Son became a human being so that human beings could be saved from their sins. He is the living Word, the Word made flesh, and the image of the invisible God. He is fully God and fully man.

Jesus lived a sinless life, revealing God and His kingdom to humankind. He was crucified and died, giving His life as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of all people. His sacrifice is totally sufficient to provide forgiveness for all the sins of all people everywhere for all time.

Jesus Christ was powerfully revealed to be the Son of God when He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted to the highest place. Jesus is Lord of all, and His name is above all names. He is supreme over all. One day, He will return in power and great glory to gather His people for eternal life and to bring judgment on all those who do not obey the gospel.

By His victory over death, Jesus Christ has destroyed the devil, who holds the power of death. Jesus is able to free all those who are afraid of death. Jesus Christ is victorious over all the powers of darkness. He is able to deliver people from the power of the devil and from all the forces of evil.

[Mt 3:17; 17:5; Jn 1:1-2; 5:19-30; 8:54; 10:25-30; 14:5-12; Acts 1:11; Rom 1:1-4; 5:6-11; 1 Cor 15:3-4; Phil 2:6-11; Col 2:13-15; 1 Thess 4:16; 2 Thess 1:6-10; Heb 1:1-3; 2:14-17; 9:12,14-15,28; 10:10; 1 Pet 2:22-25; 1 Jn 2:1-2; Rev 19:11-21; 22:20]

Mt 3:16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. Mt 3:17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Heb 1:1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, Heb 1:2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. Heb 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

God the Holy Spirit

The third Person of the Trinity is God the Holy Spirit. He is the Spirit of truth, sent by the Father and the Son to be with believers forever. He reveals the truth about Jesus. He convicts people of the seriousness of sin and the need for repentance. He gives new birth to those who repent of their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit produces on-going spiritual changes in human lives. He develops spiritual fruit in those who obey Him and gives spiritual gifts for effective life and ministry.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of mission. He leads and empowers believers to be witnesses of Jesus Christ among people of all nations. His supreme task is to bring glory to Jesus.

[Gen 1:2; Job 33:4; Isa 11:2; 61:1; Mt 28:19; Jn 1:12-13; 3:5-8; 14:15-26; 16:5-16; Acts 1:8; 13:1-4; 10:38; 15:28; 16:6; Rom 8:1-17,26-27; 1 Cor 2:10-16; 12:1-11; Gal 5:22-23; Eph 3:19-21; Rev 1:4; 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22; 4:5; 5:6; 22:17]

Jn 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The Bible, the Holy Scriptures

The Bible is the inspired Word of God. It explains all that we need to know to receive salvation.

The Bible is absolutely authoritative and teaches us what to believe and how to behave. We accept the Bible by faith. The Bible is complete, as it stands, and must not be added to, subtracted from, or changed because of tradition or any supposed new revelation.

Biblical passages should be interpreted with due regard to their context, content and purpose, and in reverent obedience to the Holy Spirit, who reveals their true meaning.

[Ps 19:7-11; 119:1-152; Isa 55:11; 66:2; Jer 23:29; Mt 22:29; Jn 5:39; 10:35; Lk 11:28; 24:17; Acts 6:2; 10:39-43; 17:11; Rom 10:17; 15:4; 1 Cor 15:3-4; 2 Cor 4:2; Eph 1:13; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12; 5:9; 1 Pet 1:1-12; Rev 1:1-3; 3:8; 22:18-19]

^{2Tim 3:16} All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ^{2Tim 3:17} so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

The Gospel of salvation

Unless we human beings are saved from our sin, we will suffer eternal separation from God and will not be able to enjoy fellowship with Him in this life or in the life to come. Because of His great love for all people, God the Father sent God His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to save us. Jesus Christ is the only Saviour.

