

What Do We Believe at C.O.P.E.?

The statements that follow are descriptive, not creedal. They are designed to help people understand the positions generally held by The Children of Pokot Educational Fund, along with our supporting constituency in the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ.

We believe that:

God is one being in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. He is the source of all creation (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-2), which He sustains (Col. 1:17) and is in the process of redeeming (Rom. 8:19-22). God the Father loves us and desires that we have fellowship with Him as His children (I John 1:3).

Jesus of Nazareth is the incarnation of God the Son. He is the Word become flesh (John 1:14), and He now holds all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). He is Savior and Lord. He made human salvation possible through His life, death on the cross, and resurrection. He ascended into heaven where He is now our high priest and advocate. He is head of the Church.

The Holy Spirit works actively in the world, seeking to glorify Jesus. The Holy Spirit convicts people of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come (John 16:5-11). The Holy Spirit indwells believers individually and corporately in the Church. The Holy Spirit develops within the Christian a pure heart, which results in Christ-like character expressed in private and public conduct and action.

The Bible, the Old and New Testament Scriptures, is the uniquely inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21). The Bible is the rule of faith and practice for Christians. We affirm that Scripture is the authoritative revelation from God by which we know God's will and Christ's authority. We seek to assert what the Scriptures clearly assert and allow freedom in other cases. We seek to understand divine intent, through authorial intent, and we seek to apply its teaching to the contemporary church and culture.

The Church is the body of Christ on earth, the community of believers throughout the world. Upon surrender to Christ, a person is added to the Church. In addition, the priesthood of all believers means each Christian is called to be a serving minister (1 Peter 2:9-10). The Church's mission is the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

Human beings were created by God to walk in fellowship with Him. However, all (except Jesus) have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23) and must rely on God's grace and forgiveness. Every human from the moment of life is in the image of God (imago dei), a person to be nurtured, protected, and developed.

Salvation is by God alone through Jesus Christ alone. One accepts Christ as Savior through a conversion process that includes faith, repentance, confession, and baptism (Acts 2:38, 8:12, 10:47-48, Rom.10:9,

etc.).

In **baptism** a believer is immersed, crucified and buried with Christ (Rom. 6:3-4), receives forgiveness of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), is resurrected (Col. 2:12) and clothed with Christ (Gal. 3:27), and becomes saved (1 Peter 3:21) because of God's free gift of grace received by faith.

Evangelism is carried out both by direct proclamation and by transforming community witness. (Matt 28:18-20, 1 Peter 2:12)

The Lord's Supper is the celebration of the New Covenant, in which the Christian community remembers Christ and celebrates the covenantal relationship they have with Him and with each other. Congregations in the fellowship typically celebrate the Lord's Supper at least weekly (1 Cor. 11:17-34; Acts 20:7).

The Final Coming of Jesus is a time when Christ will personally come again as savior and judge of the world. At that time there will be the bodily resurrection of the dead believers to eternal life with God and unbelievers to eternal judgment. Sin will be no more and believers will live in fellowship with God forever (1 Thess. 4:13-18 and Rev. 20:11-15).