

*Doctrinal Statement*  
*of*  
*James C. Wright*

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# Doctrinal Statement of James C. Wright

Although my position on doctrine has not changed over the years, my ability to explain it has. For that reason, this document has been edited from time to time.

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## **CONVERSION AND CALL**

Psalms 16:6 says "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea I have a goodly heritage". God blessed me with two parents who, above all else, loved God and desired to serve Him. As I grew up in their home the reality of a loving God was ever before me. It was in 1965 in a revival service with Dr. Monroe Parker that my need of Christ was impressed upon my heart. It was at that time that I received Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. Two years after my conversion I was baptized and joined the Faith Baptist Church of LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

Somehow, even with all the advantages that God had given me, I still chose to believe Satan's lie during my Jr. & Sr. High years. It wasn't until my Senior year that I stopped to survey all my failed attempts at happiness, and realized that I had not only ignored the written truth, but also the applied truth as demonstrated faithfully by my parents. My misery and their testimony drove me back to the arms of my Savior. Since that time I have sought to be but a servant in His house.

After graduating from Faith Christian School in LaCrosse, WI., the Lord moved me to Maranatha Baptist Bible College in Watertown, WI. where through the extension ministries, God burdened my heart with the needs of young people.

After graduation, God led me into full-time youth work for 10 years. In 1990 God led me to take a church in Frederick Mi. Since then we have pastored in Harbor Springs, Mi., Napoleon, Mi., and now here in Roscoe, Il.

I married Myra Cummins in June of 1982. We have two sons. James is married with a daughter, and another child on the way. He is the stage director at Maranatha Baptist Bible College. Jason is married and seeking a position as youth pastor.

## **BIBLIOLOGY**

The Bible is the infallible (Matt. 5:8), inerrant (II Peter 1:19-21), Word of God. I believe in the verbal, plenary, inspiration of the Scriptures. It is to be our only rule for faith and practice. (II Tim 3:16-17)

At least 40 men were used of God, over the course of 15 to 16 hundred years, to pen the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit superintended as the human authors used their own style, vocabulary, and background to convey God's message (II Peter 1:21). I believe that God has preserved His Word (Matt. 5:18, I Peter 1:25, Rev. 22:18-19) so that we can depend upon it's accuracy and power completely. I use the King James Version in English speaking ministries because I hold to the majority text.

While needing no external proofs, the accuracy of the Bible is testified to by science, history, archeology, sociology, and astronomy. Perhaps it's greatest external proof is the effect it has on our lives (II Cor. 5:17, 1 John 3:3).

I believe that the Scriptures are complete and that the Old and New Testaments, consisting of the 66 books, are the total of God's specific revelation to us. All of Scripture points to Jesus Christ. He and His salvation are ever it's focal point.

I believe that the history revealed to us in the Bible is to be understood by the following 7 dispensations:

1. Innocency - Gen. 1:28 - 3:6
2. Conscience - Gen. 4:1 - 8:14
3. Human Government - Gen. 8:15 - 11:9
4. Promise - Gen. 11:10 - Ex. 18:27
5. Law - Ex. 19:1 - Acts 1:26
6. Grace - Acts 2:1 - Rev. 19:21
7. Kingdom - Jer. 31:33-34

Definitions:

Verbal - The very words of Scripture are Inspired by God. (II Timothy 3:16)

Plenary - All of Scripture is complete and inspired equally. (II Timothy 3:16)

Inspiration - God-Breathed (II Peter 1:21, Rev. 21:5)

## **THEOLOGY**

The Bible never attempts to prove the existence of God, for God has placed within every man the need to worship and the knowledge that a higher power must exist. Because we could never know God sufficiently through nature, God has given us the Bible to reveal Himself to us.

God is not a cosmic force or impersonal observer. He is a loving personality who demonstrates the requirements of Personhood; intellect (I Sam. 2:30), emotion (Ro. 5:8), and will (Eph. 3:11).

He is the only God and yet we see that He is made up of three distinct persons; God the Father (Eph. 4:6), God the Son (Heb.