Salvation is a totally unmerited gift of God. It is a free gift of God's grace, which cannot be earned but is received by faith. The gospel is the good news of God's power to save those who believe in Jesus. Salvation is received by genuine repentance from sin and by faith in Jesus Christ. It sets a person free from the power and penalty of sin. In heaven, believers will also be freed from the presence of sin. Salvation involves being born again by the Holy Spirit and brings many wonderful privileges and benefits, for example:

- eternal life in fellowship with God;
- being adopted into the family of God;
- becoming a new creation;
- being counted righteous before God by faith;
- being rescued from the kingdom of darkness and brought into the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ;
- being redeemed, regenerated and sanctified, and
- being blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Salvation sets a person free to obey God and to live a holy and upright life for His purposes.

[Gen 3:15; Isa 52:13-53:12; Mk 10:45; Lk 2:10-11; 19:10; Jn 3:3-21; Acts 2:38-39; 4:12; 16:31-34; Rom 1:16-17; 5:1-11; 6:1-14; 6:23; Gal 1:4; Eph 2:8-9; 1 Cor 1:18; 15:2; 2 Cor 2:15; Col 1:13; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Tim 1:10; Tit 1:4; 2:11-14; 3:4-7; 2 Pet 1:11; 1 Jn 3:9; Rev 7:9-17; 22:17]

Lk 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Lk 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

Jn 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

The devil

The devil is a powerful created spiritual being. He sought to destroy Jesus, and he is the enemy of all Christians. The devil is the god of this world. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ have stripped the devil of his power, but he has been allowed to continue his evil works until the final judgment. Then, he and all evil spirits will be consigned to eternal torment. Until that time, the devil tempts, accuses, and seeks to deceive and destroy the people of God.

Christians, however, are entitled to exercise the authority of Jesus Christ over the power of the devil.

[Gen 3:15; 1 Chron 21:1; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Mt 4:1-11; 6:13; Lk 11:14-22; 13:15-16; 22:31; Jn 8:44; 13:2,27; 17:15; Acts 10:38; 13:10; 26:17-18; 2 Cor 2:10-11; 11:14; 12:7; Col 3:13-15; 1 Thess 2:18; 2 Thess 2:9; 1 Tim 5:15; Heb 2:14-15; Jas 3:15; 1 Pet 5:8-9; 1 Jn 3:7-10; Rev 2:9,13; 12:7-17; 20:1-10]

1Pet 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

1Jn 3:8b The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

The Church

The Church is made up of all true Christians throughout the world. It is the body of Christ and the household of God. Christ is the Head of the Church.

The Church exists to worship and serve God. The chief task of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ in every nation by proclaiming the gospel by word and deed. The Church functions through local congregations of believers, who gather for worship, prayer, teaching, fellowship, celebrating the Lord's Supper and mutual ministry.

The members of the Church should always relate to one another in the love of the Lord and consider others before themselves. The Lord has given ministry gifts to the Church to build believers up together in unity and to equip them to serve Him.

[Mt 16:18; Acts 2:41-47; 11:26; 13:1; 14:23; 20:17,28-31; 1 Cor 1:2; 12:27-28; 14:26; Eph 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:10-11,21; 4:11-13; 5:22-33; Phil 2:1-5; Col 1:18; 3:12-17; 4:15; 1 Thess 1:1; 1 Tim 3:15; 5:17; Jas 5:14; Rev 1:20; 21:9; 22:16]

Eph 1:22 And God placed all things under [Jesus'] feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, Eph 1:23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

1Tim 3:14 Although I [Paul] hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, 1Tim 3:15 if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

The Ordinances

Jesus Christ prescribed two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion).

Baptism

Baptism symbolises the identification of the believer with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. It represents burial of the old nature and the old way of life, and rising to new life in

Christ. It indicates separation from the old life and entry into the new life. It symbolises the washing away of sins.

Baptism should normally follow as soon as possible after a person repents and turns to the Lord in faith. Baptism is an integral part of Christian initiation, but it is not essential to salvation.

[Mt 3:13-17; Mk 16:16; Acts 2:38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:31-33; 19:4-5; Rom 6:3-7; Eph 4:5; Col 2:12; 1 Pet 3:21]

Acts 2:37 When the people heard this [the truth about Jesus], they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Col 2:11 In [Jesus] you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ^{Col 2:12} having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

The Lord's Supper (or Holy Communion)

The Lord's Supper is a sharing by believers of elements symbolising bread and wine which the Lord Jesus distributed at His last meal with His disciples, shortly before His arrest and crucifixion. It is a remembrance of His sacrificial death, His presence, His victory and His promised return in power.

