

PREAMBLE

We, the members of *Grace Bible Community Church* do humbly ordain and establish the following articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this church shall be Grace Bible Community Church (aka "Grace in Halsey" or "GBCC").

ARTICLE II

Affiliation

Section 1. We acknowledge no ecclesiastical authority other than our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of the Church (Ephesians 5:23) and who directs the affairs of the church through elders chosen and ordained according to the precepts of Holy Scripture. The elders themselves at all times and in all their activities are subject to the authority of Holy Scripture.

Section 2. The church may cooperate with other like-minded churches in matters of mutual interest and concern. We may seek assistance and counsel of other churches in matters of special concern to us, but the decision of no other church or group of churches shall at any time be acknowledged as binding on this church.

ARTICLE III

Purpose

The purpose of this church is to glorify the God of the Scriptures in promoting His worship, evangelizing sinners, and edifying saints. We are "committed to making disciples for Christ's kingdom" as our motto affirms. Therefore, we joyfully proclaim the glorious gospel of His grace to those in our community and throughout the world and are ready to defend "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3).

ARTICLE IV

Articles of Faith

1. CONCERNING THE BIBLE. We believe the Bible (the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments) to be the verbally-inspired Word of God, written by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. It is, therefore, inerrant in the original manuscripts, an infallible, complete, and sufficient guide for belief and behavior, and having been preserved by God through the ages, is our only and final authority.

2. CONCERNING THE TRIUNE GOD. We believe in one God, eternally-existing in three Persons: *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*, all having the same attributes and perfections, yet so as there are not three Gods, but One, each having the whole of the divine essence, yet distinct from one another, so that the Persons are not to be confused nor the substance divided. God as to His Being is spirit, self-existent, eternal and invisible; as to His Character is most-holy, righteous, just, merciful and loving; as to His Nature, is all-present, all-powerful, all-knowing, infinite and incomprehensible, sovereignly-ruling the universe He has made according to the good pleasure of His will, for the praise of His glory and the good of His creation.

3. CONCERNING THE SON OF GOD. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is fully God, possessing all of His attributes and perfections. At the appointed time, He became fully man, without ceasing

to be God, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, so that the two natures, the human and the divine, while remaining distinct, were inseparably joined in one person.

We believe that, though subject to all temptations that are common to men, He lived a sinless life, perfectly keeping every detail of God's law without failure, thus fitting Him to be the perfect sacrifice for sinful men. In due time, He yielded Himself up to die on the cross in order to purchase redemption for God's elect, dying in their place and bearing the punishment for their sins in order that they might receive eternal life. He was buried, and rose again on the third day, according to Scripture. He ascended into heaven where He now sits at the right hand of God the Father as our Intercessor and Advocate, which work He shall continue until He comes again to receive us unto Himself.

4. CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, the third member of the Trinity, and being fully God, He possesses all of His attributes and perfections. Having been sent by God the Father and God the Son to execute their will in relation to man, He is the effective agent in applying to the elect the salvation which was planned by the Father and purchased by the Son.

Thus, the Spirit convicts and regenerates sinners, indwells, seals and sanctifies believers, spiritually baptizing them into the Body of Christ and imparting to them spiritual gifts for the service of their King.

The Spirit who inspired the written Word of God guides us into all truth by illuminating that Word to our minds and hearts, in order that we might know the mind and will of God to obey it.

5. CONCERNING MAN. We believe that man is the direct and immediate creation of God. God created man in His own image, free from sin, or any tendency toward sin, and endowed him with intellect, emotion and will. Furthermore, God made man morally responsible for his actions and gave him opportunity to exercise that moral responsibility by placing before him a test of his obedience to the law of God. Adam and Eve violated that law by eating the forbidden fruit, and thereby fell from that state of innocence in which they were created.

The result of Adam's sin of disobedience is that he incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death and became subject to the wrath of God. The effect of sin upon Adam was such that he became totally depraved, completely unable and unwilling to remedy his condition, or of choosing or doing that which is pleasing to God.

