

## “This We Believe”

### #1 - TRUSTING OUR SACRED TEXT – THE BIBLE

This is the beginning of a series on the basic beliefs of evangelical Christianity – Yes – we will be looking at DOCTRINE – the essence of our faith.

Why spend the time on this?

- Biblical and doctrinal illiteracy is devastating to church health
- Barrage of counterfeit belief systems (major and minor religions)
- Post-modern culture seeks to harmonize all spiritualities
- Helps us discern the spirit of truth from the spirit of error

So... we begin by affirming our foundational authority – the source of our system of spiritual truth is the BIBLE [66 books – 39 in the Old Testament, 27 in the New Testament].

### The I-Beams of BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

#### I. INSPIRATION    2 Timothy 3:16, 17

- The process God used to reveal Himself to humanity
  - “God breathed” – concepts of truth expressed in human words and through human experiences

#### How did He do it?

The Holy Spirit “carried” the writers – 2 Peter 1:21

- The life and work of Jesus Christ – John 1:14; Hebrews 1:2
- Dreams – Daniel 7:1
- Visions – Ezekiel 1:1
- Audible voice – Leviticus 1:1
- Object lessons, symbols – Jeremiah 19:1-15
- Dictation – Revelation 2:1 – 3: 22
- Eyewitness reports – The Gospels, 1 John 1:1-3
- Testimonies of believers – Psalm 51, 32, 23
- Historical research – Luke 1:1-4

#### • The purpose

- Teaching – consistent truth promotes growth
- Rebuking – revealing the nature of sin and its impact
- Correcting – guidance to do God’s will
- Training in righteousness – a lifestyle of holiness
- Equipping for good work – agent of transformation

#### II. INERRANCY

- Questions we ask – can we trust the Bible when there seems to be inconsistencies, even apparent errors?

#### A DEFINITION OF INERRANCY

→ ***When all the facts are known...***

we have limited but always expanding clarification

→ ***The Scriptures in their original autographs (1<sup>st</sup> copy)...***

all we have now are copies of the original writings

→ ***And properly interpreted will be shown to be...***

allows for loose quotations and variations in facts

→ ***Wholly true in everything it affirms***

The content is internally consistent and trustworthy

→ ***Whether it has to do with doctrine, morality, the natural sciences, life sciences or social sciences***