4:14), and God the Holy Spirit (John 4:24). All three possess all the attributes of Deity, and all three have separate offices to fulfill. The Holy Spirit comforts and convicts. God the Son saves and serves. God the Father rules and reigns.

ATTRIBUTES

<u>Incommunicable:</u>	<u>Communicable:</u>
Omnipresence Ps.139:7-10	Isa. 6:3 Holiness
Omniscience I John 3:20	II Cor. 5:21 Righteousness
Omnipotence Matt. 19:26	I John 4:8,11 Love
Eternality Ps. 90:2	Eph. 2:8 Grace
Immutability Mal. 3:6	Ps. 103:17 Mercy
Perfection Matt. 5:48	John 17:3 Truth
Sovereignty Eph. 4:6	II Thes. 3:3 Faithfulness
	Deut. 32:4 Justice

**CHRISTOLOGY**

I believe that God the Son is the second person of the triune God. I believe that He was the Divine Agent of creation (John 1:3) and He now sustains His handiwork. Jesus Christ was born of a virgin as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), and through the miracle of the incarnation became 100% man (Luke 2:52), while remaining 100% God (John 1:1). As the theologian has put it: "Remaining what He ever had been; He became what He never had been, ever to remain the same". During His earthly stay He voluntarily laid aside the independent exercise of some of His attributes. Jesus Christ was tested by Satan in every temptation that we ever face, (apart from innate sin) (James 1:13) and remained as always, (Heb. 13:8) sinless (Heb. 4:15). I believe in His impeccability. (James 1:13)

It was on the cross of Calvary, that Jesus Christ voluntarily died and by doing so provided salvation through redemption. His substitutionary death was completely sufficient for the sins of the whole world (John 1:29) but is efficient only to those who appropriate it by personal, saving faith (Eph. 2:8-9).

Jesus Christ remained in the tomb for 3 days and nights and then broke the powers of darkness and was resurrected bodily (John 20:20 & 27) out from among the dead. After a short, post-crucifixion ministry to His disciples, Christ returned to heaven. He ascended both bodily (Matt. 28:5-10) and visibly. He now sits at the right hand of the Father (Acts 7:56), interceding for the saints. He also is preparing a place for us (John 14:1-6).

I believe that the return of Jesus Christ is imminent (Acts 1:11) and is the hope of all faithful believers.

## **PNEUMATOLOGY**

I believe that The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity (Acts 5:3-4) and as such, He is co-equal, and co-eternal with God the Father and God the Son (Matt. 28:19). He is not a mere influence, nor is He our conscience.

Up until Pentecost the Holy Spirit would come upon individuals temporarily, enabling them to perform great tasks for God (Judges 3:10, 6:34, I Sam. 16:13). Since Pentecost His ministry has been:

Convicting the world of sin, (John 16:8)

Converting sinners into saints, (John 3:5)

Conforming the child of God to the Image of God, (II

Cor. 6:14)

Counseling the believer, (John 14:26)

Confirming the salvation of the saints, (Eph. 1:13)

Correcting the believer, (1 Cor. 2:10)

During the Age of Grace, the Holy Spirit permanently indwells (1 Cor. 6:19) the believer through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), which happens once and for all at the moment of salvation (Ro. 8:9). Even though the believer receives all of the Holy Spirit at salvation, Christians are told to be being filled with Him (Eph. 5:18). These two statements are reconciled by the fact that the first refers to our possession of Him, which is constant; the second refers to His possession of us, which must constantly be renewed because of our sinful self will, and increased because of our immaturity.

I believe that in this age the Holy Spirit gives gifts to individuals for their service in the church. (1 Cor. 12:4-11, Rom. 12:6-8, Eph. 4:4-16) I also believe that the sign gifts, namely prophecy, tongues, and revelatory knowledge ceased (1 Cor. 13:8) when the New Testament canon was completed.

## **ANGELOLOGY**

I believe that angels were created by God, sometime before the creation of the earth. Created as spirit beings (Heb. 1:14), they were given super human intelligence and power. Even though they are usually referred to as masculine, we know they are not married or given in marriage (Matt. 22:30).

