

SECTION 1. THE BIBLE. We believe that the Bible, consisting of sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, was given by divine inspiration and is the Word of God (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21; 1 Thess. 2:13); that it reveals man's natural state and presents the only means of salvation (Rom. 3:10-12; Acts 4:12); that it constitutes the only perfect rule and final authority in all matters pertaining to Christian faith and practice (Acts 17:11; Isa. 8:20); and that it describes how man will be judged (Rom. 2:1-3).

SECTION 2. THE GODHEAD. We believe there is only one living and true God, Yahweh (Ps. 83:18; Ex. 6:2-3), perfect, infinite, and eternal (Matt. 5:48; 1 Kings 8:27; Ps. 90:2), who is unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, love, and truth (Mal. 3:6; 1Tim 1:17; Gen. 17:1; Isa. 6:3; Ps. 19:9; Ex. 34:6, John 3:16); who is the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the Universe (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3; Neh. 9:6; Heb. 1:2-3; Ps. 103:19; Eph. 1:11); who exists in three persons; namely, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; who are equal in their divine perfection and harmonious in the execution of their distinct office (Matt. 28:19; John 5:17; 14:16; 15:26; Eph. 2:18).

SECTION 3. THE FATHER. We believe that God is the Father of Jesus Christ, His one and only Son (John 20:17; 3:16), and spiritual Father of all believers. God the Father made the supreme sacrifice in giving His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (Matt. 3:17; Rom. 3:24-25; 1 John 2:2).

SECTION 4. THE SON. We believe that in the fullness of time the Son humbled Himself and assumed man's nature by being born of the virgin Mary, fully human and fully divine, in the one unique person of Jesus Christ (Isa. 9:6; Matt. 1:18-25; John 1:14; 1Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:14). By becoming man, He was made like us, and having a body, He could offer it as a sacrifice for us (Heb. 10:9-10). Being eternally God (John 1:1-14; 8:58), and without sin (II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15), the sacrifice He made on the cross was infinite in value (John 1:29; 1 John 2:1-2). We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven, exalted at the right hand of God where, as high priest, He fulfills the ministry of intercession and advocacy for His people (Heb. 1:3; 3:1; 7:23-25; 1 John 2:1-2).

SECTION 5. THE HOLY SPIRIT. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, equal in all aspects with the Father and the Son (Matt. 28:19; Ex. 17:7 with Heb. 3:7-9; 1 Cor. 3:16). He is sent from the Father and the Son (John 15:26). His principal ministry since His advent at Pentecost is to reprove or convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8-11); to restrain the process of evil until God's purposes are accomplished (II Thess. 2:7); to bear witness to the truth preached (Acts 5:30-32); to regenerate those who repent and believe in Christ, baptizing them at the moment of salvation into the church (the body of Christ) (John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5; 1 Cor 12:13); to indwell them permanently and seal them until the day of redemption (1 Cor 3:16; John 14:16; Eph. 1:13-14); to instruct, comfort and guide God's children (John 14:16-18, 26; 16:13); to sanctify them (II Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:1-3); to empower them for life and service (Rom. 8:2; Acts 1:8; Eph. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:1-4; 1 Thess. 1:5); and to give resurrection life to their mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11).

SECTION 6. MAN.

- A. **HIS CREATION.** We believe that man was created by an immediate act of God and not by a process of evolution; that he was created in the image and likeness of God, possessing personality; that he was endowed with power of rational and responsible choice between good and evil; and that the purpose of his creation was to glorify God (Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10; Acts 17:24-28; Rev. 4:11).
- B. **HIS FALL.** We believe that man was subject to trial in the Garden of Eden in order to test his loyalty to his Maker (Gen. 2:15-17); under trial he gave up his position of being right with God, was alienated from God, and became depraved physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually, by voluntarily transgressing His positive command and yielding to the enticement of Satan. In consequence of this act of disobedience, the entire human race became involved in sin so that in every heart there is by nature that evil disposition which eventually leads to responsible acts of sin and to just condemnation (Gen. 3:1-6; Rom. 5:12-18; 3:10-12, 23; 1:19-31; Eph. 4:18; 1 John 1:8-10).
- C. **HIS REDEMPTION.** We believe that God has provided redemption for men through the mediatorial work of Christ, who voluntarily offered Himself on the cross as a perfect sacrifice for sin, the Just offering for the unjust, being made sin for us, bearing sin's curse, and tasting death for every man (Matt. 20:28; Heb. 9:11; 1 Peter 3:18; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:5-6).