We believe that Adam was the representative and head of the entire human race, and that when he fell, we fell in him according to Scripture, and thus the guilt of his sin is imputed to all his descendants, and the corruption of his nature is transmitted by birth to them, our Lord Jesus Christ being the sole exception.

From this inherent depravity of nature issue forth sinful thoughts, motives and actions, so that we are sinners both by nature and by choice.

6. CONCERNING THE ELECT OF GOD. We believe that before the foundation of the world the Father chose, apart from any merit or foreseen faith in them, those whom He, according to the good pleasure of His will, purposed to save, and that this people, called "the elect" throughout Scripture, are saved solely on the basis of the merit and work of our Lord Jesus Christ alone, who shed His blood to redeem them from their sins.

Such people are saved, when by God's sovereign initiative, they are called by the Father into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ, and are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, thereby enabling them to turn from their sins, and place their trust in Christ alone for their salvation. Those thus saved by God's free grace are empowered by Him to live a holy life, which is the inseparable attendant of true salvation, and will ultimately and without exception enjoy eternal bliss in the presence of God their Maker and Redeemer.

We believe that all men without exception are to be exhorted and commanded to repent and believe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that all are responsible to do so. Furthermore, believers are obligated by divine love and command to make every effort to employ God-ordained means to bring men to a saving knowledge of Christ Jesus. We reject any attitude or argument that would seek to promote an apathetic or fatalistic spirit in the area of evangelism, obedience, or service as unbiblical and God-dishonoring.

7. CONCERNING THE CHURCH. We believe that the Church is composed of all those who trust in Christ Jesus as their Savior and Lord, and that this universal Church of all believers finds its visible expression in local churches made up of believers from a limited geographical area. We believe that each church is to be self-governing, and self-propagating, and while it may and should cooperate with other churches of like precious faith, it should also be committed to separation from all apostasy and heresy. It shall be directed and ruled by no external authority, but by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, through the Word of God, as it is administered by elders and deacons elected from within each local church. We believe that the ordinances of the Church consist of the Lord's Supper, which is memorial in nature, and water Baptism, which is by immersion.

8. CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE & ETERNAL DEATH. We believe that physical death involves the separation of the material body and the immaterial soul. The body sees corruption, but the soul, which neither ceases to exist nor sleeps, in the case of the redeemed, immediately passes into the presence of God, to await in conscious bliss the reuniting with and resurrection of its body at the Return of Christ Jesus; and in the case of the condemned, immediately passes into conscious torment until the resurrection on that Great Day of Judgment in which it will be reunited with the body for both judgment and sentencing, and finally cast into eternal conscious torment in the Lake of Fire.

9. CONCERNING THE RETURN OF OUR LORD JESUS & THE KINGDOM OF GOD REALIZED. We believe in the visible, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ to the earth at the end of this age, to judge the living and the dead with finality, and to usher in the fully-realized Kingdom "of Christ and of God", the "home of the righteous", in a universe renewed and forever-free from sin's terror.

(For a fuller expression of our doctrinal statements with accompanying Scripture verses, see our Faith Statement, appended to this Constitution.)

ARTICLE V

Membership

Requirements for Membership. Any person who professes repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, who has been baptized upon the profession of his faith, who expresses agreement with the doctrines and aims of this church, and is willing to submit to its government, shall be eligible for membership.

Procedures in the Reception of New Membership. A person who desires to become a member of the church may apply to the elders and request to be interviewed by them. During the interview the elders will seek to determine whether that person has a credible profession of faith in Christ, has been scripturally baptized, is in substantial agreement with the doctrines of the church, and intends to give wholehearted support to its ministry and submit to its authority.

Any person who requests membership shall have their request made publicly known to the congregation on the Lord's Day, in order to provide opportunity for any member to comment upon the applicant's qualifications for membership. The elders shall take any comments made into consideration when evaluating the qualifications of the prospective applicant for membership. If it is determined in the judgment of the elders that the applicant for membership meets the requirements for membership, he shall be received into membership by public announcement on the following Lord's Day.

Termination of Membership

By physical death. When a member of the church is removed from our midst by death, his name shall automatically be removed from the membership roll.

