

Statement of Faith

The vision of Mclean Bible Church is to make an impact on secular Washington with the message of Jesus Christ. To that end, we believe that the church's role is to equip those who call us their church home to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ—to **grow** in their relationship with Jesus Christ and **connect** in Biblical community so that they may be encouraged and strengthened to **serve** in their God-given ministry and **share** the Gospel Message with those who do not yet know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.



Those in small group leadership have considerable influence over the individuals in their care. Small group leaders and coaches are deemed to be “teachers” within the framework of small groups. Thus, for individuals in all areas of small group leadership, agreement with the Statement of Faith is required both in belief and in practice.

*Inspiring group members to become
fully devoted followers of Christ*

Eternal Values

1. The Bible is inerrant and infallible.

“All Scripture is God-breathed...” 2 Timothy 3:16a

2. The Bible is the guide for all faith and practice.

“...and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
2 Timothy 3:16b-17

3. Where the Bible is clear, we will be emphatic. Where the Bible is silent, we must allow people freedom.

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom.” 2 Corinthians 3:17

“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. One man’s faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.” Romans 14:1-4

4. Jesus Christ is God in human flesh.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1

5. All people are eternally lost; salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ apart from human works.

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” Luke 19:10

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works so that no one can boast.”
Ephesians 2:8-9

6. Jesus Christ is the head and authority of the Church.

“And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.” Colossians 1:18

7. All ministry that is effective must be empowered by the Holy Spirit.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

8. God moves in response to our united and personal prayer.

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” James 5:16b

9. The glory of God is the motive of our ministry.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31

Core Values

Recognizing that the Bible is the very Word of the Living God to man, and understanding the priority of knowing and obeying its truth, the elders of McLean Bible Church are deeply committed to studying and teaching it with diligence and authority.

Thus, the central ministry of McLean Bible Church is the continuous imparting of the Scriptures to the people of God that they may know God and serve Him in worship and ministry.

Through our years of study, training, and teaching, we as the elders of McLean Bible Church have come to convictions regarding the major theological truths of the Bible. This section presents those major truths. These are the primary doctrines of the Christian faith and reflect the heart of our teaching here at MBC.

Not just any church can accomplish the mission that we at McLean Bible Church have. In order to successfully achieve our mission, we must be a distinctive kind of church family.

- We must become effective students of our culture.
- We must discover the objections that people in Washington, DC, have to Jesus Christ, the Bible and Christianity. And then we must build a church culture that removes or, to the greatest degree possible, ameliorates these objections without in any way watering down the truth of the Bible.
- In other words, we must be driven by a distinctive set of Core Values.

In this regard, we believe that God has uniquely designed and gifted McLean Bible Church to enable us to carry out our mission. This is what our Core Values are all about. They are the enduring tenets that run deep in the soul of McLean Bible Church. They are the dynamic issues that give shape and definition to our ministry. They are the distinctive and defining values that allow us to achieve our mission.

1. PEOPLE MATTER TO GOD – AND TO US

Jesus Christ didn't die on the cross for church budgets, church programs, church attendance figures, offering plates or stained glass windows. Jesus didn't die on the cross for acreage, square footage or parking-lot size.

Jesus died on the cross for people! It was the value that God places on people which drove Jesus to the cross and which kept him there through all the pain and suffering that was involved.

One of the biggest objections to Christianity among those in our secular world is the way they feel the church treats people. Secular people generally feel that we treat people like expendable resources – which means that we're only interested in what we can get from people. This explains why the most common objection to the church is: "The church is always asking for money!" This is just another way of people saying, "All the church is interested in is what it can get out of me."

At McLean Bible Church, we are committed to being the kind of church that removes this objection by valuing and serving people. Our goal is not to see how much we can get from people but to see how much we can give to people. We don't always get this perfect. No matter how hard we try, sometimes we hurt people and fail them. But when we do fail, we are authentically committed to accepting the responsibility for our failure, to asking people to forgive us, to making things right as best we can and to figuring out ways to do it in the future so that we don't repeat our failures.

2. THE GOSPEL MESSAGE TRANSFORMS PEOPLE'S LIVES

The Bible declares (2 Corinthians 5:17): "If any person gives their life to Jesus Christ, they become a new person; old things pass away, new things come."

