



Doctrinal Statement

The Holy Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. Thus the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God.¹ The Word of God is verbally inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed.² God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship.³ The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man⁴ without error in the whole or in the part.⁵ The single, true interpretation of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation, taking account of its literary forms and devices.⁶ This interpretation can only be found in dependence on the enlightenment given by the Holy Spirit.⁷ The truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.⁸ Being infallible, the Bible is sufficient to make the believer complete, equipped for all things related to life and godliness.⁹ The Scripture will remain unchanged in its authority and efficacy forever.¹⁰

¹2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21 ²2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 6:18 ³John 16:12-13 ⁴2 Peter 1:20-21 ⁵Matthew 5:18 ⁶2 Timothy 2:15 ⁷1 John 2:27 ⁸John 12:47-48; Hebrews 4:12 ⁹2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; Psalm 19:7-10 ¹⁰Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:23-25

God

There is one and only one living and true God.¹ He is an intelligent,² spiritual,³ and personal Being,⁴ the Creator,⁵ Redeemer,⁶ Preserver,⁷ and Ruler of the universe.⁸ God is infinite in holiness⁹ and perfect in all His attributes.¹⁰ To Him is owed the highest love,¹¹ reverence,¹² and obedience.¹³ The eternal God is one in essence,¹⁴ eternally existing in the Trinity (three Persons as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).¹⁵

¹1 Corinthians 8:4 ²Romans 11:33-34 ³John 4:24 ⁴Exodus 3:14 ⁵Revelation 4:11 ⁶Colossians 1:13-14 ⁷Colossians 1:14 ⁸Isaiah 66:1; Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:9-11 ⁹1 Peter 1:16 ¹⁰Matthew 5:48 ¹¹Matthew 22:37 ¹²Psalm 33:8 ¹³John 3:36; 2 Thessalonians 1:8 ¹⁴Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7 ¹⁵Matthew 28:19

God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the course of human history disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace.¹ He is all powerful, all loving, and all wise.² He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption.³ God is Father in both His designation in the Trinity⁴ and in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.⁵ As creator He is Father to all men,⁶ but He is Spiritual Father only to believers.⁶ He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass and He works all things after the counsel of His own will.⁷ He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events.⁸ In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin,⁹ nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures.¹⁰ He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own;¹¹ He saves from sin all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption Father to His own.¹²

¹Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 104; 1 Corinthians 8:6 ²Psalm 62:11; 1 John 4:8; Psalm 36:7; Psalm 147:5 ³Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 103:19; Ephesians 3:9; Romans 11:36 ⁴John 5: 17-26; 8:54; 14:12-13 ⁵1 John 3:1; Matthew 6:6-15; Romans 8:16 ⁶Ephesians 4:6; 3:15 ⁷Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18 ⁸Ephesians 1:11; 3:15 ⁹1 Chronicles 29:11 ¹⁰Habakkuk 1:13; Job 34:10 ¹¹1 Peter 1:17; Matthew 16:27 ¹²Ephesians 1:4-6 ¹³John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5

God the Son

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God,¹ possessing all the fullness of the divine nature and attributes.² In these, He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father.³ God the Father created all things according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ.⁴ In Christ, all things continue in existence and in operation.⁵

In His incarnation, Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.⁶ In the incarnation, Christ willingly surrendered only the prerogatives of deity⁷ but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind.⁸ In His incarnation, Christ took upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature and identified Himself completely with mankind⁹ yet without sin.¹⁰ Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness.¹¹

Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God.¹² In His death on the cross He made provision for the redemption

of men from sin.¹³ His death was voluntary,¹⁴ vicarious¹⁵ substitutionary,¹⁶ propitiatory,¹⁷ and redemptive.¹⁸

He was raised from the dead¹⁹ with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion.²⁰ Our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead.²¹ In the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son²² and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross.²³ Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers.²⁴

He ascended into heaven²⁵ and is now exalted at the right hand of God.²⁶ In heaven, He is now the One Mediator, serving as our Advocate, making intercession for those who draw near to God.²⁷

Jesus Christ will return to receive the church unto Himself at the rapture.²⁸ Returning in glory, He will establish His kingdom on earth and reign for 1000 years.²⁹ The Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind.³⁰ As the mediator between God and man,³¹ the head of His body the church,³² and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David,³³ He is the final judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior.³⁴