SECTION 7. SALVATION, REGENERATION, JUSTIFICATION, UNION WITH CHRIST, AND ADOPTION. We believe that salvation is wholly by grace through faith in Christ (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Acts 4:12; 16:31; 2 Cor. 7:10).

Regeneration is the work of God in which the new believer is made a new creation in Christ and is given a desire to obey God (2 Cor. 5:17). Regeneration follows the special calling of God's Spirit (John 16:8-11; 1 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 1:7; 11:29; 1 Cor. 2:12-14; 2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Tim. 1:9; Heb. 3:1; 2 Pet. 1:10) and the believer's trusting in Christ's saving work on the cross and resurrection (Acts 16:31). This experience is affirmed by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:16).

Justification is a judicial act of God in which the believer is declared righteous on the basis of Christ's punishment on the cross (Rom. 4:4-5; 5:1, 9).

Union with Christ describes the believer's secure position in Christ's righteousness (John 15:5; Rom. 6:4-5; Gal. 2:20; Phil 3:8-9; Col. 2:6-7, 12; 1 John 3:24).

Adoption describes the believer's new status as an accepted member of God's family (John 1:12; Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:14-16).

SECTION 8. SANCTIFICATION. We believe God sets apart the believer for Himself positionally at salvation (1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; Col. 3:1; Heb. 10:10, 14), progressively throughout life (Col. 3:1-4), and ultimately when the believer enters Christ's presence (Col. 3:4). Sanctification is the result of Christ's finished work on the cross and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit. Every believer at regeneration receives the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9), is sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13), is baptized by the Holy Spirit (i.e., identified with the Church at the

moment of salvation; 1 Cor. 12:13), and sanctified by the Holy Spirit (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). Under the Spirit's control (Eph. 5:18), the believer is to live in holiness because God is holy (1 Pet. 1:13-16).

SECTION 9. ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER. We believe in the eternal security of the believer which is the guarantee that God's work of redemption will be accomplished (John 6:37-40; Rom. 8:28-30). Believers are given eternal life (John 5:24; 10:27-29), sealed for the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30), hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3), given knowledge and assurance of eternal life (1 John 5:11-13) and are assured of no condemnation or separation from God (Rom. 8:1; 8:35-39).

SECTION 10. RESURRECTION AND IMMORTALITY. We believe that at the return of the Lord the righteous dead will be raised and the living believers will be changed so that both will have material, and spiritual, and immortal bodies like Christ's own glorious body (Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Phil. 3:20-21; Acts 1:3).

SECTION 11. THE CHURCH. We believe that the church invisible and universal is an organism composed of all those who are called out of the world, separated from sin and vitally united by faith to Christ, its living head and ruler (1 Peter 2:9; cf. John 15:28; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 12:12-27); that the church, local and visible, is an organization made up of professed believers in Christ, voluntarily joined together and meeting at stated times for worship and instruction in the Word, to observe the ordinances, and to administer discipline (Acts 2:46-47; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; see also Acts 6:1-6; 14:23). It is the duty of the church to share the gospel as a witness to all men (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 5:42), to build itself up in the most holy faith (Jude 20; Eph. 4:11-12, 16; Acts 20:32), to minister to the widows and orphans, the sick and afflicted (Acts 6:1-9; James 1:27), and to glorify God (1 Peter 4:11).

