

STATEMENT OF FAITH

(A) The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed, and therefore are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and divine revelation of God to man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only translation used by the Church (**2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 12:6,7; Prov. 30:5,6**).

(B) Dispensationalism

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations--the age of law, the age of the Church, and the age of the kingdom--are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (**Gen. 1:28; I Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25,27; Rev. 20:2-6**).

(C) The Godhead

We believe there is one and only living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love.

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (**Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 14:10,26; Exodus 20:2,3; I Cor. 8:6; Rev. 4:11; I John 5:7**).

(D) The Person and Work of Christ

(1) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (**Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2,14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8**).

(2) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (**Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; I Peter 2:24; Eph. 1:7; I Peter 1:3-5**).

(3) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (**Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; Rom. 8:34, I John 2:1-2**).

(E) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

(1) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person Who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration,

baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (**John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14**).

(2) We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all saved to be filled with the Spirit (**Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; I John 2:20,27**).

(3) We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry (**Rom. 12:3-8; I Cor. 12:4-11,28; Eph. 4:7-12**).

(4) We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing (**I Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22**).

(F) The Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and, that man is totally depraved, and of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (**Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19**).

(G) Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (**John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-10; I Peter 1:18-19**).

Justification

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification; (a) that Justification includes the pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life, on principles of righteousness (b) that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed to us (**Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Rom. 8:1; 5:8; 5:1**).

(H) The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers

(1) We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (**John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1, 38-39; I Cor. 1:4-8; I Peter 1:4-5**).

(2) We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (**Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15**).

(I) The Church

(1) We believe that the invisible church, which is the "body of Christ" and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons (**I Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27**).

(2) We believe that a local church is a congregation of immersed believers; associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers are pastors and deacons with qualifications, whose claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures; we believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that is scriptural for true churches to cooperate for the furtherance of the Gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final. (**Acts 2:41,42; I Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22,23; Eph. 4:11; Acts 20:17-28; I Tim. 3:17; Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23,24; Acts 15:13-18**).

(3) We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (**Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11**).

(4) We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control (**Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1,4; I Cor. 3:9,16; 5:4-7,13; I Peter 5:1-4**).

(5) We recognize water baptism and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the Church in this age (**Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; I Cor. 11:23-26**).

(J) Separation

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God (**Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11**).

(K) The Second Advent of Christ

We believe in that "blessed hope", the personal, imminent return of Christ Who will rapture His Church prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation Christ will **personally** and visibly return, with His saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom which was promised to the Nation of Israel (**Psalms 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; I Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6**).

(L) The Eternal State

(1) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (**Matt. 25:46; John 5:28,29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13**).

(2) We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (**Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; I Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6**).

(3) We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to

be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment (**Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15**).

(M) The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (**Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10**).

(N) Creation and Fall of Man

(1) We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24 hour periods. We reject evolution, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin (**Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11; Col. 1:16,17; John 1:1-3**).

(2) We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but by choice, and, therefore, under just condemnation without defense or excuse (**Gen. 3:1-6, 24; Rom. 5:10-19; Rom. 1:18,32**).

(O) Civil Government

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home; 2) the Church; and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the Church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God (**Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14; Acts 5:29**).

(P) Human Sexuality

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (**Gen. 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; I Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4**).

(Q) Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service (to be defined by the Pastor and Deacons) in the Church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon (**Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; I Tim. 3:2,12; Titus 1:6**).

(R) Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother is acceptable (**Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1,5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44**).

(S) Missions

We believe that God has given the Church a Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the lost at home and abroad and not wait for them to come to us (**Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20**).

(T) Lawsuits Between Believers

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (**I Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32**).

(U) Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that **God** has established the tithe as a basis for giving but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the Church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once they have been made love gifts, however, may be designated (**Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; I Tim. 5:17-18; I John 3:17**).

AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH:

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members.