By transfer. When it is so requested, the elders may grant to a departing member in good standing a letter of dismissal to the fellowship of another church. No such letter may be given to a member who is at the time under the corrective discipline of this church. The elders may refuse to grant a letter of transfer to any church which is in their judgment disloyal to "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3) or which does not exercise godly care over its members.

By exclusion. If a member habitually absents himself from the stated meetings of the church without showing just cause, or if due to relocation he ceases to maintain a vital contact with the church, he may be excluded from the membership at the discretion of the elders. Also, any member who personally so requests may after due admonition be excluded from the membership. In such cases no congregational approval of the action shall be needed; the elders shall simply announce to the congregation that such a person is no longer a member. If an excluded member applies again for membership, the procedures set forth in "Procedures in the Reception of New Members" will again be followed.

By excommunication. According to the teaching of Holy Scripture a congregation must cut off from its fellowship and visible membership any person who teaches or insists on holding to false and heretical doctrine or who blatantly and persistently conducts himself in a manner inconsistent with his Christian profession, or who persists in disturbing the unity or peace of the church (Matthew 18:15ff). The procedure to be followed in such excommunication is set forth in the "Church Discipline" section of this Constitution.

ARTICLE VI

Church Discipline

Formative Discipline. Every disciple (follower of, student) of Christ Jesus must be under His discipline (His instruction and correction through His written word), which is administered to each one through the church, according to 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 and other passages. Mutual submission to one another and to the elders (overseers) whom the Lord has set over His church (Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5) will result in the sanctification of each member individually and of the whole body of the church collectively. There are occasions, however, when failure in the application of this formative discipline makes the application of corrective discipline necessary.

Corrective Discipline. Corrective discipline becomes necessary when heretical doctrine or disorderly or scandalous conduct appears among the members of the church. In all such cases, reasonable efforts must be made to resolve difficulty, correct error, and remove offense through counsel and admonition before more drastic steps are taken (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20). The principles given to us in Matthew 18:15-16 and 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 must be carefully followed in all cases of corrective discipline. When admonition is not heeded, corrective discipline will be applied.

Restoration. It is the duty of the church to forgive and restore to full membership a discipline person who gives satisfactory evidence of his repentance and reformation (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

ARTICLE VII

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

General Statement. There are two ordinances of special significance which our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us to observe, namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Neither of them has saving merit, nor is any grace imparted to the recipient through the water of Baptism or the bread and the cup of the Lord's Supper. These ordinances are intended to be aids to the faith of believers who participate in them, not a means of imparting grace through engagement in the physical act of participation.

Baptism. Only confessed disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ are proper candidates for Baptism, and all such persons should be baptized (Acts 2:28). Believing that Baptism is the God-ordained door of entrance into the visible community of the people of God, we shall receive into the membership of the church only those who have been baptized in the biblical manner, which is by immersion.

The Lord's Supper. Whereas Baptism is the initiatory ordinance by which one enters the visible church and should be observed only once by each believer, the Lord's Supper should be celebrated frequently by the assembled church (1 Corinthians 11:26). While this is a most holy ordinance and should be observed with solemnity and dignity, the bread and the cup of the Lord's Supper are and remain only symbols of the broken Body and the shed Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated by the church on a regular basis.

ARTICLE VIII

Office Bearers

General Statement. Our Lord Jesus Christ alone is the Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18), and He governs His Church through office bearers whom He appoints and who are endowed by His Spirit with the gifts and graces needed to accomplish their work. Office bearers in local churches are of two kinds, Elders (also called "Bishops" in Scripture) and Deacons (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13). It is the duty of the church to seek and discover among its members those to whom Christ the Lord has imparted the necessary gifts for office bearing, and after formally recognizing such by common consent, to set them apart by united prayer, and then to submit to their authority.

Elders. Scriptures indicate that normally there should be a plurality of elders in the local church (Acts 20:17; Philippians 1:1). These are also called "bishops" (meaning "overseers") because they are charged with the oversight of the assembly (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2). They are the "pastors and teachers" given to the church "to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12).