Jesus Christ now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.³⁵

¹ John 1:9, 17:5, ²⁴ Colossians 1:19, 2:9 ³ Psalm 110:1; John 10:30-33; 14:9; Philippians 2:6
⁴ John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6 ⁵ Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3 ⁶ Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:34-35
⁷ Philippians 2:8 ⁸ Colossians 1:19, 2:9 ⁹ Hebrews 2:17-18 ¹⁰ Hebrews 4:15 ¹¹ Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 10:30, 14:9 ¹² John 5:30, 8:28-29 ¹³ Romans 3:24; Hebrews 7:25-27; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 3:18 ¹⁴ John 10:14-15, 17-18 ¹⁵ Romans 5:8, 6:4; Galatians 2:20 ¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18
¹⁷ Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2 ¹⁸ Romans 3:24; Titus 2:14 ¹⁹ Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:6-7 ²⁰ John 20:16, 19-20, 26; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8 ²¹ Romans 4:23-25, 5:10, 18 ²² Romans 4:25 ²³ Acts 2:32-36 ²⁴ John 5:25-29; Romans 4:25, 6:3-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23 ²⁵ Acts 1:9 ²⁶ Acts 2:34; Hebrews 1:3, 10:12 ²⁷ Hebrews 7:25, 9:15, 24; 1 John 2:1 ²⁸ Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ²⁹ Revelation 20:6 ³⁰ Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:22-23; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15 ³¹ 1 Timothy 2:5 ³² Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18 ³³ Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 1:31-33 ³⁴ Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-3; Revelation 20:11-15 ³⁵ Romans 8:10; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:27

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a divine person possessing all the attributes of deity including personality,¹ intellect,² emotions,³ will,⁴ eternity,⁵ omnipresence,⁶ omniscience,⁷ omnipotence,⁸ and truthfulness.⁹ In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son.¹⁰

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind.¹¹ We recognize His sovereign activity in creation,¹² the incarnation,¹³ the written revelation,¹⁴ and the work of salvation.¹⁵

A unique work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost¹⁶ when He came from the Father as promised by Christ¹⁷ to initiate¹⁸ the building of the body of Christ.¹⁹ The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor those He gifts by ostentatious displays,²⁰ but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith.²¹ He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment,²² effects regeneration,²³ and baptizes all believers into the body of Christ.²⁴ His presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer into full redemption of their body.²⁵

The Holy Spirit bestows the spiritual gifts²⁶ by which believers serve God through His church²⁷ for the perfecting of the saints today.²⁸ Gifts such as speaking in tongues, prophecy and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles and prophets as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers.²⁹ The Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible.³⁰ Through illumination, He enables men to understand truth.³¹ He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship,³² evangelism,³³ and service.³⁴

The Holy Spirit permanently indwells the believer.³⁵ He sanctifies,³⁶ instructs,³⁷ empowers them for service,³⁸ and seals them unto the day of redemption.³⁹ It is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled by the Spirit.⁴⁰

¹John 14:26, 16:13 ²1 Corinthians 2:10-13 ³Ephesians 4:30 ⁴1 Corinthians 12:11 ⁵Hebrews 9:14
⁶Psalms 139:7-10 ⁷Isaiah 40:13-14 ⁸Romans 15:13 ⁹John 16:13 ¹⁰Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4;
16:6-7; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 10:15-17 ¹¹John 16:8-11

¹²Genesis 1:2, 26 ¹³Matthew 1:18 ¹⁴2 Peter 1:20-21 ¹⁵John 3:5-7 ¹⁶Acts 2:4 ¹⁷John 14:16-17; 15:26 ¹⁸John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8 ¹⁹Ephesians 2:22 ²⁰1 Corinthians 12:4-11 ²¹2 Corinthians 3:18 ²²John 16:8 ²³Titus 3:5 ²⁴1 Corinthians 12:13 ²⁵Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 John 4:13 ²⁶1 Corinthians 12:4-11 ²⁷Acts 2:4; Ephesians 2:22 ²⁸Ephesians 4:7-16 ²⁹1 Corinthians 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:19-20; 3:4-5; Hebrews 2:1-4 ³⁰John 16:13; 2 Peter 1:20-21 ³¹1 Corinthians 2:14-16 ³²Ephesians 5:18-20 ³³1 Peter 4:10-11 ³⁴Acts 1:8 ³⁵Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16 ³⁶Galatians 4:6 ³⁷1 John 2:27 ³⁸2 Corinthians 3:6 ³⁹Ephesians 1:13 ⁴⁰Ephesians 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

