

The AFES Doctrinal Basis

The AFES upholds the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, including:

- * The divine inspiration and infallibility of Holy Scripture as originally given and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- * The unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead.
- * The universal sinfulness and guilt of humanity since the fall, rendering men and women subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
- * The conception of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit and his birth by the Virgin Mary.
- * Redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the sacrificial death, as our representative and substitute, of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God.
- * The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
- * The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit to make the death of Christ effective in the individual sinner, granting him or her repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ.
- * The indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit in the believer.
- * The expectation of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THEOLOGY 101 – FUNDAMENTALS OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

1. Concerning the Scriptures

- Divine inspiration and infallibility – the Scriptures are comprised of humanly written documents in which God was actively involved in initiating the writing and moving the writers. This is not to be thought of simply as *dictation*. There was real human agency and decision in the forming of the documents of Scripture. But in all that human activity, God was at work shaping these writings so that they clearly and without fault represented His mind and will. As human documents they are set in historical situations and reflect actual human thought and understanding of the world etc. and so have limitations in some directions. But they are infallible in communicating the truth of the way of salvation that God wants us to have and to know. To affirm the infallibility of Scripture is to affirm the trustworthiness of God in His speaking to us.
See **2Timothy 3:14–17**
- “... as originally given...” – this phrase recognises the primacy of the original documents of Scripture. It is unlikely that we have any original copy of any Biblical book or letter. The process of copying (by hand) runs the risk of error. Many documents underlie the Biblical text as we have it, and whilst there are small discrepancies between versions of a number of texts, there are remarkably few serious discrepancies.
- Supreme authority – as the Scriptures are the trustworthy, inspired gift of God in which we have clearly His Word, and with the example of Christ’s use of the Scriptures as a clear model, they have authority for us in all matters of faith and conduct (what we believe about God and what that faith in God then requires we do.) No matter of faith or teaching of conduct is to be accepted that contradicts Scriptures. Nothing is to be required of persons in faith or conduct that is not proven by Scripture. All matters of faith and conduct are to be tested by Scripture. We are not left to mere subjectivity in our lives, but are given an objective declaration of the mind and will of God. Subjectivity (discovering the truth from within yourself) ultimately leads to autonomy (having no external authority apart from yourself.)