Elders are responsible for the spiritual administration of the church, the implementation of church discipline, and the oversight of the souls of the church's members "as those who will have to give

an account” to God (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:2-3). While every elder should be “able to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2), some will be more engaged in pastoring (that is, private teaching and admonishing) and governing. Gifted men who are not recognized as elders may engage in public preaching and teaching, provided they are godly in character and walk, but the exercise of their gift must be under the direction and control of the elders, as all ministries of the church shall be.

While elders are overseers of the flock, they are themselves members of the flock. Therefore, each elder as an individual is under the oversight of his fellow elders and is subject to the same discipline as are all the members of the church.

The church should endeavor to discover and formally recognize those men whom the Holy Spirit has endowed with the requisite gifts and graces of an elder, but only such men. Thus, when men have been ordained to this office, the church will have the confidence that it has recognized the overseers whom the Holy Spirit has set over it (Acts 20:28). It is evident, therefore that neither the number of elders nor the length of their term of office can be fixed by the church.

The qualifications for a man chosen to fill the office of elder are clearly set forth in Scripture, particularly in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

Deacons. Deacons are responsible to administer the business, secular affairs, and benevolent concerns of the church so that the elders may devote themselves without distraction to their responsibilities (Acts 6:3-4). They must fulfill the duties of their office in cooperation with and in subjection to the elders.

Neither the number of deacons nor the length of their term of office shall be fixed. The church shall choose as many as are needed for the work to be done from among the men who give evidence of having the scriptural qualifications for that office.

The qualifications for a man chosen to fulfill the office of deacon are particularly set forth in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Appointment of Office Bearers. The local church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is responsible to appoint men to the offices of elder and deacon. Each individual involved should have an inward conviction that the Lord Jesus Christ is calling him to the particular office, and the church should recognize that call as it observes in the individual the evidence of the gifts and graces which Scripture requires for the particular office. This is a matter of such gravity that it should be accompanied by much prayerful waiting on God for guidance, a careful consideration of the relevant passages of Scripture, and a dispassionate evaluation of each man nominated to a particular office. These activities are the responsibility of each individual member of the church as well as of the church as a whole.

Nominations to the office of elder and deacon shall be made by any member of the congregation in good standing who desires to do so and submitted to the elders in writing prior to the Annual Business Meeting. All nominations received shall be screened by the elders in accordance with the standards of Scripture for such office and those who meet those standards shall be submitted to the entire congregation for a vote of approval. No less than *a three-fourths majority* of the members present and voting shall be necessary for the election of an office bearer. The elders may, at their discretion, ask for the nominations at other times of the year to elect office bearers.

Following the recognition of an office bearer by vote of the congregation, he shall be publicly ordained to his office at a regular worship service by the prayer of the church and the laying on of the hands of the elders.

ARTICLE IX

Congregational Business Meetings

General Statement. There shall be an Annual Business Meeting of the church for the hearing of reports, the election of officers, and the transaction of such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting. Special business meetings may be called at other times at the discretion of the elders.

Notice of Meetings. Notice of all congregational business meetings shall be given at regular worship services on two successive Lord's Days immediately prior to the meetings. However, in the case of an emergency, a meeting may be called on shorter notice by notifying each regular member by mail of the time, place, and the purpose of the meeting.

Meetings for the hearing of special reports or for seeking the counsel of the congregation may be called on shorter notice, but no vote may be taken or other business transacted at such meetings.

Quorum. The regular members present at any properly-convened congregational meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Voting. All members who have reached the age of eighteen years and are in good standing in the church, may vote on any question properly brought before the congregation. While recognizing that Scripture nowhere expressly stipulates an age requirement or limitation on voting, and that there is the distinct possibility that there will be members in good standing under the age of 18, nevertheless, the nature of voting, which is to express what the mind of Christ is understood to be in particular situations, and the maturity required to discern that mind, both by way of understanding the situation and Biblical principles with which to apply it, preclude, under ordinary circumstances, a person of younger years from being able to vote in a responsible manner due to lack of experience, judgment and wisdom (1 Corinthians 13:11; 14:20).