Man

God created man for His own glory.¹ Man was directly and immediately created by the special act of God, in His own image and likeness, and is the crowning work of His creation.² In the beginning man was innocent of sin³ and was endowed by his Creator with intelligence,⁴ volition,⁵ and moral responsibility to God.⁶ God provided everything necessary for man to glorify God enjoy God's fellowship and live his life in the will of God.⁷

By his free choice man sinned against God⁸ and brought sin into the human race.⁹ In Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God,¹⁰ man lost his innocence;¹¹ incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death;¹² became subject to the wrath of God;¹³ and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God.¹⁴ All men are sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration.¹⁵ Man is spiritually dead in his sins and is incapable of saving himself; therefore salvation is wholly of God's grace.¹⁶

¹Isaiah 43:7 ²Genesis 1:26-31; Genesis 2:7; Psalm 8:5; James 3:9 ³Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 7:29 ⁴Genesis 2:19-20 ⁵Genesis 2:16-17, 3:6 ⁶Romans 1:18-20 ⁷Genesis 1:31 ⁸Genesis 3:6 ⁹Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 ¹⁰Genesis 2:16-17 ¹¹Genesis 3:7-8; Romans 5:18-19 ¹²Genesis 2:16-17; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1 ¹³Genesis 3:16-24; John 3:36; Ephesians 2:3 ¹⁴Genesis 6:5; Job 14:4; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:19, 6:44 ¹⁵Psalms 14:1-3; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:3 ¹⁶Ephesians 2:1-9

Salvation

Salvation is the redemption of the whole man, involving both his immaterial soul¹ and material body.² Salvation is offered freely³ to all who believe in Jesus Christ,⁴ who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer.⁵ Salvation is wholly of God by grace and not on

the basis of human merit or works.⁶ In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration,⁷ sanctification,⁸ and glorification.⁹

¹ James 1:21, 5:20 ² 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 ³ Romans 5:15-17, Ephesians 2:8 ⁴ John 1:12, Acts 16:31 ⁵ Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 9:12, 1 Peter 1:18-19 ⁶ Romans 3:28, Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9 ⁷ Ephesians 2:5 ⁸ 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Peter 1:1-2 ⁹ Romans 8:30, 2 Timothy 2:10

Election

Election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies.¹

Sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust in Christ.² Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines.³ All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith and all who come in faith the Father will receive.⁴

The unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will,⁵ but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy.⁶

Election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love.⁷ This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁸ God's sovereign election excludes boasting⁹ and promotes humility.¹⁰

¹ Matthew 25:34, Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2 ² Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17 ³ Ephesians 1:5, Philippians 2:13, Colossians 1:19-20 ⁴ John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48 ⁵ John 1:12-13; Ephesians 1:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2 ⁶ Titus 3:4-7 ⁷ Romans 9:11-16 ⁸ Matthew 11:25-28; John 5:19-20; 2 Timothy 1:9 ⁹ 1 Corinthians 1:29-31; Ephesians 1:9 ¹⁰ Romans 9:20-21

Justification

Justification before God is an act of God¹ by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins² and confess Him as sovereign Lord.³ This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man,⁴ it's a gift of God's grace,⁵ and involves the placing of our sins on Christ⁶ and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us.⁷ By this means God is enabled to be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.⁸ Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.⁹

¹ Romans 8:33 ² Acts 2:38; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6–7 ³ Romans 10:9–10; 1 Corinthians 12:3 ⁴ Galatians 2:16; Titus 3:5 ⁵ Romans 3:25 ⁶ Isaiah 53:6; Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24 ⁷ Romans 4:5–8; 2 Corinthians 5:21 ⁸ Romans 3:26 ⁹ Isaiah 61:10; Romans 5:1

Sanctification

Through justification, every believer is declared to be just and holy and thus is sanctified (set apart from sin) unto God.¹ By this sanctification, the believer is identified as a "saint," and that identification has to do with the believer's position in God's eyes, not with his present walk.²

