

Distinctives

The following statements summarize distinctives of the faith and practice at Summit Church. These and other theological distinctives mark areas of conviction that are debated even among Bible-believing, gospel-preaching churches. Because of that, agreement with every particular of these distinctives isn't required to join us in fellowship. However, Summit Church's teaching will be consistent with these convictions.

I. God's Sovereignty

We believe that God governs all creatures, actions, and events, from the greatest to the least.³⁰ He does this according to the free and unchanging counsel of His own will.³¹

We believe that God, from eternity, set His love on an elect people and determined to reconcile them to Himself³²; that Christ, in the fullness of time, died to make reconciliation possible³³; and that the Holy Spirit, in time, brings new birth and reconciliation to those the Father effectually calls.³⁴ This effectual call is based on God's free grace, not any merit in man.³⁵ God keeps His own faithful so that they persevere to the end and are saved.³⁶

II. Weekly Lord's Supper

We believe the Lord's supper is the eating of bread and drinking of wine with other believers to remember the Lord, proclaim his death, and commune with him.³⁷ Summit Church's practice is to partake of the Lord's supper every Lord's Day. We see this as most consistent with the New Testament pattern.³⁸

III. Believer's Baptism

We believe baptism is the application of water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ We believe the New Testament pattern concerning baptism is most clearly realized in the immersion in water of a professing believer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁰ Exceptions to this ordinary pattern may arise in cases of medical necessity or issues of conscience.⁴¹ The elders must approve any deviation from the ordinary pattern.

³⁰ Ac. 4:28; Pro. 16:33; Mt. 10:29-31; 1 Ki. 12:15; Isa. 46:10.

³¹ Ps. 33:10-11; Eph 1:11; Ge. 45:7; Isa. 63:14; Ro. 9:17; Eph. 3:10.

³² Titus 2:14; Ro. 8:29; Eph. 1:4-5; 1 Pe. 1:2.

³³ Jn. 3:16; Ga. 4:4-5; 1 Tim. 3:16; Col. 2:9; Jn. 10:15, 18; Ro. 3:25; He. 10:10; 1 Jn. 2:2.

³⁴ Jn. 3:3, 8; Titus 3:4-7; Jn. 6:37, 44; Jn. 6:37, 44; Ro. 8:30.

³⁵ Ro. 9:11; Ga. 2:16; Eph. 2:4-5, 8-9; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 3:4-5.

³⁶ Jn. 10:27-29; Phil 1:6; 1 Pe. 1:5, 9; 2 Pe. 1:10; 1 Jn. 3:9.

³⁷ 1 Co. 10:16-17, 21; 11:23-26; 12:13.

³⁸ Ac. 20:7; 1 Co. 11:23-34; Ac. 2:42; *see also* Ac. 2:46; 1 Co. 16:19; Phlm. 2; He. 10:25; *cf.* 2 Th. 2:1.

³⁹ Mt. 28:19; Ac. 8:38-39, 10:47, 22:16.

⁴⁰ Ro. 6:4; *see also* 1 Pe. 3:19-21.

⁴¹ *See* Mk. 2:27.

IV. Fellowship

We believe every believer should commit to fellowship and regular gathering in a local assembly—a local church.⁴² The Bible further teaches that we as believers should receive others into fellowship in the same way that Christ received us.⁴³ Fellowship is not synonymous with “church membership.” Membership in the church—the one body of Christ—begins automatically at the new birth.⁴⁴ Fellowship in the local church, by contrast, is a believer’s commitment to live in the care of and at peace with brothers and sisters in the local church.⁴⁵

We desire to see every part of the fellowship at Summit Church—from the infant to the elderly—worship, serve, and grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ alongside one another.⁴⁶ One application of this commitment to multigenerational faithfulness is that we welcome children in Summit Church’s Lord’s Day gathering.⁴⁷

V. Biblical Anthropology

We believe that human life is sacred from the moment of conception and that all human beings, regardless of ethnicity, sex, age, or physical and mental capacity, are created in the image of God and are of equal value.⁴⁸ We oppose practices, policies, or procedures which unjustly undermine or deny any human being’s God-given right to life.⁴⁹

We believe God immutably creates each person as male or female.⁵⁰ We also believe that God designed men and women to occupy different roles within the home, church, and society.⁵¹ We reject as sinful efforts to deny the God-given sex of any individual.

We believe marriage is a one-flesh union of one man and one woman that uniquely reflects Christ’s relationship with His church and serves as the foundational building block of stable society.⁵² We reject as sinful any sexual activity outside of the covenant marriage of one man and one woman.⁵³ We affirm Christlike father-rule within the home.⁵⁴

⁴² He. 10:25; *see* Ac. 9:26, 11:25-26; *see also* 1 Co. 5:9-11; 2 Th. 3:14; Ga. 2:9.