Our whole approach to ministry at McLean Bible Church is built around this one fundamental truth. We believe that when a person exhibits a genuine salvation response to the message of Jesus Christ, Almighty God begins to transform their life – from the inside out. In the Bible, Jesus compared this process to that of yeast leavening dough, which happens irresistibly, overpoweringly and dramatically from the inside out. This is why we're not interested in presenting people with clever self-help schemes, or with self-enhancement programs, or with feel-good flattery or psychobabble –

BECAUSE these things cannot transform a person's life. Only the biblical message of Jesus Christ, which leads people into a personal relationship with God Himself, can do that.

This is what we mean when we say that at McLean Bible Church, we don't offer people "religion." "Religion" is a bunch of rules and regulations aimed at helping people work their way into God's good graces. The Bible never offers people "religion" because religion doesn't transform people's lives. Only a personal relationship with Jesus Christ does that, which is why a personal relationship with Christ is what God offers people in the Bible and it's what we offer people at McLean Bible Church.

3. THE GOAL OF OUR MINISTRY IS TO TRANSFORM PEOPLE INTO FULLY DEVOTED FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus' parting challenge to the church as he ascended into heaven (Matthew 28:19-20) was for us to go and make DISCIPLES. Disciples of Jesus are made, not born. Disciples result from a deliberate process of skill training and spiritual formation that brings a follower of Jesus to a higher plane of spiritual dedication and loyalty.

At McLean Bible Church, we're not here to build a monument to ourselves. We're not here to build "Solomon's Temple." We're here to see people not only make a decision for Jesus Christ, but then to go on and become true men and women of God.

This is how we measure our success at McLean Bible Church. We don't measure success by the physical size of our building or the amount of the offerings or the number of people on our staff. We measure success by the quality of disciples we build for Jesus Christ.

4. MINISTRY AND EVANGELISM MUST BE CARRIED OUT IN A RELEVANT WAY

The Apostle Paul said: "I have become all things to all people so by all possible means I might win some" (1 Corinthians 9:22b). What Paul was saying here is: "I figure out some way to make Jesus Christ relevant to every person I meet because I understand that this is the only way I can reach any of them."

We at McLean Bible Church have come to realize that there are untold numbers of secular people in Washington who do not think that God is bad. They don't think that the Bible or church is bad. They simply think all of this is irrelevant — that it has no bearing on their everyday lives.

Most people who aren't followers of Jesus are not truly rejecting Jesus. A person would have to be foolish to reject what Jesus is offering them, if they really understood it. What most of these people are rejecting is the modern church's lame and irrelevant portrayal of Jesus.

Our vision and challenge as a church is to bridge this gap — to help secular people appreciate and understand just how relevant Jesus Christ and the Bible really are! That's why, at McLean Bible Church, we often talk about current events and use film clips and contemporary music. That's why we don't use jargon or "Christianese", but we use language that people are used to hearing in the everyday marketplace. That's why we're always answering the questions "SO WHAT?" and "HOW?" We want people to understand that, as followers of Jesus, we're living in the same world they

are and that Christianity and the Bible work in the world of the 21st century.

5. PEOPLE MUST BE TREATED GENTLY & RESPECTFULLY

There's a powerful dynamic that Peter writes about in his first letter: "Always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks about the hope that lies within you. **BUT DO THIS WITH GENTLENESS AND RESPECT**" (1 Peter 3:15).

This last phrase tells us about a major key to creating a church environment that is able to reach secular people. It tells us that to accomplish our mission, McLean Bible Church has to create a "safe place" for people.

- First, we have to be a "safe place" for followers of Jesus: where we can be real; where we can be honest about our struggles and problems; where we don't have to "paste on the plastic"; and where we can get genuine help and support instead of condemnation.
- Second, we have to be a "safe place" for people who have not yet made a commitment to Jesus: where they can sit and learn and process Biblical information; where they can work through their issues in making a commitment to Jesus; where they can come to a decision point for Christ without feeling pressured, judged, threatened or hurried.

This Core Value is about building a church family where all people can be honest and yet where we will still treat people with dignity, respect and courtesy in spite of their imperfections, doubts and struggles.

This is why we say, that at McLean Bible Church, we're out to be a "Hospital for Sinners, not a Museum for Saints."

6. PEOPLE NEED TO BE CONNECTED TO A CARING COMMUNITY

Simon and Garfunkel sang a song years ago entitled "Like a Bridge over Troubled Water." We believe that this is what God intended the church to be for people: a bridge over the troubled waters of life. God intended the church to provide a support system that helps people make it through the tough times.

