

Essential Doctrines of the Christian Faith

Grace Baptist Church

I. The Doctrine of Scripture

What can we know about God apart from what the Bible tells us?

- _____ - is the foundational source and the ultimate validation for all Christian doctrine.
 - It is only through God's revelation of himself that we learn about his nature and purpose for us and for creation.
 - Deuteronomy 29:29
 - Romans 1:20-23 explains that people have an innate sense that God _____ but left to their own devices their view of God is fundamentally flawed.

A. What Christians Believe about the Bible

- During sermons Pastor Ron frequently has the congregation stand "in honor of God's inspired, infallible, and inerrant word."

What is it that we affirm when we stand?

- The Bible contains several major characteristics that make it distinct from all other literature:
 - All Scripture is _____ - This means that the words of Scripture are the words of God. Therefore to obey or disobey the Bible is the same as obeying or disobeying God.
 - 2 Timothy 3:16; Deuteronomy 4:1-2
 - All Scripture is _____ – This means that the words of Scripture do not confirm anything that is contrary to fact (it is not wrong).
 - Matthew 24:35; Psalm 119:89
 - All Scripture is _____ (Clear) – This means that the Bible is written in such a way that it's teaching are able to be understood by all.

- Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Psalms 119:130
- All Scripture is _____ – This means that the Bible is required to understand the gospel, maintain our spiritual life, and know God’s will.
 - Romans 10:13-17; Deuteronomy 8:3
- All Scripture is _____ – This means that the Bible contains everything that God intended to share with mankind about Himself, life, salvation, and how to maintain a relationship with Him.
 - 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3

“The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation” (Baptist Faith & Message)

“We affirm the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We also affirm the power of God's word to accomplish his purpose of salvation. The message of the Bible is addressed to all men and women. For God's revelation in Christ and in Scripture is unchangeable. Through it the Holy Spirit still speaks today. He illumines the minds of God's people in every culture to perceive its truth freshly through their own eyes and thus discloses to the whole Church ever more of the many-colored wisdom of God” (Lausanne Covenant)

B. The Necessity of Biblical Literacy

*“The Word of God can be in the mind without being in the heart;
but it cannot be in the heart without first being in the mind.”*
R.C. Sproul, quoted in *The Portable Seminary*, 22.

- **Fact:** Since their foundation in 1908, the Gideons have distributed 1.6 billion Bibles and New Testaments around the world.
 - Wycliffe Bible Translators estimate that there are still _____ million people who do not have Scripture available in their heart language (2,000+ of the 6,800+ languages in the world do not have translations).

II. The Doctrine of God and the Trinity

A. Monotheism

“I am God and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:22).

“I am the first and I am the last. There is no God but me” (Isaiah 44:6).

- As Christians, the idea that God _____ is probably not something that we really question.
 - However, even here at the core of our religious beliefs Scripture is very important. Monotheism is not naturally the position arrived at by men reasoning on their own.
 - Again, Paul says in Romans that everyone knows intuitively that there is a God, but we have a tendency to create him in our own _____ (Romans 1:21-25).

B. The Trinity

- In addition to God’s divine exclusivity, Scripture also teaches his _____ nature.

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19) [see also Genesis 3:22, Matthew 3:16-17].

- This doctrine is one of elements that is truly unique to the Christian worldview. One concise but clear statement of the Trinity can be found in the Westminster Shorter Catechism:

“There are three _____ within the Godhead; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one _____, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.” [Note that neither the word “Trinity” nor “persons” is actually used to describe the Godhead in Scripture.]

- Various _____ have been used to try and express the idea of the Trinity but we probably want to stress the potential dangers of such analogies.
- The Trinity is not:
 - Three gods in one God.
 - Three persons in one person

- God _____ himself in three different ways throughout human history.
- By studying the whole counsel of God’s Word we see that the Trinity is:
 - Three _____ in one God.
 - God is the only being like Himself.
 - Just as we are one being with one center of _____ (one personhood); God is a being with three centers of self-consciousness (three personhoods in one being).
 - There are distinct persons within the Trinity and relationship exists between those persons themselves and between them and us as believers.
 - God is a _____ being (the failure to recognize this is one of the shortcomings of Islamic monotheism).
 - The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are _____ in essence, substance, and will. The three persons are consubstantial, co-equal, and co-eternal.
- Current and historical errors surrounding the nature of the Trinity:
 - Unitarianism
 - Modalism
 - Tritheism

C. God the Father

- We can come to know God through his _____ of himself in the Bible (the written Word) and in Jesus (the living Word).

