

## **EASTSIDE BELIEFS**

### **GOD**

A holy (without sin), spiritual being, all knowing, everywhere present, eternally existent in three distinct personalities – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – one God (Exodus 3:14-15, John 4:24, Matthew 28:19, John 1:1-2).

### **JESUS**

Jesus became “God in the flesh.” He was born through the miracle of a virgin birth, lived a sinless life, was crucified and died a physical death as atonement for our sins, and was physically resurrected from the grave (Matthew 1:18-25, 1 Corinthians 15:3-8). He will return in bodily form as Lord of the universe, to gather his followers and judge those who have rejected him (Acts 1:9-11, Hebrews 9:27-28).

### **HOLY SPIRIT**

Lives within those who believe in Jesus Christ as Comforter and Advocate, and helps us become more like Jesus in thought, word, actions, and character (John 16:5-15).

### **SIN**

Men and women were created in the image of God but are now separated from God by sin (Romans 5:12-21).

### **SALVATION**

Faith (belief and trust) in Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross is the only way to be reconciled with God (Acts 4:8-12). Salvation cannot be earned; it is offered through Jesus based on grace, not merit. What we couldn't do for ourselves (reconcile with God), Jesus did through his death on the cross (Ephesians 2:8-9). God lovingly offers salvation to every person, who has the freedom to accept or reject this gift at any time (John 3:16-18). Faith requires repentance (conforming our lifestyle to Christ's), and results in obedience. Baptism by immersion demonstrates a pledge of our willingness to live for Him (Acts 8:26-38, Romans 6:1-4).

### **THE BIBLE**

The Bible is inspired by God, and is therefore without error or contradiction, and is the sole authority for faith and practice. All our beliefs come from the Bible (2 Timothy 3:15-16, 2 Peter 1:20-21).

### **THE CHURCH**

The Church of Jesus Christ is not limited to any one institution or denomination; it consists of all who have trusted Jesus Christ for the redemption of their sins. Eastside is, therefore but one part of the greater Church (1 Corinthians 12:12-17).

## TERMS + DEFINITIONS

**Adoptionism** - creates a hierarchy within the Trinity, putting the Father superior to both the Son and the Spirit. Further, adoptionism distorts the good news of salvation, making it into a story about rewards earned in exchange for a life well lived, as Jesus is simply a man who – because of his good deeds and perfect record – is adopted as God’s son. In this heresy, the hope that we find in salvation through Jesus’s death, burial and resurrection is lost as perfection becomes the goal and the divinity of the Son doesn’t exist.

**Arianism** - which “taught that Jesus was God’s first and greatest creature,” granting “that Jesus was ‘like’ God” but ultimately “denied that he is eternal”. This heresy shows up in the Mormon & Jehovah’s Witness faiths, as they worship the Father of Jesus Christ, making him into an idol, and “implying that the Father is a different God than the God we meet in Scripture”.

**Church** - comes from the Greek word ecclesia, which refers to the visible expression of the gathered followers of Jesus Christ who have been grafted into a community created by God, under the banner of Jesus Christ.

**Doctrine** - a belief or set of beliefs held and taught by a Church.

**Ecclesiology** -theology as applied to the nature and structure of the Christian Church.

**Heresy** refers to beliefs & opinions that land in contradiction with what would be considered essential Christian beliefs, and while some might say “what harm do they really cause,” it can lead a person down a path that is contrary to the foundations of faith.

**Incarnation** - the appearance of God in human form.

**Modalism** - as a heresy, “would understand Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three modes in which the one God works in the world,” likening them to “three masks God wears as he goes to work”.

**Pneumatology** - the Christian study of the Holy Spirit.

**Sanctification** - the action of making or declaring something holy.

**Theology** - the study of God and the Christian belief.

**Tradition** - traditional teachings of the Christian Faith, as filtered through realities in Scripture, act almost like guardrails to help us focus on the Truth.

**The Wesleyan Quadrilateral** - provides a practical roadmap for studying Scripture, enriching our understanding of passages

- *Scripture* - Instead of bringing what we *already* think and fitting it into God's Word, we submit to God's Word and allow it to be the source of truth. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- *Tradition* - traditional teachings of the Christian Faith, filtered through realities in Scripture, and then act almost like guardrails to help us focus on the Truth. (2 Thessalonians 2:15, 2 Timothy 2:2 )
- *Reason* - We acknowledge that God has given us brains to help us discern His truth in the World around us. (Mark 12:30, 2 Tim. 1:7)
- *Experience* - As our theological framework continues to develop, we become aware that our experience with God, his working in our hearts, in the lives of others, and the world around us, also helps inform us of the reality of who God is. (2 Corinthians 5:17)