We believe that having healthy, caring relationships with people is as crucial for our spiritual survival as food is for our physical survival. We believe that "it took people to make us sick and God uses people to make us well again."

For so many of us, it's when we first experience a loving, supporting, accepting community of Christian friends, that God is able to begin the healing process in our lives. And we not only need a place where we can receive this kind of love and support, but also a place where we can give it to others.

At McLean Bible Church, we try to create this kind of caring community in a variety of ways. But the primary way we seek to achieve it is by helping every person to get connected to a small group. We have thousands of people in a wide variety of groups. But we believe that our job is undone until we get every person who calls McLean Bible Church their home church into a small group, where they can be loved, cared for and supported — and where they do the same for others.

7. EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS A GOD-GIVEN MINISTRY

“Now to each one of us (who are followers of Jesus Christ) the manifestation of the Spirit (i.e. spiritual gifts) is given for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7).

We believe that every single follower of Jesus Christ has at least one spiritual gift. And if every follower of Jesus Christ has a spiritual gift, then each of us has an area of ministry for which God has gifted and designed us. What this means is that God wants every follower of Jesus to use their lives to make a difference for eternity.

But this Core Value also has a bearing for our church family as a whole. God’s plan for McLean Bible Church is that we be a “team.” And in order for us to achieve our mission of making an impact on secular Washington, we need every member of the team “on the field.” We need every team member to be exercising his/her gifts in an effort to help McLean Bible Church achieve the mission God has given us.

This is why we provide ongoing training and development services for the members of our church family in the areas of recognizing and learning to use their spiritual gifts.

8. EVERYTHING WE DO MUST BE DONE WITH EXCELLENCE

As followers of Jesus Christ, the Bible calls us to a dedication to excellence (Colossians 3:23-24). The reason for this is that we are serving the Lord Himself in every thing that we do, from the smallest task to the largest project.

However, this biblical principle also has enormous application to McLean Bible Church if we are serious about achieving our stated mission for God.

Living in Washington, DC, is like being in constant air combat: there are no prizes for second place! When secular people, who are accustomed to this level of excellence in every area of their everyday lives, walk into a church setting and see mediocrity and sloppiness, they immediately judge our “product” to be inferior.

The truth is – we have the best “product” in the history of the universe: a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. In presenting this “product” to people, nothing less than our absolute best effort and performance is acceptable.

It is this kind of dedication to excellence in all that we do that lies at the very heart of the ministry of McLean Bible Church.

9. OUR CHURCH MUST HAVE AN EVANGELISTIC IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY

In saying Core Value #9, all we’re saying is that we take seriously what Jesus Christ told us to do in the Bible. Jesus said to his first followers, who were living in Jerusalem at the time: “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and then to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Jesus calls us to be a “FORCE” in our world, not a “FORTRESS”. And when it comes to being a “force” in our world, Jesus’ model is for us to begin right in our own community.

We believe that it is unacceptable for a church to exist in a community for years and, at the end of that time, to have made little or no impact for Christ on that community.

We believe that it is a travesty for churches to spend many thousands of dollars a year to support overseas missionary work and, at the same time, to expend virtually no energy to reach the people across the street from the church building.

We cannot control what people do with the message of Jesus Christ. But our calling is to make sure that every person living in the Washington metro area has the opportunity to respond to that message. In other words, our mission is to saturate the Washington area with the message of Christ and to do so in language that is intelligible and understandable. And this means the inner city as well as the suburbs.

As a church family, we're not going to be satisfied until every person in the metro area has had the opportunity to hear about, understand and respond to Jesus Christ's offer of forgiveness and reconciliation with God.

Every dollar our people give — every prayer our people pray — every hour our people serve at McLean Bible Church is dedicated to making this kind of impact on our world.

10. TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION WE MUST BE WILLING TO STEP OUT IN FAITH AND TAKE RISKS FOR GOD

One of the most searching verses in the entire Bible is Hebrews 11:6: "And without faith it is impossible to please God." The key word here is the word "impossible." The Bible does not say "improbable" or "unlikely" — it says "impossible."

Now this truth applies to the way church families conduct themselves just like it applies to how individuals conduct themselves. God delights in people who walk by faith.

