

Last week we worked through our church Doctrinal Statement. A couple of things come to mind after our discussion last week.

1. We do not need to change our statement at all — the statement we have is sufficient to define our church on its own, we cannot risk marring our unity by making changes.
2. Any potential change must not diminish our Doctrinal Statement. The goal of any change would be to enhance, expand, and further clarify the statement we already have.
3. To minimize change, if all the statements we have are left intact, there are four doctrinal issues that should further define our fellowship:
 - a. Baptism & Lord’s Supper: ordinances, not sacraments
 - b. Creationism: that is, a Young Earth, non-evolutionary point of view
 - c. Eschatology (dispensationalism, premillennialism, pretribulation Rapture)
 - d. Marriage and Gender issues

With a view to examining carefully our present statements, I would like to compare our statement with two others:

Our Statement	The FBFI Statement	Toronto Baptist Seminary Statement
<p>The Bible</p> <p>We believe the Bible is the Word of God. Every word of the original manuscripts is inerrant, infallible, and verbally inspired by God. The Bible is the only rule for faith and practice. It is the absolute standard of life and as such is to be obeyed by all men.</p>	<p>Section 1. The Scripture: We believe in the verbal plenary inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments alone by God, without error in the original writings, their sole authority for faith and practice of the Christian church and their providential preservation as God’s eternal Word (2 Pt 1.21;</p>	<p>We believe that the Holy Bible was (a) written by men supernaturally inspired; (b) that it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter; and (c) therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to men; the true centre of Christian</p>

2 Timothy 3.16-17, 2 Peter 1.19-21, Psalm 119.160, Romans 15.4, John 12.48.

2 Tim 3.16-17; 1 Pt 1.23b-25).
 We believe in a dispensational understanding of the Bible based on the progressive unfolding of the divine mysteries from God, which result in distinguishable stewardships of God’s truth (Heb 1.1-3; Eph 1.9-10; 1 Cor 10.32).

union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.
Explanatory
 By “The Holy Bible” we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not only contain and convey the word of God, but is the very Word of God.
 By “Inspiration” we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

Observations:

1. We use doctrinal statements to protect our institutions against errors.
 Our statement on Inspiration protects against:
 - a. Any form of liberalism that denies the inspiration of every word of the original manuscripts

- b. The error of King James Onlyism that elevates a translation to the equivalent level of the original manuscripts
 - c. Any notion of antinomianism (anti-law) that holds that obedience to God's standards is not required
2. Both the FBFI and TBS statements do better at defining the Bible itself, quite clearly giving no authority to the Apocrypha or any other writings.
3. The FBFI statement adds a statement on Bible interpretation that defines its approach to the Bible

Suggestions:

- Our statement on inspiration is adequate, but we could upgrade our wording in some of the areas where the other two statements are more explicit.

We believe the Bible, that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation, is the Word of God. Every word of the original manuscripts is inerrant, infallible, and verbally inspired by God. The Bible is the only rule for faith and practice. All human conduct, creeds and opinions must be accountable to its absolute standard. Christians are accountable for living according to its precepts.

2 Timothy 3.16-17, 2 Peter 1.19-21, 1 Peter 1.23-25 Psalm 119.160, Romans 15.4, John 12.48.

We believe the Bible teaches its own proper interpretation, which is that literal, grammatical, historical approach defined as dispensationalism, which sees the divine mysteries unfolded over the ages for the guidance of God's people in all times, but especially for the full understanding of the church in the Church Age.

Galatians 3.16; Hebrews 1.1-3; Ephesians 1.9-10; 1 Corinthians 10.32