The Lord's Supper bears witness to the new covenant between God and humankind, established by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, which brings forgiveness of sins and restores believers to a right relationship with God.

[Mt 26:17-21,26-30; Mk 14:12-16,22-26; Lk 22:7-22; Acts 2:42; 20:11; 1 Cor 10:16-17; 11:17-32]

Mt 26:26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." ^{Mt 26:27} Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you." ^{Mt 26:28} This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

^{1Cor 11:23} For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ^{1Cor 11:24} and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

^{1Cor 11:25} In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Christian unity

Unity amongst believers is the will of God. It is a testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and is evidence of the love of God. God promises His blessing on believers who dwell together in unity. Christian unity transcends differences of culture, background, experience, denomination, gender and social standing. All believers should work together to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to build one another up in love.

[Ps 133:1-3; Jn 10:16; 17:11,20-21; 1 Cor 1:10-13; 12:12-31; 2 Cor 13:11; Gal 3:28; Eph 2:13-22; 4:3-5,15-16; Phil 2:1-2; 3 Jn 5-8; Rev 7:9-10]

Jn 10:16 "I [Jesus] have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

Jn 17:20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ^{Jn 17:21} that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

We use the phrase "baptism in the Holy Spirit" (or "the baptism in the Holy Spirit") to describe the experience of being "overwhelmed by", "immersed in" or "flooded by" the Holy Spirit. This first

became reality for believers on the day of Pentecost, when the ascended Lord Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on His disciples. As then, so today, Jesus is the one who baptises in the Holy Spirit.

Baptism in the Spirit is received by faith and empowers believers to be witnesses of Jesus Christ. It is a free gift of God and is available to every believer. It does not depend on spiritual maturity.

The book of Acts suggests that the normal initial evidence of baptism in the Spirit is speaking in tongues. This is closely linked to prophecy, which throughout the Bible, is a sign of the Spirit's presence, and which characterised the first occurrence of speaking in tongues at Pentecost, as described in Acts chapter 2.

[Joel 2:28-29; Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; 24:49; Jn 1:32-34; 7:37-39; Acts 1:5,8; 2:1-4; 8:14-19; 10:44-47; 11:15-18; 19:5-6]

Acts 1:5 [Jesus said:] "For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit... Acts 1:8 ... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 2:3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

Acts 2:4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

The fruit of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit changes human lives and produces the fruit listed in Galatians chapter 5: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These and other similar qualities develop increasingly as the believer obeys the Lord, cooperates with the working of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and progresses towards Christian maturity.

[Mt 12:33-35; Jn 15:1-17; Rom 7:4-6; 8:5-17; 1 Cor 13:1-3; Gal 5:16-25]

Jn 15:5 [Jesus said:] "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, Gal 5:23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

The gifts of the Spirit

Spiritual gifts are one category of grace gifts (*charismata*). They are not earned or deserved but are given out of God's grace. Spiritual gifts include the supernatural gifts listed in 1 Corinthians chapter 12: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healings, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in different kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues.

Spiritual gifts are given and distributed by the Spirit as He wills. They are to be exercised in the church today in the context of Christian love for mutual edification and for the common good. Spiritual gifts also have an important role in evangelism.

[Mk 16:17-18; Lk 1:67; Acts 3:1-9; 5:15-16; 8:6-7,12; 19:6; 21:9; 28:8-9; Rom 1:11; 12:6-8; 1 Cor 1:7; 12:1-11,27-31; 13:1-3; 14:1-40; 2 Tim 1:6; 1 Pet 4:10-11]

Acts 8:5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. Acts 8:6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. Acts 8:7 With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. Acts 8:8 So there was great joy in that city... Acts 8:12 ... when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

1Cor 12:1 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant... 1Cor 12:4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. 1Cor 12:5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 1Cor 12:6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. 1Cor 12:7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.