SECTION 12. ORDINANCES. We believe that Christian ordinances are outward rites appointed by Christ to be administered in each church, not as a means of salvation, but as visible signs of the facts and realities of salvation.

- A. **BAPTISM.** We believe that baptism by water is the public confession of Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and pictures the believer's new relationship with Christ (Rom. 6:1-11; 2 Cor. 5:17). It should be administered by immersion to those who have trusted in Christ (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38-41; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:15-17).
- B. **THE LORD'S SUPPER.** We believe that the Lord's Supper should be observed by all believers in obedience to the command, "Do this in remembrance of me." It consists of the partaking of the emblems of bread and wine, and symbolizes the death of Christ for the remission of our sins and our continual dependence upon Him for our sustenance. The Lord's Table should be open to all believers who are in right relationship with God, regardless of denomination (Matt. 26:26-30; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 10:16).

SECTION 13. ATTITUDE TOWARD CIVIL GOVERNMENT. We believe that civil government is ordained of God for the punishment of evil-doers and for the protection of the good (Rom. 13:1-7). We, therefore, consider it our duty to pray for rulers and magistrates (1Tim. 2:1-3), and to be submissive and obedient to their authority, except in things opposed to the will of God (Titus 3:1; 1Peter 2:13-14; Acts 4:19; 5:29; 22:21).

SECTION 14. CHRIST'S SECOND COMING. We believe in the personal, visible, premillennial and imminent return of Christ (John 14:1-3; Acts 1:10-11; Mark 13:34-37). This will be accomplished in two stages: First, the Rapture - Christ's coming for His saints - when Christ will descend into the air to catch away His waiting bride, the church (1Thess. 4:14-18; 1 Cor. 15; Rev. 3:11); Second, the Revelation - Christ's descending with His saints (Jude 14; Rom. 8:16-19; Col. 3:4; Rev. 19:14) to establish the long-promised kingdom and to reign upon the earth for a thousand years (Dan. 7:13-14; Luke 1:32-33; Rev. 5:9-10; 20:4-6). Between these two stages the Great Tribulation judgments are carried out upon the apostate and rebellious world (Jer. 30:7; Matt. 24:21; II Thess. 1:3-10; Rev. chapters 6-19).

SECTION 15. JUDGMENTS. We believe that the believer's sins are judged in Christ on the cross (II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; John 5:24); and that his works will be judged for rewards at the judgment seat of Christ at the time of His coming (1 Cor. 3:8-15; II Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 4:5; II Tim. 4:8). We believe that the unrepentant wicked will appear before God for judgment at the Great White Throne after the Millennium to be consigned to the lake of fire, there to suffer torment forever and ever, together with the devil and his angels (Eccl. 12:14; Matt. 10:28; Mark 9:43-48; Rom. 2:8-9; Gal. 9:27; Rev. 20:10-15; cf. Rev. 14:9-11).

SECTION 16. THE RESTORED CREATION. We believe that after Christ's intermediate reign (i.e., His millennial reign) the heavens and earth will be destroyed and recreated (2 Peter 3:1-13; Rev. 21:1-22:7). Christ will reign forever over a world without sin (Is. 65:17). Believers will dwell with Christ (Rev. 21:3), fulfilling their original purpose of serving God and working in His world (Gen. 2:15).

SECTION 17. THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE. We believe in the sanctity of human life from conception to the ending of that life on earth by God. It is a grievous sin to take a life except in self defense, during times of war, or when administered by the civil government (Gen 1:26-27, 9:6; Ex. 21:22-25; Ps 127:3, 139:13-16; Jer 1:4-5; Lk 1:15; Gal 1:15).

SECTION 18. MARRIAGE. We believe that God created marriage in the beginning, as a blessing for both man and woman, before any sin or rebellion entered the world, and that He created marriage to be between one man and one woman, who enter into a covenant before God to complement one another and serve one another for as long as they both shall live. Accordingly, we reject any attempt to redefine marriage as a union between people of the same sex or as between more than one man and one woman (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:15-24; Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 7:14).