

# Summary of Core Doctrines

To be evangelical [according to the Evangelical Theological Society] is to believe in the triune God and the inspiration of the Bible. That leaves a lot of room for discussion on most issues, so it is important to understand the theological conclusions of each teacher.

1. I believe in the triune God of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe they are distinct in personality and actions, yet so unified in essence, character, and will, that they are one God. I believe their unity is absolute and that they each are eternal and share the divine characteristics, which include perfection in every way. I believe Jesus is the Son, who came to earth and was born as a fully human baby, to the virgin Mary, thus being fully divine and fully human. I believe Jesus is the Messiah-savior [Christ] promised by God the Father to the Jews, and he is the greatest prophet, our high priest, our future judge, and God the Father's eternal king for the Earth.
2. I believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, inerrant in its original copies, incredibly accurate in our Greek and Hebrew texts today. I believe the Bible thus is authoritative and that it is sufficient revelation for knowing God, the way of salvation, and the way of life as a believer. I believe God and the human authors had one true meaning for each passage, though it might be applied in many ways. I believe God progressively revealed more over time, but the canon is now closed. I believe the Bible reveals changes in God's covenants with mankind, which result in unique dispensations in human history.
3. I believe God created men and women in his own image, and thus all human life is sacred, and we should all live with the purpose of reflecting God's character, representing God, and reproducing God's image by helping others to know and live for God. I believe we are born tainted because of the corruption to Adam and Eve's nature, we are all held guilty for the human race going astray, and that we all willfully choose to sin. I believe there are many effects of this, including eternal spiritual death, or separation from God. I believe there is nothing people can do to purify or save themselves.
4. I believe the entire Bible teaches salvation only by the grace of God, with the only requirement [which God empowers] being to believe in God's promise of deliverance. As God's promise was progressively revealed in scripture throughout time, there was more to believe; today we know that Jesus is the promised deliverer [the Messiah or Christ], as the Son of God who came to Earth as a man who lived a perfect life to be worthy of his sacrifice on the cross, by which sacrifice he took the punishment for our sins, allowing believers in this promise to be reconciled with God, forgiven of sin, and given eternal life.
5. I believe you cannot lose your salvation. I have at least ten conclusive scriptural reasons for this belief.
6. I believe God desires for every believer to grow spiritually [be progressively sanctified] to become more like Christ, the perfect image of God the Father, to become more like God designed that believer to be. I believe the New Testament reveals specific attitudes and actions by which believers can experience this work of grace.
7. I believe that every believer faces three challenges to his walk with Christ: the flesh, cultural influences, and demonic activity. I believe that as the believer experiences progressive sanctification, these challenges become ever more mitigated, allowing the believer to live more in freedom and victory.
8. I believe that man and woman are equal before God but have different roles in God's kingdom, just as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are equal with each other but have different roles. In the church, I believe the Bible reveals only male pastor-elders, but reveals women involved in every other aspect of ministry.
9. I believe the Bible gives some direction as to church purpose, goals, governance, methodology, and worship, while leaving flexible how diverse groups will apply that direction. I believe in two ordinances, water baptism to welcome a believer into the body of Christ and the Lord's Supper for those who have been baptized.