This instantaneous work of sanctification should not be confused with the Holy Spirit's work of progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the obedience to the Word of God.³ By the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is enabled to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.⁴ Furthermore, any person who shows no evidence of the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work in their life has no claim to genuine faith.⁵

Every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.⁶ It is the believer's responsibility to actively appropriate the resources provided by God's Spirit through God's Word in order to overcome the sinful patterns in their lives.⁷ The struggle with the sinful flesh will stay with the believer all through

this earthly life and is never completely ended.⁸
Therefore, all claims to the eradication of sin in this life
are unscriptural.⁹

¹ Acts 20:32; Hebrews 10:10 ² 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11 ³ John 17:17; Romans 6:17-22 ⁴ 2
Corinthians 3:18 ⁵ Romans 8:12-14; 1 John 3:5-9 ⁶ Galatians 5:16-24 ⁷ John 17:17; Ephesians
4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16 ⁸ Colossians 3:3-4; 1 John 3:2-3 ⁹ 1 John 1:8-2:1

Regeneration

Regeneration, or new birth, is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit whereby man, who is dead in sin, is made alive and becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.¹ Regeneration is a work of God's grace by which the divine nature is given.² It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God.³ As a result of the Spirit's work, the sinner repents and responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation.⁴ Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct.⁵ Good works will its proper evidence and fruit.⁶

¹ 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:5 ² Titus 3:5; 2 Peter 1:4 ³ John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:23 ⁴ Ezekiel
11:19; John 1:13 ⁵ Luke 3:8; Galatians 5:22-23 ⁶ Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:14

Repentance

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God.¹ Faith is the response to the call of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.² Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ.³

¹ Isaiah 45:22; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 ² 2 Chronicles 7:14; James 4:9-10 ³ John 3:36; 5:24; Acts
3:19; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:25-26

Preservation

Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit,¹ will progress in sanctification² and shall persevere to the end.³ Although believers may fall into sin,⁴ whereby they grieve the Spirit,⁵ impair their graces and comforts,⁶ bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal chastisements on themselves,⁷ they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.⁸

¹ 1 Corinthians 6:11 ² 2 Corinthians 7:1 ³ John 6:37-40; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Philippians 1:6 ⁴ 1 John 2:1 ⁵ Ephesians 4:30 ⁶ 1 Corinthians 3:9-15 ⁷ Hebrews 12:1-6 ⁸ John 10:27-29; Romans 5:9-10; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 1:3-5

Glorification

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed when they will be separated from the presence and the power of sin forever.¹ The souls of believers who have already died are alive with Christ in heaven.² They will receive new bodies at the resurrection and rapture of the church, when those alive on earth will have their bodies transformed.³ The believers new body will be like Christ's after His resurrection, and will be redesigned and adapted for heaven.⁴ All believers will receive a glorified body after the likeness of Christ's resurrected body⁵ at the time of their resurrection⁶ or at the rapture of the church.⁷

¹ Romans 8:30; Philippians 3:20-21 ² Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8 ³ Romans 8:18-23; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:16 ⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:42-43; 1 John 3:2 ⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:42-54; 1 John 3:2 ⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:22-24; Revelation 20:4-5 ⁷ 1 Thessalonians 4:16

The Church

All who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized, that is placed, by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church,¹ the bride of Christ,² of which Christ is the head.³

The formation of the church, which brought Jews and Gentiles into one body under Christ, constitutes one "new" man in Christ, a work of God that began after the coming of Christ.⁴ That formation began on the Day of Pentecost⁵ and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture.⁶

The church is thus a unique spiritual organism, distinct from Israel,⁷ a mystery not revealed until this age.⁸

The establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures.⁹ The members of the one scriptural body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies.¹⁰

The one supreme authority for the church is Christ and the church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures.¹¹ The biblically designated leadership under Christ and over the assembly are elders (who are also called overseers, bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers).¹² God's design is that these elders be males¹³ and that each church be lead by a plurality of these men.¹⁴

These leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ¹⁵ and have His authority in directing the church.¹⁶ The congregation is to submit to their leadership.¹⁷ These elders alone are entrusted with authority but are joined in service to the church by deacons. Both elders and deacons must be tested in order to validate their biblical qualifications.¹⁸

An importance is to be placed in the church on discipleship.¹⁹ This discipleship encompasses mutual accountability within the body and discipline for sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture.²⁰