As one of our staff members said: "If you want the fruit, you've got to be willing to go out on the limb — because that's where it is." And how right he is. No tree has fruit growing on the trunk! But as we all know, going out on the limb demands "risk." In other words, there's no way to exhibit faith without taking risk.

Here at McLean Bible Church, we tell folks: "If you hate risk, you don't want to be a part of this church!" The reason for saying this is that we're always about one nanometer away from total disaster here.

- We're not "foolhardy" — but we are "risktakers" for God.

- We believe in "pushing the envelope" for Jesus Christ.
- We believe that the organizations and the people God uses are always the ones that are "leaning forward in the saddle." And this is the kind of church we're committed to being.

When the Lord shows us something that we believe He's calling us to do for Him, we step out in faith and take risk. And we believe that the Bible testifies to the fact that God's richest rewards are reserved for those people and those church families who are willing to live by faith like this.

CONCLUSION

As McLean Bible Church, this is who we are and what we're about. Our target is to change Washington, DC, and the world — one life at a time!

If you're a follower of Jesus Christ, this is the vision we want you to buy into and become a part of. Life is too short to spend it doing something irrelevant. Becoming a "big shot", making lots of money, amassing lots of power, stockpiling lots of stuff — these are not relevant reasons for living. Changing people's lives and their eternal destinies IS! This is the exciting privilege that God has given us in the nation's capital. We invite you to come and join us in rocking this city for Jesus Christ.

Statement of Faith

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We teach that the sixty-six books of the Bible are the written revelation of God and that this written revelation is both objective and propositional. (Exodus 17:14; Isaiah 30:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13)

Further, we teach that every word of it is inspired (2 Timothy 3:16)...

...and that, because of this, the Scriptures are inerrant in the original documents and infallible in their teaching.

We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. This simply means that the Holy Spirit took and used human authors with their individual personalities and different styles of writing and guided and superintended the process in such a way that they composed and recorded God's Word to man... (2 Peter 1:20-21)

...without error in whole or in part. (Isaiah 40:8)

As such, we teach that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice for the Christian. (Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 2:15-17; Hebrews 4:12)

(Exodus 17:14 NIV) Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

(Isaiah 30:8 NIV) Go now, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it on a scroll, that for the days to come it may be an everlasting witness.

(2 Thessalonians 2:13 NIV) But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

(2 Timothy 3:16 NIV) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

(2 Peter 1:20-21 NIV) Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

(Isaiah 40:8 NIV) The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.

(Matthew 5:18 NIV) I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

(John 10:35 NIV) If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came-and the Scripture cannot be broken-

(2 Timothy 2:15-17 NIV) Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and

We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. It is to be found as one diligently applies the grammatical-historical method of interpretation* under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15).

We teach that the Bible plays an indispensable part in living a dynamic Christian life. It builds up, transforms, encourages, corrects, and protects the believer's life as he or she studies and applies it (Psalms 119:11; Acts 20:32; Ephesians 5:26, 6:17).

GOD

more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,

(Hebrews 4:12 NIV) For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

(John 16:12-15 NIV) "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

(1 Corinthians 2:7-15 NIV) No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"- but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

(Psalms 119:11 NIV) I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

(Acts 20:32 NIV) "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

(Ephesians 5:26 NIV) to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,

(Ephesians 6:17 NIV) Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

We teach that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7), . . .

(Deuteronomy 6:4 NIV) Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

(Isaiah 45:5-7 NIV) I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me, so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting men may know there is none besides me. I am the Lord, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things.

. . . perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing, and subsistent in Three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14) . . .

(Matthew 28:19 NIV) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

(2 Corinthians 13:14 NIV) May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

. . . - each equally deserving the same worship and obedience.

GOD THE FATHER

God the Father, the first person of the Trinity (1 Corinthians 8:6),

(1 Corinthians 8:6 NIV) yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalms 145:9; Ephesians 1:11; Philippians 2:13).

(Psalms 145:9 NIV) The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

(Ephesians 1:11 NIV) In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,

(Philippians 2:13 NIV) for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1-31).

(Genesis 1:1-31 NIV) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning--the first day. And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning--the second day. And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas."

And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the third day. And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made two great lights--the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the fourth day. And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." And there was evening, and there was morning--the fifth day. And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day.

As the absolute and highest Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence and redemption (Psalms 103:19; Romans 11:36).

(Psalms 103:19 NIV) The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.

(Romans 11:36 NIV) For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass and continually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and events (2 Chronicles 29:11).