Unanimity of heart and mind under God shall, at all times, be sought and prayed for (Acts 6:5), but when unanimity is not realized, not less than *a two-thirds majority* of the members present and voting shall be required to make a resolution valid.

ARTICLE X

By-laws

The elders shall draft and amend from time-to-time, with the advice of the deacons, such by-laws as they shall deem necessary for the efficient implementation of this constitution; but no by-law which is in violation of any of the terms of this constitution shall be valid.

ARTICLE XI

Amendments

This constitution may be amended by *a two-thirds majority* of the members present and voting at a duly-convened business meeting of the congregation. No proposed amendment may be voted on which has not been distributed to the congregation in written form at least two weeks prior to such a meeting.

On 2 Dec 2018, this constitution was unanimously and formally adopted by official church members and supersedes all previous constitutions.

APPENDIX. A fuller expression of our doctrinal statements with accompanying Scripture verses.

GRACE IN HALSEY STATEMENT OF FAITH

(Taught in Sunday School & Sunday Evening services in 2012

by Pastor Jeff L. Black;

Adopted by the Board in 2013)

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is the perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Ex 24:4; Deut 4:1-2; 17:19; Jos 8:34; Pss 19:7-10; 119:11, 89, 105, 140; Isa 34:16; 40:8; Jer 15:16; 36:1-32; Mt 5:17-18; Mt 22:29; Lk 21:33; 24:44-46; Jn 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Rom 15:4; 16:25-26; 2Tim 3:15-17; Heb 1:1-2; 4:12; 1Pet 1:25; 2Pet 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Gen 1:1; 2:7; Ex 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Lev 22:2; Deut 6:4; 32:6; 1Chr 29:10; Ps 19:1-3; Isa 43:3, 15; 64:8; Jer 10:10; 17:13; Mt 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mk 1:9-11; Jn 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Rom 8:14-15; 1Cor 8:6; Gal 4:6; Eph 4:6; Col 1:15; 1Tim 1:17; Heb 11:6; 12:9; 1Pet 1:17; 1Jn 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

Gen 18:1ff.; Pss 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isa 7:14; 53; Mt 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16, 27; 17:5; 27; Mt 28:1-6, 19; Mk 1:1; 3:11; Lk 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; Jn 1:1-18, 29; 10:30, 38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; Jn 16:15-16, 28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20, 28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5, 20; Rom 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; Rom 8:1-3, 34; 10:4; 1Cor 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8, 24-28; 2Cor 5:19-21; 8:9; Gal 4:4-5; Eph 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Php 2:5-11; Col 1:13-22; 2:9; 1Thess 4:14-18; 1Tim 2:5-6; 3:16; Tit 2:13-14; Heb 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; Heb 9:12-15, 24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1Pet 2:21-25; 3:22; 1Jn 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2Jn 7-9; Rev 1:13-16; Rev 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Gen 1:2; Jdgs 14:6; Job 26:13; Pss 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isa 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Mt 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; Mt 28:19; Mk 1:10, 12; Lk 1:35; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; Jn 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Rom 8:9-11; 8:14-16, 26-27; 1Cor 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11, 13; Gal 4:6; Eph 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1Thess 5:19; 1Tim 3:16; 4:1; 2Tim 1:14; 3:16; Heb 9:8, 14; 2Pet 1:21; 1Jn 4:13; 5:6-7; Rev 1:10; 22:17.

We further believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues, prophesying and miraculous healings were designed by God as sign (or revelatory) gifts for the establishment of the early church, and as such were temporary in their emphasis. We believe that speaking in tongues was never and is not the common or necessary sign of the baptism or of the filling of the Spirit. God does heal miraculously. However, the complete deliverance of the body from all sickness or death is not by the gift of miraculous healing but awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection.

Acts 4:8, 31; Rom 8:23; 1Cor 12:30; 14:22; Heb 2:3-4.

III. Angels

A. Holy Angels

Holy Angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and worship Him.

Lk 2:9-14; Heb 1:6-7, 14; 2:6-7; Rev 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9.

