



*Primary Doctrines
of
Christianity*

Erhard H Hermann

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Introduction

This short study seeks to provide the basic doctrines of Christianity without going into a lot of detail and avoiding those doctrines which are not essential or are debatable.

God

Scripture is quite clear that there is only one God. (Dt 6:4, 1 Co 8:4) This one true God is manifested in three persons. This is called the Triune God or Trinity. The universe and all creatures including the spiritual beings were created by God in six, literal, 24-hour days as described in Genesis chapter one. God is all powerful, all knowing and not restricted by time or space. He is spiritual, personal, knowable and has revealed Himself to people, and, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has moved men to write down the Scriptures. Jesus is described as God (Jn 1:1-3, Col 1:15-17). Jesus claims to be God (Jn 8:58, Mat 26:63-64). The Holy Spirit is also God as He was there at creation and exercises the attributes of God (Gen 1:2, Job 33:4, Act 5:3-4, Heb 9:14, Ro 8:11, 2 Pe 1:21). Creation testifies to God's existence, eternal power, invisible attributes and divine nature (Ro 1:19-20).

Jesus

As noted, Jesus is fully God. He was born of a virgin (Mat 1:18-25) and as such is also fully man. All things were created through Him and are sustained by Him (Col 1:16-17, Heb 1:2-3, Jn 1:3). He was crucified on the cross and suffered a literal death and was raised again on the third day to atone for the sin of mankind. Jesus is the only way to salvation (Act 4:12, Jn 14:6).

Scripture

Inspiration

The books of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit and are therefore inerrant in the original documents. (2 Ti 3:16, 2 Pe 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. (2Pe 1:20-21)

Authority

The Scriptures are authoritative for every subject that is addressed or covered, including the days of creation in Genesis. Jesus and the writers of the New Testament all considered the Old Testament writings to be authoritative and the Word of God. (2 Ti 3:16, Mat 5:18, Mat 4:3-11) God Himself told Joshua (Jos 1:7) to do all according to the law of Moses. Essentially, right after Moses' death, God told Joshua that the books of Moses were Scripture. See also 1 Ki 2:3, 2 Ki 14:6, 2 Ki 21:8, Ezr 3:2, Neh 10:29, Mal 4:4, Luk 24:44. The Apostle Paul considered his message to be the word of God (1 Th 2:13) and Peter considered Paul's writings to be on par with the rest of Scripture (2 Pe 3:16).

History

The Scriptures provide an accurate account of the history of the universe (less than 8000 years), the lineage from Adam to Jesus and selected events in the lives of people from creation to about the end of the first century AD. We have the account of creation in 6 literal, 24-hour days, the fall of mankind, judgement by the worldwide flood of Noah's day, the dispersion of the nations at the tower of Babel, the formation of the people of Israel, the exodus from Egypt, the giving of the law and then the successes and failures of the people of Israel. In the New Testament, we have the life of Jesus, His death and resurrection and the account of the growth of the early church along with the letters written to the churches.

Man

The first man, Adam, was created directly by God in His image out of the dust of the earth on day six of creation (Gen 1:26-31, Gen 2:7). Eve, his wife was then formed from a rib taken from Adam (Gen 2:22).

Nature

Mankind was endowed with a free will, intelligence and the knowledge of God and His will. Mankind disobeyed and incurred the consequence of this sin by being subject to physical and spiritual death. This resulted in a "sin nature" which was passed on to all descendants of Adam and Eve. (Ro 3:23, Ro 5:12, Ro 1:20-21)

Eternality

Mankind has a beginning but no end. Those that receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior will go on to eternal life, those that do not accept the payment of Jesus for their sins will go on to eternal damnation in the lake of fire. (Mat 25:46, Ro 6:23, Mat 9:42-48, Jud 1:7)

Salvation

Since the just reward for our sin is eternal damnation, Jesus came to pay the penalty of our sin. This payment must be accepted by each individual. Our works will never be able to gain eternal life. Eternal life is obtained totally through faith. (Ro 6:23, Ro 3:28, Gal 2:16, Eph 2:8, Heb 10:4)

Spiritual Beings

God created various spiritual beings such as angels, cherubim and seraphim. These being were made to worship God and render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation (Heb 1:6,14). Satan, one of these angels, rebelled against God and took other angels with him. We typically call these demons. The eternal destiny of Satan and his fallen angels is the lake of fire (Mat 25:41).

The Church

The church consists of all who have received Jesus by faith, accepting His payment of our sins in order to redeem us. Jesus is the head of the church. Each believer is endowed with spiritual gifts that are to be used to minister to others and glorify God. (Eph 4:7-12, Ro 12:5-8, 1 Cor 12:4-12, 1 Pe 4:10-11)

End Times

Jesus addresses this issue in Matthew chapter 24. Some key points.

- No one knows the day or hour (Mat 24:36).
- The end will come after the gospel has been preached in the whole world (Mat 24:14).
- There will be a rapture of the church (1 Th 4:16-17).
- There will be judgement and tribulation (Mat 24, much of Revelation).
- Believers are called to endure (Mat 24:13) and be alert (Mat 24:42).
- It will be as in the time of Noah (Mat 24:38-41).
- There will be a 1000-year reign of Jesus (Rev 20:1-7).
- There will be a final judgement (great white throne) at which all those whose name is not found in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire and experience eternal punishment. (Rev 20:11-15)
- The believers will go on to eternal life in the new Jerusalem (Rev 21 & 22).