The local church is autonomous, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations.²¹ It is scriptural for true churches, under the oversight of their elders, to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith.²²

The purpose of the church is to glorify God.²³ It accomplishes that purpose as it fulfills God's will by

building itself up in the faith,²⁴ by instruction of the Word,²⁵ by maintaining unity in fellowship,²⁶ by keeping the ordinances,²⁷ by the ministry of their individual gifts,²⁸ and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world.²⁹

It is God Who, by His Spirit, gives the church spiritual gifts to accomplish His purpose in the world.³⁰ First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry³¹ and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ.³²

There were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message;³³ and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another.³⁴ With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message.³⁵ Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan to deceive even believers.³⁶ The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification.³⁷

No one possesses the gift of healing today but God does hear and answer the prayers of the saints and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted.³⁸

¹ 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 ² 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8 ³ Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18 ⁴ Ephesians 2:14-20 ⁵ Acts 1:5; 2:37-47 ⁶ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ⁷ Romans 11:13-24; 1 Corinthians 10:32 ⁸ Ephesians 3:1-6 ⁹ Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1 ¹⁰ Hebrews 10:25 ¹¹ 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18 ¹² Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9 ¹³ 1 Timothy 2:12-3:1 ¹⁴ Acts 14:23; 15:2; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-2 ¹⁵ 1 Peter 5:1-5 ¹⁶ 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:2-3 ¹⁷ Hebrews 13:7, 17 ¹⁸ 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9 ¹⁹ Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2 ²⁰ Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16 ²¹ Acts 20:28-30 ²² Romans 15:24-26 ²³ Ephesians 3:21 ²⁴ Ephesians 4:13-16 ²⁵ 2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-4:2 ²⁶ John 17:20-23; Acts 2:47; Ephesians 4:1-6 ²⁷ Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42; 1 Corinthians 11:26 ²⁸ 1 Peter 4:10-11 ²⁹ Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:46-47 ³⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 ³¹ Ephesians 4:7-12 ³² Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11 ³³ Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12 ³⁴ Romans 12:3-8 ³⁵ 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 ³⁶ 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10; Revelation 13:13-14 ³⁷ Romans 12:6-8 ³⁸ Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15

Holy Angels

Angels are created beings¹ and are therefore not to be worshiped.² Although they are a higher order of creation than man,³ they are created to serve God⁴ and to worship Him.⁵

Fallen Angels

Satan is a created angel and the originator of sin.⁶ He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator,⁷ and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve.⁸ He is the leader of the angels which he carried with him in his fall.⁹

Satan is the open and declared enemy of God¹⁰ and man.¹¹ He is repeatedly called the ruler of this world¹² who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,¹³ and he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire.¹⁴

¹ Psalm 148:2, 5; Colossians 1:16 ² Colossians 2:18-19; Revelation 19:10; 22:9 ³ Hebrews 2:6-7
⁴ Psalm 103:20-21; Matthew 13:39-42 ⁵ Nehemiah 9:6; Hebrews 1:6 ⁶ Genesis 3:1, 4; John 8:44;
1 John 3 ⁷ Isaiah 14:12-17; Revelation 20:2,10 ⁸ Genesis 3:1-15 ⁹ Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4;
Jude 6 ¹⁰ Isaiah 14:13-14 ¹¹ Revelation 12:9-10 ¹² John 12:31; John 14:30; John 16:11 ¹³ Genesis
3:15; Romans 16:20 ¹⁴ Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Two ordinances have been given to the church: baptism¹ and the Lord's Supper.² Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water³ in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.⁴ It is a physical act of obedience symbolizing the spiritual reality of the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.⁵ Baptism is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the body of Christ.⁶ The ordinance of water baptism imparts no grace.⁷

The Lord's Supper is an act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize and proclaim the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.⁸ It should always be preceded by solemn self-examination.⁹ The elements of communion are only

representative of the flesh and blood of Christ.¹⁰ When we properly share in communion we spiritually participate in fellowship with Jesus Christ and with other believers.¹¹ The Lord's Supper is a command from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself to every believer.¹²

¹ Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16 ² Matthew 26:26-27; Luke 22:19 ³ Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:38-39 ⁴ Matthew 28:19 ⁵ Acts 8:36-38, 16:31-33; Romans 6:3-5 ⁶ Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27-28 ⁷ Acts 2:41, 10:47-48 ⁸ 1 Corinthians 11:24-26 ⁹ 1 Corinthians 11:28-32 ¹⁰ Luke 22:19-20 ¹¹ 1 Corinthians 10:16 ¹² Matthew 26:26-28