B. Fallen Angels

Fallen Angels are those angels who followed Satan in rebellion against God and are forever sealed in that rebellion. Satan is a personality, having once existed as a perfect created angelic being with God; but he rebelled against God, becoming the author of sin and the cause of man's fall. He is the open and declared enemy of God and man. Although he was defeated by Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, he seeks to discredit and dishonor God, and to deceive those whom God would save, keeping them in bondage to sin. He is also the accuser of the saints. He will be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire.

Gen 3:1, 15; Ezek 28:11-19; Mt 25:41; Jn 8:44; 12:31; Col 2:15; Jude 1:6; Rev 12:7-12; 20:10.

IV. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherits a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that

Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Gen 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3; 9:6; *Pss* 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; *Isa* 6:5; *Jer* 17:5; *Mt* 16:26; *Acts* 17:26-31; *Rom* 1:19-32; *Rom* 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; *1Cor* 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; *Eph* 2:1-22; *Col* 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

V. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, Repentance and Faith

Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. *Repentance* is a genuine turning from sin toward God. *Faith* is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. Justification

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification

Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Gen 3:15; **Ex** 3:14-17; 6:2-8; **Mt** 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22—28:6; **Lk** 1:68-69; 2:28-32; **Jn** 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21, 36; **Jn** 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; **Acts** 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; **Rom** 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; **Rom** 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18, 29-39; 10:9-10, 13; 13:11-14; **1Cor** 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; **2Cor** 5:17-20; **Gal** 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; **Eph** 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; **Php** 2:12-13; **Col** 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; **1Thess** 5:23-24; **2Tim** 1:12; **Tit** 2:11-14; **Heb** 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8, 14; **Jas** 2:14-26; **1Pet** 1:2-23; **1Jn** 1:6—2:11; **Rev** 3:20; 21:1—22:5.

VI. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Gen 12:1-3; **Ex** 19:5-8; **1Sam** 8:4-7, 19-22; **Isa** 5:1-7; **Jer** 31:31ff.; **Mt** 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22, 31; 25:34; **Lk** 1:68-79; **Lk** 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; **Jn** 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45, 65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12, 17-18; **Acts** 20:32; **Rom** 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36; **1Cor** 1:1-2; 15:24-28; **Eph** 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; **Col** 1:12-14; **2Thess** 2:13-14; **2Tim** 1:12; 2:10, 19; **Heb** 11:39—12:2; **Jas** 1:12; **1Pet** 1:2-5, 13; 2:4-10; **1Jn** 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VII. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His

laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are elders and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the offices of elders and deacons are limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people and nation.

Mt 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23, 27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Rom 1:7; 1Cor 1:2; 3:16; 1Cor 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Eph 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32; Php 1:1; Col 1:18; 1Tim 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Heb 11:39-40; 1Pet 5:1-4; Rev 2—3; 21:2-3.

VIII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Mt 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mk 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Lk 3:21-22; 22:19-20; Jn 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; Acts 20:7; Rom 6:3-5; 1Cor 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Col 2:12.

IX. The Lord's Day

Sunday, the first day of the week, is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private.

Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Ex 20:8-11; Mt 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mk 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Lk 24:1-3, 33-36; Jn 4:21-24; 20:1, 19-28; Acts 20:7; Rom 14:5-10; 1Cor 16:1-2; Col 2:16; 3:16; Rev 1:10.

X. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Gen 1:1; Isa 9:6-7; Jer 23:5-6; Mt 3:2; 4:8-10, 23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mk 1:14-15; 9:1; Lk 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; Lk 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; Jn 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Rom 5:17; 8:19; 1Cor 15:24-28; Col 1:13; Heb 11:10, 16; 12:28; 1Pet 2:4-10; 4:13; Rev 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21—22.

XI. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to the Lake of Fire, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever with the Lord in the New Heavens and New Earth.