(2 Chronicles 29:11 NIV) My sons, do not be negligent now, for the Lord has chosen you to stand before him and serve him, to minister before him and to burn incense."

This He does in such a way so as not to be the author or approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; James 1:13) . . .

. . . nor to abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (Ezekiel 18:20; Romans 14:12).

He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, and He relates Himself to His own as their Father (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Ephesians 1:3-6; Hebrews 12:5-9).

GOD THE SON

Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these he is coequal, co-substantial and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit (John 10:30; 14:9).

(Habakkuk 1:13 NIV) Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

(James 1:13 NIV) When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

(Ezekiel 18:20 NIV) The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.

(Romans 14:12 NIV) So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

(John 1:12 NIV) Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-

(Romans 8:15 NIV) For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

(Ephesians 1:3-6 NIV) Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

(Hebrews 12:5-9 NIV) And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!

(John 10:30 NIV) I and the Father are one."

(John 14:9 NIV) Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

We teach that in the incarnation He surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation Christ's divine nature united itself with a human nature in an indissoluble union, and so he became the God-man (Philippians 2:5-8).

We teach that Jesus Christ represents the fusion of humanity and deity into an indivisible oneness (Colossians 2:9).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:25; Luke 1:26-35), . . .

. . . that He was God incarnate (John 1:1-3, 14, 18) . . .

. . . and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God (John 1:29; 1 John 1:1-3), . . .

(Philippians 2:5-8 NIV) Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death- even death on a cross!

(Colossians 2:9 NIV) For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,

(Isaiah 7:14 NIV) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

(Matthew 1:25 NIV) But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

(Luke 1:26-35 NIV) In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

(John 1:1-3, 14, 18 NIV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

(John 1:29 NIV) The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

(1 John 1:1-3 NIV) That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched-this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared

to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

... redeem men (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:7; Revelation 5:9), ...

(Acts 20:28 NIV) Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

(Ephesians 1:7 NIV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

(Revelation 5:9 NIV) And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

... and rule over God's kingdom (Isaiah 9:6).

(Isaiah 9:6 NIV) For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross, and that His death was voluntary (John 10:17-18), ...

(John 10:17-18 NIV) The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life-only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

... substitutionary (1 Peter 2:24), ...

(1 Peter 2:24 NIV) He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

... propitiatory (Romans 3:25), ...

(Romans 3:25 NIV) God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-

... and redemptive (Ephesians 1:7).

(Ephesians 1:7 NIV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

We teach that, upon the basis of the efficacy of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin, declared righteous, given eternal life and admitted to the family of God (Romans 5:1, 8-11; 8:1, 14-17).

(Romans 5:1, 8-11 NIV) Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son,

We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead; and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father where He is ministering as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39-43; Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:25; 9:24).

We teach that by the resurrection of Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of Christ. In addition, God accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross and His bodily resurrection as the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:28-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

(Romans 8:1, 14-17 NIV) Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

(Matthew 28:6 NIV) He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.

(Luke 24:39-43 NIV) Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence.

(Hebrews 4:14-16 NIV) Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

(Hebrews 7:25 NIV) Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

(Hebrews 9:24 NIV) For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.

(John 5:28-29 NIV) "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

(John 14:19 NIV) Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

(Romans 1:4 NIV) and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Romans 4:25 NIV) He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for

our justification.

(Romans 6:5 NIV) If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

(1 Corinthians 15:20, 23 NIV) But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the Church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the Rapture and, returning with His Church in glory, will establish His kingdom in its millennial manifestation (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4-6).

(Acts 1:9-11 NIV) After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NIV) Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

(Revelation 19:11-16 NIV) I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

(Revelation 20:4-6 NIV) I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

As the mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), . . .

(1 Timothy 2:5 NIV) For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

. . . the Head of His Body the Church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), . . .

(Ephesians 1:22 NIV) And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

(Ephesians 5:23 NIV) For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

(Colossians 1:18 NIV) And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

. . . and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), . . .

(Isaiah 9:6 NIV) For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

(Luke 1:31-33 NIV) You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

. . . He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as the Lord of life and the only Savior (Acts 17:30-31).

(Acts 17:30-31 NIV) In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, underived, possessing all the divine attributes, and that in these He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

(Matthew 28:19 NIV) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

(Acts 5:3-4 NIV) Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

(1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NIV) There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working,

but the same God works all of them in all men.