⁴³ Ro. 15:7; *see* Ac. 9:26; Ga. 2:9.

⁴⁴ Ro. 12:4-5; 1 Co. 6:15, 12:12-27; Eph. 4:25, 5:30.

⁴⁵ He. 10:22-25; *see* Ac. 9:26, 11:25-26.

⁴⁶ Titus 2:2-6; 1 Pe. 5:1-5.

⁴⁷ Mt. 18:1-6, 19:13-15; Mk. 9:33-37; 10:13-16; Lu. 18:15-17; Deu. 31:12-13; Jos. 8:34-35; Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20.

⁴⁸ Ge. 1:26; Ps. 139:13-16; Prov. 24:11-12, 31:8-9; Jas. 1:27.

⁴⁹ Ge. 9:5-6; Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Lev. 24:17; Deu. 5:7; Ro. 13:9; 1 Jn. 3:11-12; *see also* Mic. 6:8.

⁵⁰ Ge. 1:26-27; Mt. 19:4-5; Deu. 22:5.

⁵¹ Ge. 1:26-27, 2:18, 1 Co. 11:3, 5-12; 7:4-5; Eph. 5:15-33; Col. 3:18-4:1; 1 Tim. 2:9-15, 3:1; Titus 1:5-6, 2:2-5; 1 Pe. 3:1-7.

⁵² Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Co. 7:2; Mt. 19:5-6; Ge. 2:24.

⁵³ Ex. 20:14; Lev. 18:22, 20:13; Pro. 6:32; Mt. 5:27-28; Ro. 1:26-28; 1 Co. 6:9-11; He. 13:4.

⁵⁴ Eph. 5:22-33; Titus 2:2-5; 1 Pe. 3:1-7; *see* Num. 30:1-16.

We believe God limits the exercise of speaking gifts during meetings of the local church and the oversight of the local church to men.⁵⁵ Only biblically qualified men may serve as elders and deacons at Summit Church.⁵⁶

VI. Spiritual Gifts

We believe the Holy Spirit gives gifts to every believer as He wills.⁵⁷ These gifts differ from one another and exist to edify the church and confirm the word.⁵⁸

We believe some gifts—such as healing and tongues—were either given entirely to the early church or else are given in discrete ways such that we do not expect them to be normative. We must exercise discernment when approaching any alleged manifestation of a gift, whether a man claims to have the gift of teaching or tongues, testing all things.⁵⁹ But, at the same time, we must not quench the spirit or despise true manifestations of God's gifts.⁶⁰

VII. Church Government

We believe there is one body of Christ.⁶¹ Christ is the one and only head of the church, the Chief Shepherd, who has all preeminence.⁶² We believe that God has revealed everything necessary for faith and practice in Scripture.⁶³ While we have an attitude of humble submission toward those God has placed in positions of authority, in all things we ought to obey God rather than men.⁶⁴

We believe the one body of Christ finds expression in local assemblies—or churches—of believers.⁶⁵ These local churches meet on the Lord's day to continue in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer.⁶⁶ We further believe that each local church is autonomous and accountable to the Lord Jesus Christ, having no ecclesiastical structure between the local church and Christ.⁶⁷

⁵⁵ 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 1 Co. 14:34-35; *see* Ac. 14:23, 20:28-35; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pe. 5:1-4.

⁵⁶ 1 Tim. 3:1-10, 12-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pe. 5:1-4; *see* Ac. 6:1-6.

⁵⁷ 1 Co. 12:11.

⁵⁸ Ro. 12:6; 1 Co. 12:4-31, 14:1-5; 1 Pe. 4:10; Mk. 16:17, 20.

⁵⁹ 1 Th. 5:21; 1 Jn. 4:1.

⁶⁰ 1 Th. 5:19-20.

⁶¹ Eph. 4:12; Ro. 12:5; 1 Co. 12:20.

⁶² Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23; 1 Pe. 5:4.

⁶³ Ga. 1:8-9; 2 Th. 2:2; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Ps. 119:105; Heb. 4:12.

⁶⁴ Ro. 13:1-7; 1 Pe. 2:13-14; Ac. 5:29; Ex. 1:16-21.

⁶⁵ He. 10:25; *see* Ac. 14:23.

⁶⁶ Ac. 2:42, 20:7.

⁶⁷ Rev. 1:13; *see* 1 Co. 5:4-5, 16:12.

We believe it is proper for the saints in a local church to recognize biblically qualified men among them who are doing the work of elders and deacons.⁶⁸ God has committed the government of each local assembly to the elders present in that assembly.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Ac. 14:23; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pe. 5:1-4.

⁶⁹ 1 Pe. 5:2-3; Ac. 20:28-35; 1 Tim. 5:17; *see* Mt. 20:25-26.