God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you . . . Say this to the Israelites: Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you” (Exodus 3:14-15).

- In the New Testament, Jesus revealed (or at least put greater emphasis on) God as our _____.

- He refers to God as “Father”, “heavenly Father”, or “Father in Heaven” seventeen times in the Sermon on the Mount.
- God has revealed himself as:
 - Personal (not a force)
 - Spiritual (not limited like a material being and not to be depicted)
 - _____ (separateness, both transcendent and immanent).
 - Eternal
 - Omnipotent
 - Omniscient
- NOTE: All these attributes are equally applicable to all three persons of the Trinity.

D. God the Son

- As a full member of the Trinity, Jesus is co-eternal with the Father and was active in _____.
- In the Bible, Jesus is described as being fully _____ and fully _____ (Hypostatic Union).
 - Throughout scripture, Jesus demonstrated his humanity: hunger, sorrow, and tiredness.
 - Throughout scripture, Jesus also demonstrated his divinity: omniscience, omnipotent, and the ability to forgive sins.
- Throughout the first few centuries of the Christian faith, extensive debates arose about how to understand the person and _____ of Jesus.
 - Several heresies arose that were ultimately rejected and creedal statements were developed that carefully defined orthodoxy.
 - Today one of the most common heresies is to deny the divinity of Christ; historically, the tendency was to underemphasize his humanity.

“We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end. And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets” (Nicene Creed).

- To describe Jesus as the “only begotten Son” does not imply derivation or subordination, but rather his _____ . Consider the following passages:

⁵ *Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,* ⁶ *who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,* ⁷ *but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.* ⁸ *Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2:5-8).*

¹⁵ *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.* ¹⁶ *For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.* ¹⁷ *He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together (Colossians 1:15-17).*

⁹ *Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”* ¹⁰ *Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. (John 14:9-10).*

- The _____ – Jesus has always existed in his divine nature. However, there came a point in human history when Jesus added to his divine nature a human nature.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. ⁵ The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. ⁶ There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light. ⁹ There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

E. God the Holy Spirit

- Unfortunately, one of the most misunderstood dynamics of the Holy Spirit relates to a shallow understanding of his nature.
 - The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force, mystical feeling, or a vapor.
 - The Holy Spirit is clearly portrayed in the Bible as an _____, like the Father and the Son.

Jesus told his disciples, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth.” (John 14:16-17)

- The Bible undoubtedly reveals that the Holy Spirit plays a vital role both in the individual Christian life and in the Christian community. For instance:
 1. The Holy Spirit is instrumental in the process of _____ and he is the sign of that salvation.

²¹ Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, ²² who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

*“Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.”
(Matthew 12:31-32)*

“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.”
(Romans 8:9).

In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:11-14)

“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
(Ephesians 4:30)

2. The Holy Spirit helps us to know God and to _____ His revelation:

“When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come” (John 16:13).

“The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.”
(1 Corinthians 2:10-12).

3. The Holy Spirit aides in the process of _____:

“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature . . . But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control . . . Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit”
(Galatians 5: 16, 22-25).

“But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.” (2 Thessalonians 2:13)

4. The Holy Spirit _____ us for kingdom service and unites us as the church:

“There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all . . . It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Ephesians 4:4-6, 11-12) [see also 1 Corinthians 12].

III. The Doctrine of Humanity, Sin, and Salvation

A. God created mankind in his _____ and likeness.

“God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created him” (Genesis 1:27).

- Although God is pure spirit and we are physical beings, we _____ the image of God in a multitude of ways. We reason (intellect), feel (emotion), choose (will), and are relational beings.
 - We were created to live in relationship with God, a fact evident throughout scripture.
- Unfortunately, one error related to this teaching of scripture is the creeping acceptance of _____ views of human development.
 - In an attempt to reconcile the view that humanity evolved from lower species with the biblical account of creation, some people have interpreted the first few chapters of Genesis as an allegory or an ancient myth.
- There are many good books defending the traditional “Creationist” position but perhaps the simplest argument for Christians is the fact that _____ clearly believed in the historicity of Adam.
 - This is evident in his appeal to the opening chapters of Genesis in his debate with the Pharisees over divorce in Matthew 19.