Compare Isaiah 6:8-9 with Acts 28:25-26, and Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10:15-17.

(Isaiah 6:8-9 NIV) Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" He said, "Go and tell this people: " 'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.'

(Acts 28:25-26 NIV) They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: "The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your forefathers when he said through Isaiah the prophet: " 'Go to this people and say, "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving."

(Jeremiah 31:31-34 NIV) "The time is coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

(Hebrews 10:15-17 NIV) The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds." Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more."

The divine attributes of the Holy Spirit include:

Intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13)

(1 Corinthians 2:10-13 NIV) but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

Emotion (Ephesians 4:30)

(Ephesians 4:30 NIV) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Will (1 Corinthians 12:11)

(1 Corinthians 12:11 NIV) All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Co-equality (Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 12:4-6; II Corinthians 13:14)

(Matthew 28:19 NIV) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

(I Corinthians 12:4-6 NIV) There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

(2 Corinthians 13:14 NIV) May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Eternalness (Hebrews 9:14)

(Hebrews 9:14 NIV) How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-10)

(Psalms 139:7-10 NIV) Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

Omniscience (Isaiah 40:13-14)

(Isaiah 40:13-14 NIV) Who has understood the mind of the Lord, or instructed him as his counselor? Whom did the Lord consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding?

Omnipotence (Romans 15:13)

(Romans 15:13 NIV) May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Truth (John 16:13)

(John 16:13 NIV) But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to the world of men. We recognize His sovereign activity in the creation (Genesis 1:2), . . .

(Genesis 1:2 NIV) Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

. . . the incarnation (Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:35), . . .

(Matthew 1:18 NIV) This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

(Luke 1:35 NIV) The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

... the written revelation (II Peter 1:20-21), ...

(2 Peter 1:20-21 NIV) Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

... and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

(John 3:5-7 NIV) Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father, as promised by Christ (John 14:16, 15:26), ...

(John 14:16 NIV) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-

(John 15:26 NIV) "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

... to initiate and complete the building of the Body of Christ, which is His Church (1 Corinthians 12:13).

(1 Corinthians 12:13 NIV) For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:7-8); ...

(John 16:7-8 NIV) But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

... glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:14) ...

(John 16:14 NIV) He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

... and transforming believers into Christ-likeness (II Corinthians 3:17-18; Galatians 5:22-23).

(2 Corinthians 3:17-18 NIV) Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

(Galatians 5:22-23 NIV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher who guided the apostles into all truth as they submitted to God's revelation in Scripture (John 16:13).

(John 16:13 NIV) But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16) . . .

(Romans 8:9 NIV) You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

(1 Corinthians 3:16 NIV) Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

. . . and it is the duty and privilege of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

(Ephesians 5:18 NIV) Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

We teach that the Holy Spirit alone administers spiritual gifts to the Church (1 Corinthians 12:11) . . .

(1 Corinthians 12:11 NIV) All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

. . . not to glorify Himself or the gifts by ostentatious displays, but to glorify Christ (John 16:14) . . .

(John 16:14 NIV) He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

. . . and implement His work of redeeming the lost (Acts 1:8) . . .

(Acts 1:8 NIV) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

. . . and building up believers in the most holy faith (II Corinthians 3:18).

(2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV) And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

We teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11) . . .

(1 Corinthians 12:11 NIV) All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

... for the perfecting of the saints today (1 Corinthians 14:12).

We teach that the confirming sign gifts (speaking in tongues (intelligible languages), interpretation, healing, and working of sign miracles) were evangelistic gifts in the beginning days of the Church for the purpose of confirming the Gospel message (1 Corinthians 14:22a; II Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3-4), ...

... and were not intended by God to be part of normative church worship and service.

MAN

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:27: 2:7, 22).

Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Matthew 12:36; I Thessalonians 5:23; I Peter 1:17).

We teach that the purpose of man's creation was with the divine intention that he should glorify God (Isaiah 43:7; Revelation 4:11), . .

(1 Corinthians 14:12 NIV) So it is with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church.

(1 Corinthians 14:22 NIV) Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers.

(2 Corinthians 12:12 NIV) The things that mark an apostle—signs, wonders and miracles—were done among you with great perseverance.

(Hebrews 2:3-4 NIV) how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

(Genesis 1:27 NIV) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

(Genesis 2:7, 22 NIV) the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

(Matthew 12:36 NIV) But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.