Isa 2:4; 11:9; Mt 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27, 30, 36, 44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mk 8:38; 9:43-48; Lk 12:40,48; 16:19-26; Lk 17:22-37; 21:27-28; Jn 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Rom 14:10; 1Cor 4:5; 15:24-28, 35-58; 2Cor 5:10; Php 3:20-21; Col 1:5; 3:4; 1Thess 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2Thess 1:7ff.; 2; 1Tim 6:14; 2Tim 4:1, 8; Tit 2:13; Heb 9:27-28; Jas 5:8; 2Pet 3:7ff.; 1Jn 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Rev 1:18; 3:11; 20:1—22:13.

XII. Evangelism and Missions

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. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus

Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Gen 12:1-3; Ex 19:5-6; Isa 6:1-8; Mt 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Lk 10:1-18; Lk 24:46-53; Jn 14:11-12; 15:7-8, 16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Rom 10:13-15; Eph 3:1-11; 1Thess 1:8; 2Tim 4:5; Heb 2:1-3; 11:39—12:2; 1Pet 2:4-10; Rev 22:17.

XIII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deut 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Neh 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Pss 19:7ff.; 119:11; Pro 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7, 11; 15:14; Eccl 7:19; Mt 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Lk 2:40; 1Cor 1:18-31; Eph 4:11-16; Php 4:8; Col 2:3, 8-9; 1Tim 1:3-7; 2Tim 2:15; 2Tim 3:14-17; Heb 5:12—6:3; Jas 1:5; 3:17.

XIV. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly,

systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Gen 14:20; Lev 27:30-32; Deut 8:18; Mal 3:8-12; Mt 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Lk 12:16-21, 42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Rom 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1Cor 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2Cor 8—9; 12:15; Php 4:10-19; 1Pet 1:18-19.

XV. Christian Unity and Associations

Christ's people can, as occasion requires, secure cooperation between like-minded congregations for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such loosely organized entities (or associations) have no authority over one another individually or over the churches as a whole. They are voluntary and advisory bodies at best, usually for a time, designed to direct the energies of a larger group of Christian people in the most effective manner toward a commonly specified goal.

Members of New Testament churches can work together in carrying forward missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom, while retaining their autonomy as independent congregations. This unified effort between Christian denominations is often vital on time-sensitive projects and God-honoring, when such effort involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Ex 17:12; 18:17ff.; Jdgs 7:21; Ezr 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Neh 4; 8:1-5; Mt 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mk 2:3; Lk 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1Cor 1:10-17; 3:5-15, 12; 2Cor 8—9; Gal 1:6-10; Eph 4:1-16; Php 1:15-18.

XVI. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all

human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Ex 20:3-17; Lev 6:2-5; Deut 10:12; 27:17; Ps 101:5; Mic 6:8; Zech 8:16; Mt 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mk 1:29-34; Mk 2:3ff.; 10:21; Lk 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; Jn 15:12; 17:15; Rom 12—14; 1Cor 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23—11:1; Gal 3:26-28; Eph 6:5-9; Col 3:12-17; 1Thess 3:12; Phm 1; Jas 1:27; 2:8.

XVII. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war. The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isa 2:4; Mt 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Lk 22:36, 38; Rom 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Heb 12:14; Jas 4:1-2.

XVIII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is

the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Gen 1:27; 2:7; *Mt* 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; *Jn* 8:36; *Acts* 4:19-20; *Rom* 6:1-2; 13:1-7; *Gal* 5:1,13; *Php* 3:20; *1Tim* 2:1-2; *Jas* 4:12; *1Pet* 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XIX. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. 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. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. 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. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Gen 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; *Ex* 20:12; *Deut* 6:4-9; *Jos* 24:15; *1Sam* 1:26-28; *Pss* 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; *Pro* 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15; 31:10-31; *Eccl* 4:9-12; 9:9; *Mal* 2:14-16; *Mt* 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; *Mk* 10:6-12; *Rom* 1:18-32; *1Cor* 7:1-16; *Eph* 5:21-33; 6:1-4; *Col* 3:18-21; *1Tim* 5:8, 14; *2Tim* 1:3-5; *Tit* 2:3-5; *Heb* 13:4; *1Pet* 3:1-7.