B. As a result of sin man is cursed and separated from God (The Fall and Original Sin)

What is sin?

John declares, “Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4)

- God created all mankind with free will and required obedience to his law.
 - In the Garden of Eden, that law was simple yet Adam and Eve violated it when they ate from the tree of the _____ of good and evil.
- The Bible teaches us that there are both sins of commission and sins of _____.

James declares, “Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it sins” (James 4:17).

- We often focus on the sins of commission. But, as Christians, we have to be particularly careful about the sins of omission.
 - Like the Pharisees of Jesus' time, we can become caught up in a culture obsessed with avoiding certain behaviors (e.g. swearing, drinking, smoking) but “neglect the more important matters of the law—justice, _____, and faithfulness” (Matthew 23:23).
- Current and historical errors surrounding the doctrine of humanity:
 - Zoroastrianism
 - Manichaeism
- Both of these heretical philosophies posit the objective existence of _____.
 - Christianity sees evil only as a privation of the good.
 - In Augustine's formulation, the substitution of a lesser good for a greater.
- Our own self-awareness and our experience of the world confirm the biblical teaching that sin is present in every human heart.
 - We are also keenly aware that sin continues to _____ our relationships with God and with each other.

“There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one” (Romans 3:10-12; Psalm 14:2-3).

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me” (Psalm 51:5).

- Paul argues in Romans 5:12-21 that our tendency to sin is not a product of our upbringing or our environment but rather an inherited attribute passed down from _____ and Eve (Original Sin).
- Current and historical errors surrounding the doctrine of sin:
 - Classical Greco-Roman humanism
 - Pelagianism

- Paul also argues in Romans 5:12-21 that just as we share in the guilt of the first Adam, so we can be reconciled to God through the _____ Adam, Jesus Christ.
 - Unlike the aforementioned heretical errors, Christianity has a far more pessimistic/realistic view of human nature and our (unregenerate) capacities.

C. Through Christ, God had made a way for us to be _____ to him.

- The Bible teaches us that salvation is a three stage process:
 - Justification – This is an instantaneous legal act of God in which He thinks of our sins as _____ and Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and declares us to be righteous in his sight.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

"⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Romans 5:8)

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

"Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved!" (Romans 10:13)

"...If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." (Romans 10:9,10)

- Sanctification is the process by which a believer continually _____ to the image of Christ.
 - Sanctification is a dual effort on the part of the Holy Spirit and the individual believer.
 - God works in the believer to produce more of a godly character and life in the person who has already been justified (Phil. 2:13).
 - The believer must willing _____ and actively respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit (James 2:17).
 - Sanctification is not instantaneous; but rather a lifelong process.

"God has called us not for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification." (1 Thessalonians 4:7)

"¹² So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:12-13)

- Glorification - The act that will occur when Christ _____ and raises from dead the bodies of believers who have already died and reunites them with their souls and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like His own.

"¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17)

"¹⁶ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him." (Romans 8:16-18)

"⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; ⁴³ it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body... ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Corinthians 15:42-44; 49)

"²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself." (Philippians 3:20-21).

- Current and historical errors concerning sanctification and justification:
 - Traditional Catholic teachings on salvation do not maintain a clear distinction between justification and sanctification. In orthodox Catholicism, justification is a life-long process of participation in the sacraments.
 - Antinomianism, incorrectly holds that sanctification occurs simultaneously with justification and that true Christians are no longer capable of sin.

D. The exclusivity of Christ

- The Bible is adamant, _____ is by grace through faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8-9).
 - Unfortunately, there are a variety of incorrect things that people think constitute salvation: good works, walking the aisle, saying a prayer, getting wet in a baptistery, and church membership.

*“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”
(John 14:6).*

“There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

- Only through a relationship with Christ can the answers to life’s biggest questions be found:
 - Questions of origin – “Where did I come from?”
 - Questions of meaning – “Why am I here?”
 - Questions of destiny – “Where am I going?” and “How do I get there?”
- Christianity correctly answers these questions through its teachings on creation, humanity, sin, and redemption.