(1 Thessalonians 5:23 NIV) May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1 Peter 1:17 NIV) Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

(Isaiah 43:7 NIV) everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

(Revelation 4:11 NIV) "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their

being."

... enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world.

We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence; incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; Romans 3:23; 5:12; 6:23); ...

(Genesis 2:16-17 NIV) And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

(Genesis 3:1-19 NIV) Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' " "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" The man said, "The woman you put here with me--she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, 'Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.'" To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' 'Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.'"

(Romans 3:23 NIV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

(Romans 5:12 NIV) Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned-

... became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost (1 Corinthians 2:14), ...

... apart from the salvation which is the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:5; 2:1-3; Titus 3:5-6).

We teach that all men were in the loins of Adam and that the sin nature as well as the consequences of that original sin have been transmitted (imputed) to all men of all ages (Romans 5:12), ...

Jesus Christ being the exception. All men are thus sinners by divine declaration (Psalms 14:1-3; Romans 3:9-18, 23), ...

(Romans 6:23 NIV) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(1 Corinthians 2:14 NIV) The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

(Ephesians 1:5 NIV) he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-

(Ephesians 2:1-3 NIV) As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

(Titus 3:5-6 NIV) he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,

(Romans 5:12 NIV) Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned-

(Psalms 14:1-3 NIV) For the director of music. Of David. The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

(Romans 3:9-18, 23 NIV) What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know." "There is no fear of God before their eyes." for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

... by nature (Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19) ...

(Jeremiah 17:9 NIV) The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

(Matthew 15:19 NIV) For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

... and by choice (Isaiah 53:6; James 2:10).

(Isaiah 53:6 NIV) We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

(James 2:10 NIV) For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

SALVATION

We teach that salvation is totally from God, by grace (Ephesians 1:7; 2:8), ...

(Ephesians 1:7 NIV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

(Ephesians 2:8 NIV) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-

... through the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood (1 Peter 1:18-19); ...

(1 Peter 1:18-19 NIV) For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

... not on the basis of human merit or works (Ephesians 2:9; Titus 3:5).

(Ephesians 2:9 NIV) not by works, so that no one can boast.

(Titus 3:5 NIV) he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

REGENERATION

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are communicated (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5).

(John 3:3-7 NIV) In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

(Titus 3:5 NIV) he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of

It is instantaneous and it is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24), . . .

. . . so as to secure voluntary obedience to the Gospel. Regeneration will be manifested by repentance, faith, and righteous living. Good works are its proper evidence and fruit (Ephesians 2:10; Titus 3:8) . . .

. . . and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:18-19; Philippians 2:12; Colossians 3:16; II Peter 1:3-8).

This obedience causes the believer increasingly to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 3:18).

his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

(John 5:24 NIV) "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

(Ephesians 2:10 NIV) For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

(Titus 3:8 NIV) This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

(Ephesians 5:18-19 NIV) Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,

(Philippians 2:12 NIV) Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,

(Colossians 3:16 NIV) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

(2 Peter 1:3-8 NIV) His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV) And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

(Romans 8:17 NIV) Now if we are children, then we are heirs-heirs of God and co-heirs

Such a conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Romans 8:17; II Corinthians 5:17; I Peter 1:23; I John 3:2-3).

JUSTIFICATION

We teach that justification before God is an act of God by which He declares righteous those who believe in Christ (Romans 8:33).

This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16) . . .

. . . and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; I Peter 2:24) . . .

. . . and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (II Corinthians 5:21).

By this means God is enabled to "be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

(2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

(1 Peter 1:23 NIV) For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

(1 John 3:2-3 NIV) Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

(Romans 8:33 NIV) Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

(Romans 3:20 NIV) Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

(Galatians 2:16 NIV) know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

(Colossians 2:14 NIV) having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

(1 Peter 2:24 NIV) He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

(2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV) God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

(Romans 3:26 NIV) he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

SANCTIFICATION

We teach that every believer is “set apart” (sanctified) unto God by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every believer therefore is declared to be holy and identified as a saint. This is not a progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer’s positional standing in the eyes of God: he is “in Christ” (Acts 20:32; I Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; II Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; I Peter 1:2).

We teach that there is, by the work of the Holy Spirit, also an experiential sanctification by which the ongoing earthly state of the believer progressively is brought closer to the positional standing the believer enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17, 19; Acts 20:32; Romans 6:1-22; II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 5:26; I Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23).

