

West Zion Mennonite Church

Doctrinal Position – the Core Issues

- a) The Holy Scriptures as originally given by God are divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy, and constitute the only supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pt. 1:21)
- b) There is One God (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 43:10-11; 44:6, 8; John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Jas. 2:19) eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19; John 1:1, 14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Gal. 1:1)
- c) Our Lord Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh (Jn. 1:1,14); we affirm His virgin birth (Matt. 1 :20-25; Lk. 1:35), sinless humanity (Jn. 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pt. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5), divine miracles (Jn. 2:9; Mk. 1:26; Jn. 5:5; Mt. 9:27; 12:10; Jn. 10:18), His vicarious and atoning death (Rom. 5:8; 1 Jn. 2:2; Titus 2:14; 1 Jn. 3:16) , bodily resurrection (Mt. 28:6; 1 Cor. 15:4), ascension (Lk. 24:50-51; Acts 1:9), ongoing mediatorial work (1 Tim. 2:5), and personal return in power and glory (Mt. 24:30; Acts 1:11).
- d) God made the universe by a direct creative act as recorded in Gen.1. Humankind was made in the image of God, both male and female (Gen. 1:27; Jas. 3:9). When the first man and woman fell into sin the image of God was distorted. The fall brought physical and spiritual death as well as depravity to the human race (Gen. 3:19; Eze. 18:4; Rom. 3:10-23; 5:12-21; Eph. 2:1, 5; Rev. 21:8). Apart from God's grace, all people are slaves to sin and are unwilling and unable to break the bondage of sin and death. (Rom. 3:23; 6:6; Eph. 2:1-5)
- e) The salvation of lost and sinful humanity is possible only through the merits of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, received by faith apart from works (Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5), and is characterised by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-8; Eph. 2:5; Jam. 1:18; 1 Pt. 1:23; 1 John 5:1; Titus 3:5).
- f) The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity (Acts 5:3-5; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). He convicts the world of sin and righteousness (Jn. 16:8), regenerates and baptises every believer into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13; Titus 3:5). He indwells every believer and enables them to live a holy life, to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:16; Jn. 14:16, 26; 15:26; Acts 9:31; 13:2-4; Rom. 8:14, 16, 26; Acts 13:2-4). The Holy Spirit has gifted each individual in the body and as such every believer has an obligation to build up the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:11-31; 14:4-5; 12, 17) and reach out to the lost (Matt. 28:19-20).
- g) The Universal Church, the Body of Christ, consists of all true believers. The universal church finds expression in local congregations. Christ is the head of the church and it exists to exalt God (Jn. 4:24; 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17), edify believers (1 Cor. 14; Eph. 4:12; 2 Tim. 2:2) and evangelize the lost (Mt. 28:19-20).
 - 1) The local church is to encourage believers to follow the Lord in the waters of baptism. Baptism is not the means of salvation, but represents cleansing from sin effected by salvation and our identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection (Matt. 3:13-17; Rom. 6:2-7).
 - 2) The Lord's Supper serves to remind believers of Christ's broken body and shed blood. It is a symbol of fellowship for the church and is to be celebrated until Christ returns (1 Cor. 11:17-34).
 - 3) Church discipline is intended to restore to right relationship with God, the Christian who is living in sin. It is intended to be done in a spirit of love and concern. Church discipline preserves the purity of the church and its witness in the world (Matt. 18:15-20).
- h) Christ's second coming is to be taken literally (Matt. 24:20, 21; 26:64; Heb. 9:28) and it will be physical and visible (Matt. 16:27; Acts 1:9,11; Rev. 19:11-16). Ultimately God will judge the living and the dead, those who are saved unto the resurrection of life, those who are lost unto the resurrection of damnation (Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46; 1 Cor. 4:5; Rev. 20:11-15).
- i) God has established the government of the state as an instrument for order in the world (Rom. 13:1-5). Every believer is to honour (Matt. 22:17-21; Rom. 13:1; 5-7; 1 Pt. 2:13-17), pray for (1 Tim. 2:1-2) and witness to the government and its officials (Matt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15; Acts 1:8).
- j) Believers are to refrain from use of retaliation and violence in their relationships (Matt. 5:38-42). They are to show Christian love to all men and follow Christ's example of peace (Jn. 14:27), justice, reconciliation (Lk. 4:18-21), and non-resistance (Lk. 6:27) even in the face of violence (Matt. 26:51-52) and warfare (Matt. 5:43-47; Rom. 12:14, 17; 1 Thess. 5:15). We are to live at peace with all men as far as this is possible (Rom. 12:18).
- k) Believers are exhorted to tell the truth, to give a simple yes or no, and to avoid the swearing of oaths (Matt. 5:33-37).
- l) We believe that God instituted the covenant of marriage with the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve, and that His purpose for marriage is to be only between one man and one woman (Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-5). We believe that God intends for the expression of sexual intimacies to be fully consummated only within the monogamous heterosexual marriage relationship (Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 2:24-25; Proverbs 5:15-23; Malachi 2:14-15; Matthew 19:4-5; 1 Corinthians 7:1-6), and that any deviation from this (Ephesians 5:3-7; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5), be it premarital or extra-marital sexual relationship between a man and a woman (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 13,18; Hebrews 13:4), or any sexual relationship between a man and a man (Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:8-10), or any sexual relationship between a woman and a woman (Romans 1:26-27 ; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10), or any incestuous sexual relationship (Leviticus 18:6-18), or bestiality (Leviticus 18:23), constitutes sin.