Local and Worldwide Evangelism

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations,¹ and to pray for others to join the effort.² At the heart of all fruitful missionary efforts are workers whose regenerate lives shine forth the light of the gospel into a perverse world.³ It is the duty of every child of God to make the most of every opportunity to share the gospel of Christ.⁴

¹ Matthew 28:18-20; John 20:21 ² Matthew 9:37-38 ³ Matthew 5:16; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; Philippians 2:15 ⁴ Romans 10:14-15; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 2:9-10, 3:15

Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; He is the Creator and rightful Owner of all that we have and all that we are.¹ Christians should recognize that their time, talents, and material possessions have been entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others.² According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means willingly, cheerfully,³ systematically,⁴ proportionately,⁵ and bountifully⁶ for the advancement of the gospel on earth.⁷

¹ Deuteronomy 8:18; 1 Chronicles 29:12; Psalm 50:10-12 ² Luke 16:9-13; 1 Timothy 6:17-18 ³ 2 Corinthians 9:7 ⁴ 1 Corinthians 16:2-4 ⁵ 2 Corinthians 8:11-12 ⁶ 2 Corinthians 9:6 ⁷ Philippians 4:10-19

The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society.¹ It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime.² It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church,³ and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.⁴

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image.⁵ The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people.⁶ A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church.⁷ He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family.⁸ A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ.⁹ She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him,¹⁰ has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.¹¹

Children, from the moment of conception,¹² are a blessing and heritage from the Lord.¹³

Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage.¹⁴ Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them,¹⁵ through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth.¹⁶ Children are to honor and obey their parents.¹⁷

¹ Genesis 2:18-25; Proverbs 18:22 ² Matthew 19:3-6 ³ Ephesians. 5:32 ⁴ Genesis 1:28, 2:25; Proverbs 5:18-19; Hebrews 13:4 ⁵ Genesis 1:26-27; 2:21-22 ⁶ Ephesians 5:22-23 ⁷ Ephesians 5:25 ⁸ Ephesians 5:33; 1 Peter 3:7 ⁹ Ephesians 5:22-23; 1 Peter 3:1 ¹⁰ Genesis 2:23-24; 1 Corinthians 7:3-4; 1 Peter 3:8-9 ¹¹ Psalms 128:3; Proverbs 31:10-31; Titus 2:3-5 ¹² Psalms 139:13-16 ¹³ Psalms 127:3-5 ¹⁴ Colossians 3:18-21 ¹⁵ Proverbs 6:20-23 ¹⁶ Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Psalms 78:1-8 ¹⁷ Exodus 20:12; Colossians 3:20; Ephesians 6:1-3

Last Things

Death

Physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness.¹ At death, the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ,² but the soul of the unredeemed passes immediately into Hades.³

All of the dead will be bodily resurrected, some unto everlasting life and some unto everlasting punishment.⁴ The saved will be resurrected to eternal life in two separate events;⁵ the first for those who died after Christ's resurrection and ascension⁶ and the second for those who died before Christ's ascension and during the tribulation.⁷ The unsaved will be resurrected to appear at the Great White Throne for judgment and everlasting punishment in which they will be cast into the lake of fire.⁸

¹ Luke 16:22; Revelation 6:9–11 ² Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23 ³ Matthew 11:23; Luke 16:19-23 ⁴ Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:31-34, 41; John 5:28-29 ⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:23-24 ⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:23, 52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16 ⁷ Revelation 20:4-6 ⁸ Revelation 20:11–15

The Rapture of the Church

Before the seven-year tribulation¹ and immediately after the resurrection from the dead of those true believers who died after the ascension of Christ, there will be a personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ² to translate His church from his earth.³ Between this event and His glorious return to establish His earthly kingdom, Christ will reward believers according to their works.⁴

¹ Revelation 3:10, 4:10-5:2 ² John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16 ³ 1 Corinthians 15:51–53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 ⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:11–15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 4:10

The Tribulation Period

This is the period explained to Daniel by Gabriel as the seventieth week in the ancient prophecy.¹ Immediately following the removal of the church from the earth² the righteous judgments of God will ...(to be continued)