Satan or Lucifer, was created as a covering cherub (Ezek. 26:18) and ministered in the presence of God, until he chose

to rebel (Isa. 14:12-14) against God. At that time, he and all the angels, who followed him, were cast out (II Peter 2:4) of heaven. As the author of sin, it was Satan who introduced rebellion to man in the garden. He and his followers (demons) can possess (Mark 5:2) the unsaved and animals, but can only influence and oppress (Eph. 6:11-12) the saints. God has decreed that all the powers of darkness will meet their final doom in hell fire.

The angels who chose to remain in the service of God, are now called upon to minister to man, and carry out God's directives. They are divided into ranks (Dan. 10:13), and certain angels are given specific responsibilities.

## **ANTHROPOLOGY**

Man is the highest act of creation for none other was made in the image of God. (Gen. 1:27) The Bible tells us that we were given a body, soul, and spirit. (1 Thes. 5:23) The manner in which man was created is also unique in that He formed man from the dust of the earth, and breathed into him the breath of life. (Gen. 2:7)

Man was created as a tri-partite being, in a state of innocence and untested righteousness. (Gen. 1:31, 2:16-17) Since we were in the loins of Adam and he was our federal representative, when he chose to fall, (Gen. 3:6) we fell. (Rom. 5:12) Thus man stands guilty before a Holy God because of our inherited position which is confirmed by our choice. Because of his depravity, man cannot save himself (Ro. 3:10) and thus stands before God guilty and condemned (Ro. 3:23, 6:23). His end, unless he repents and trusts Christ, is eternal

punishment and separation from the presence of God. (John 3:18, Rev. 20:15)

## **HAMARTIOLOGY**

The first sin was committed when Satan lifted himself up in pride and said "I will" (Isa. 14:12-14). Sin is, anything less than complete obedience to God. It is missing God's standard of holiness (Ro. 3:23).

Sin always has consequences (Nu. 32:23). Adam's first sin in the garden resulted in a curse upon the man, the woman, the serpent, and the ground (Gen. 3). The most profound result of sin is the separation of man from a holy God (Gen. 2:17). The death that will result as the wages of sin has three aspects: Physical death - separation of soul and body (James 2:26, Luke 8:55), Spiritual death - separation of the person from God (Eph. 2:1-6), The second death-the final separation and eternal punishment for all who reject Christ (Matt. 7:23, Rev. 20:14).

The only cure for sin is the shed blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7).

## **SOTERIOLOGY**

In Grace, God reaches out to fallen man and pictures salvation with many illustrations to point out all of it's wonderful facets to the end that man might understand. The overture to salvation is always first from God to man.

Redemption: (Eph. 1:7) God created man in His own image. Through the fall, man chose to follow Satan. It was on the cross that Christ redeemed us, paid the price, bought us back

and enabled us to escape the tyranny of that wicked task master.

Substitution: (John 3:14, I Peter 2:24) As sinners we deserve to suffer punishment. On the cross, Christ could take my punishment for my sins because He is the Spotless Lamb who deserved no punishment. Because He is God, He could substitute as the recipient of punishment for the sins of the whole world. This necessitated the virgin birth.

Atonement: On the cross, Christ shed His blood to wash us from our sins (Rev. 1:5). His Blood is so complete and sufficient that God has promised to remember our sins no more (Heb. 10:17).

Propitiation: (Ro. 3:25, I John 2:2) God's Holiness demands that our sins be eliminated before we can be in His presence. Christ's finished work on Calvary's cross satisfies this demand and reconciles us to God.

Regeneration: (Titus 3:5) God told Adam and Eve that disobedience would cause death. The immediate result was Spiritual Death. As Adam's descendants, we are born spiritually dead (Gen. 2:17). Only faith in Christ can regenerate us, and give spiritual life.

I believe that since Jesus Christ was both God and man, He was able to provide salvation for Adam's lost and dying race. Though totally undeserved, salvation is free to all who will put their trust in the shed blood of The Lamb. Faith that is evidenced by true repentance, is all that is required of man in

relation to receiving eternal life. Eternal life is given at salvation, and can never be taken away (John 3:16) or forfeited by God or man (John 10:28, Phil. 1:6). The Holy Spirit is also given at salvation to indwell the believer and assist him in guidance, wisdom, and intercession.