Questions/ Comments/ Thoughts _____

IV. The Doctrine of the Church

A. What is the Church?

- As in our discussion of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of ecclesiology has succumbed not so much to incorrect doctrine as to shallowness of doctrine.
 - For many believers today, the effectiveness of Christians in reaching the world around them has been _____ (both historically and in the contemporary world) by a narrow understanding of what the church is and their place within it.
- Potentially, three of the greatest mistakes of the church historically were:
 - 1) The separation of clergy and laity.
 - 2) The compartmentalization of Sunday and the rest of the week.
 - 3) The common view that the word “church” refers primarily to a building or to an organizational hierarchy
 - The latter is more likely among Catholics, the former among Protestants.
- The word “church”, from the Greek term "ekklesia", which means "gathering" or " _____ ", is never used in scripture to refer to a building.
- Instead, it refers:
 - 1) To the entire Christian _____,
 - In Ephesians 5:23, Paul explains, “Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the savior.”
 - 2) To the Christian _____ in a particular city or region,
 - Frequently New Testament writers would address particular communities as when Paul writes to “the church of God in Corinth” (2 Corinthians 1:1) or when John addresses “the church in Ephesus” (Revelation 2:1).

3) To gatherings of Christians in _____.

- We frequently hear of groups of Christians meeting in homes (Romans 16:3-5, Colossians 4:15, Philemon 2) [Home Groups]. It was not until the time of Constantine that purpose-built churches began to be constructed.

B. What is the purpose of the Church?

- The purpose of the church is to:
 - Worship God (Luke 4:8; John 4:23; Rev. 4:10)
 - Study His Word (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Cor. 4:6)
 - Pray (Acts 2:42)
 - _____ one another (John 13:35; Phil. 1:1-4)
 - Help each other (Gal. 6:2)
 - Partake of baptism and the Lord's supper (Luke 22:19-20)
 - To learn how to live as godly people (Titus 2:11)
 - To be equipped to evangelize the world (Eph. 4:12; Matt. 28:18-20).
- The Ordinances of the Church (*Material adapted from www.carm.org*)

Baptism

- The word “baptism” occurs one hundred sixteen times in the New Testament.
- The definition of baptism is “to dip or to _____.” *Baptizo* in Greek is “to dip or to immerse or to destroy”. Can refer to “ritual washings” or “ceremonial purification”.

¹³ Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?”

¹⁵ But Jesus answering said to him, “Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him. ¹⁶ After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God

descending as a dove and lighting on Him,¹⁷ and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.” (Matthew 3:13-17)

- The model provided in Matthew 3:13-17 instructs us that all believers should obediently follow Jesus through the waters of believer’s baptism as a _____ of their relationship with him and a confession that they have died to their old nature and have been born anew.

Communion (Eucharist, Mass, Lord’s Supper)

- The term “communion” means “a shared or mutual participation.” It comes from the word “_____.”
 - In Matthew 26:26, the precursor to communion is the Passover meal (the Jewish celebration of the Passover instituted in Exodus 12).
 - In this context, Jesus is _____ God’s faithfulness to redeem the Israelites from the Egyptians. It was commemorated in Exodus, chapter 12. He is taking the old Jewish tradition and giving it new significance.
 - The Bible uses the phrase “the Lord’s Supper” for this celebration (1 Corinthians 11).
 - This celebration is also called the Eucharist in some traditions (Roman Catholic).
- Current and historical errors concerning the ordinances of the church.
 - Baptismal regeneration.
 - Continual justification through observing the sacraments.
 - A diminished view of the significance of the ordinances.
- The consistent model portrayed for us in God’s Word teaches that both Baptism and Communion were faithfully _____ by believers because of their relationship with the Lord; not as a means of attaining grace or salvation.
- There is an important balance struck in the biblical witness:

- On the one hand, the Bible is clear that baptism and communion are not _____ for salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- However, the Bible also places great importance on these components as acts of _____ in which all believers should partake (Matthew 3:15).

C. The Church as the Body of Christ

- One of the most common analogies that Paul uses when he describes the church is the idea of the church as a _____. He says in Romans 12:4-8:

“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.”

- He makes a similar point in 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27-30:

“The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink . . . Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?”

- These passages suggest that every Christian has an important _____ to play within the Christian community and that it is the presence of the Holy Spirit which empowers them to fulfill those roles and which creates a general parity between members.
- Current and historical errors concerning the doctrine of the church:
 - In our culture the “solitary Christian” has become more and more common, in part because of disillusionment with the church.

