

What We Believe

- **In essential beliefs—we have unity.**

There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all...
Ephesians 4:4-6

- **In non-essential beliefs—we have liberty.**

Accept him whose faith is weak, without judgment on disputable matters... Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls... So then each of us will give an account of himself to God... So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.
Romans 14:1,4,12,22

- **In all our beliefs—we show charity.**

...I may understand all the secret things of God and have all knowledge, and I may have faith so great I can move mountains. But even with all these things, if I do not have love, then I am nothing.
1 Corinthians 13:2 (NCV)

- **Our Statement of Faith Is Simple**

We believe that Jesus is **the Christ, the Son of the Living God.**

The Essentials We Believe

1. ABOUT GOD

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1:1,26,27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

2. ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus was born of a virgin through the power of the Holy Spirit. He revealed that He was the Son of God by performing literal miracles. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He was raised from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 1:20-23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5,14; John 10:30-33; Hebrews 4:14,15; Romans 1:3,4;
1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Titus 2:13

Central Church of Christ; Where We Love, Grow, Serve, and Go

3. ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is present to make people aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He convicts people of their sin through the spoken and written Word of God. He is instrumental in converting us from sinful creatures to live a new life through the new birth. Through baptism, He is given as a gift to reside in the life of every Christian, providing them with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to walk with Him daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13; John 14:16,17; Acts 1:8; John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38; Acts 5:32
1 Corinthians 2:12; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 5:18

4. ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because God inspired it, it is the truth without any error.

We maintain that the Bible alone is sufficient for our rule of faith and practice. All human creeds have come out of controversy. We go to the Bible for our authority in church government, as well as to learn the plan of salvation. Whatever the Bible commands us to do, those things we do; what the Bible forbids, from those we refrain; where the Bible is silent, there is freedom of opinion.

2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 12:6;
Proverbs 30:5; Psalm 119:105,160

5. ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, through our choice all of us are marred by an attitude and action of disobedience toward God called "sin". This attitude and action separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1,2

6. ABOUT SALVATION

We teach that salvation is by grace and accepted as a free gift from God. This grace is accepted through faith and reflected in our submission and obedience to God's Word and His will for our life. One accepts Christ as Savior through a conversion process that includes faith, repentance, confession, and baptism (immersion). In baptism a believer is immersed, crucified and buried with Christ, receives forgiveness of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit, is resurrected and clothed with Christ, and becomes saved because of God's free gift of grace received by faith.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 14:6; Romans 10:17; John 1:12; Romans 10:9,10
Acts 2:38, 8:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26,27; Romans 6:3-6; 1 Peter 3:21,22;
Colossians 2:12; Romans 5:1

Central Church of Christ; Where We Love, Grow, Serve, and Go

7. ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

God promises eternal life through Jesus Christ as a free gift. However, we must carefully distinguish between the power of God's promise, and the weakness of man's will. If man falls at any stage in his spiritual life, it is from his own neglect to draw on God's power to remain faithful. We are encouraged throughout scripture to remain faithful to God. The New Testament clearly states that some will abandon the faith, and warns of the consequences of such action.

Luke 8:13; John 15:1-4; 1 Timothy 4:1; Galatians 5:4; 2 Peter 1:10; 2 Peter 2:14,15,17-22;
Hebrews 6:4-6; 1 John 2:24; 2 John 6-9; Jude 21; Revelation 14:12

8. ABOUT ETERNITY

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is Heaven. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:17-18;
Revelation 20:15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9

What We Practice

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following seven practices:

1. BIBLE AS OUR SOLE AUTHORITY

Since you were a child you have known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise. And that wisdom leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by God and is useful for teaching, for showing people what is wrong in their lives, for correcting faults, and for teaching how to live right. Using the Scriptures, the person who serves God will be capable, having all that is needed to do every good work.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (NCV)

Since God's Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is "What does the Bible say?" We practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe and do.

2. AUTONOMY OF EACH LOCAL CHURCH

He is the head of the body, which is the church. Everything comes from him. He is the first one who was raised from the dead. So in all things Jesus has first place.

Colossians 1: 18 (NCV)

Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control. In relating to our "sister churches", we encourage each congregation to determine its own strategy, structure, and style.

3. PRIESTHOOD OF EVERY BELIEVER

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

Revelation. 1:6

But you are a chosen people, royal priests, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession. You were chosen to tell about the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9 (NCV)

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to "full-time" Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading.

Central Church of Christ; Where We Love, Grow, Serve, and Go

4. SUPPORTING THE CHURCH THROUGH TITHING

A tithe of everything you produce belongs to the Lord, it is holy to the Lord.

Leviticus 26:30

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:21

On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

At Central Church of Christ, we practice tithing for the support of Christ's body, the church, as God commands. We recognize that giving 10% of our income is a Biblical standard and should be the place where we begin our giving to God.

5. BAPTISM BY IMMERSION

When you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and you were raised up with him through your faith in God's power that was shown when he raised Christ from the dead.

Colossians 2:12 (NCV)

We practice baptism by immersion under water—the way Jesus was baptized, and the way the Bible commands. Immersion is a requirement for church membership.

6. LIVING BY THE SPIRIT

(Jesus said), "I am the Vine, you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit, but apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God's power within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God's Spirit to enable us to do what is right.

Philippians 2:13, Ephesians 5:18

7. TELLING OTHERS ABOUT CHRIST

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

1 Peter 3:15

It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the Good News with those with whom God brings us into contact. We practice personal sharing about Christ and inviting friends to church.