I believe that God is sovereign, and yet man is a responsible moral agent. Although these two statements seem to be irreconcilable, I accept them by faith, and look forward to the day when God Himself puts an end to all of our questions.

## **ECCLESIOLOGY**

I believe that the vehicle through which God wants believers to worship and serve during this age, is the local church (Matt. 16:18). Whereas all believers since Pentecost are in the Body of Christ, God has ordained the local church to do His work. I believe that the Bible is the only valid rule for faith and practice, both in church, and personal matters (I Tim. 3:16-17).

I believe in the autonomy of the local church (Acts 6:3-5). The church should be governed by the decisions of it's members under the guidance of the undershepherd. Since all members must be regenerate, the guidance of the Holy Spirit should be obvious in all the church's dealings. No outside organization or person should be allowed to dictate to the local church.

I believe that there are two biblical offices in the church which are the Pastor, and Deacons. The requirements for the Pastor and Deacons are found in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Bible uses the terms Pastor, Bishop and Elder, to designate different responsibilities of the undershepherd.

I believe that there are two ordinances of the church, namely, baptism (Ro. 6:4-5, Acts 2:38, 41 8:36-37) and the Lord's supper (I Cor. 23-26). Baptism is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Believers who wish to be obedient to God must be immersed, publicly declaring their faith in Christ. The Lord's Supper is a time when the church members gather to examine there own lives and commemorate and reflect upon our Savior's sacrifice on Calvary. I repudiate trans-substantiation, and con-substantiation.

I believe in the priesthood of the believer (I Peter 2:5, 9). Every individual is responsible before God for his or her obedience to His commandments. God does require however, that every Christian join a church so that their needs can be met, and so that they can help in meeting the needs of others. I believe that the Bible teaches separation: political (Acts 4:19, 5:29, church & state), personal (II Cor. 6:16-17, from worldliness), and ecclesiastical (Ro. 16:17, Eph. 5:11, from apostasy).

## **ESCHATOLOGY**

I believe that the next event on God's prophetic calendar is the rapture. Jesus Christ Himself will return to the clouds to catch up first, those who are dead in Christ, then those of us who are alive and remain (I Thes. 4:16-17). We will then stand before the Bema Seat judgement, where our works will be judged, not for salvation but for rewards (Ro. 14:10, II Cor. 5:10). Then, as the bride of Christ, we will attend the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9).

After the rapture, those on earth will go through a terrible

seven year period known as "Daniel's Seventieth Week" (Dan. 9:24-27). The world will be unified politically, under one leader, known as the Beast or Anti-christ (Rev. 19:20). There will be a "one world church" led by the false prophet (Rev. 16:13). A covenant will be signed between the Antichrist and Israel bringing peace to the world to begin the Tribulation period (Dan. 9:27), but after three and half years the agreement will be broken and the Anti-christ will seek to destroy God's earthly people in the last half of "Daniel's Seventieth Week". This three and a half year period is also known as "The Time of Jacob's Trouble" (Jer. 30:7) and "The Great Tribulation" (Matt. 24:21, Rev. 7:14) In their hour of need Israel will return to God. The Tribulation will end with the Battle of Armageddon, when with the host of heaven present, God will defeat the armies of the world (Rev. 16:16-21).

For the next one thousand years, Satan will be chained, and Christ will rule and reign on earth (Rev. 20:2-4). Even with these tremendous advantages, man will prove himself to be depraved by rebelling against God Almighty. At the end of the millennium, Satan will be loosed for a short season. At that time he will once again deceive the nations and attempt to attack the camp of God. The attack will be short lived, for God will crush them and cast them into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:8-9).

This will be followed by the Great White Throne Judgement, where all those who have never received Christ will hear the final sentence, "Guilty" (Rev. 20:11-15). They will be cast into the lake of fire, which is a literal place of eternal torment, prepared for Satan and his angels, and inhabited by all men who have not received Christ as Savior. God will then bring His redeemed into the new heaven and the new earth, where we will worship Him forever (Rev. 21:1-7).