(Acts 20:32 NIV) "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

(I Corinthians 1:2 NIV) To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ-their Lord and ours:

(I Corinthians 6:11 NIV) And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

(2 Thessalonians 2:13 NIV) But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

(Hebrews 2:11 NIV) Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

(Hebrews 3:1 NIV) Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

(Hebrews 10:10, 14 NIV) And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

(Hebrews 13:12 NIV) And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.

(I Peter 1:2 NIV) who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

(John 17:17, 19 NIV) Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

(Acts 20:32 NIV) "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

(Romans 6:1-22 NIV) What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be

united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey- whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

(2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV) And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

(Ephesians 5:26 NIV) to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,

(1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 NIV) It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable,

(1 Thessalonians 5:23 NIV) May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this respect we teach that every saved person is involved in a conflict (Romans 7:22-23; Ephesians 6:10-12).

(Romans 7:22-23 NIV) For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

(Ephesians 6:10-12 NIV) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on

The new creation in Christ is set against the flesh. Nevertheless, adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 10:13; 15:56-57).

This struggle stays with the believer all through his earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide victory over sin (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

(1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV) No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

(1 Corinthians 15:56-57 NIV) The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Galatians 5:16-25 NIV) So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

(Ephesians 4:22-24 NIV) You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

(Colossians 3:9-10 NIV) Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

(1 Peter 1:14-16 NIV) As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

(1 John 3:5-9 NIV) But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.

SECURITY

We teach that all the redeemed are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-39; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; I Corinthians 1:8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; I Peter 1:5; Jude 24).

(John 5:24 NIV) "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

(John 6:37-39 NIV) All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

(John 10:27-30 NIV) My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

(Romans 5:9-10 NIV) Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

(Romans 8:1, 31-39 NIV) Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all-how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died-more than that, who was raised to life-is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(1 Corinthians 1:8 NIV) He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Ephesians 4:30 NIV) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

(Hebrews 7:25 NIV) Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

(Hebrews 13:5 NIV) Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

We teach 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 for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

(1 Peter 1:5 NIV) who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

(Jude 24 NIV) To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy-

(Romans 6:15-22 NIV) What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey-whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

(Romans 13:13-14 NIV) Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

(Galatians 5:13 NIV) You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

(Titus 2:11-15 NIV) For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope-the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

SEPARATION

We teach that the doctrine of separation from sin is clearly evident throughout the Old and New Testaments (II Corinthians 6:14-7:1), . . .

(2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 NIV) Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will

... and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness will increase (1 Timothy 4:1; II Timothy 3:1-5).

We teach 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 and worldly and sinful practices is commanded by God (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 1 John 2:15-17; II John 9-11).

receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

(1 Timothy 4:1 NIV) The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

(2 Timothy 3:1-5 NIV) But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God- having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

(Romans 12:1-2 NIV) Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will.

(1 Corinthians 5:9-13 NIV) I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people- not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

(1 John 2:15-17 NIV) Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world-the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does-comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

(2 John 1:9-11 NIV) Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

THE CHURCH

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), . . .

. . . of which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18), . . .

. . . and which is His espoused Bride (II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8).

We teach that the formation of this Body began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) . . .

(1 Corinthians 12:12-13 NIV) The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

(Ephesians 1:22 NIV) And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

(Ephesians 4:15 NIV) Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

(Colossians 1:18 NIV) And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

(2 Corinthians 11:2 NIV) I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.

(Ephesians 5:23-32 NIV) For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church- for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery-but I am talking about Christ and the church.

(Revelation 19:7-8 NIV) Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

(Acts 2:1-21, 38-47 NIV) When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard

them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: " 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them. "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

... and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the Rapture (I Corinthians 15:51-52; I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

(I Corinthians 15:51-52 NIV) Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

(I Thessalonians 4:13-18 NIV) Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

We teach that the Church, then, is a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ (Matthew 16:18), . . .

. . . made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11-3:6).

The Church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), . . .

. . . a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:3-6, 9-10; 5:32).

(Matthew 16:18 NIV) And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

(Ephesians 2:11-3:6 NIV) Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)- remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles- Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

(1 Corinthians 10:32 NIV) Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God-

(Ephesians 3:3-6, 9-10 NIV) that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,

We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:21-23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; I Thessalonians 1:1; II Thessalonians 1:1),

...

... and that the members of this one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (I Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that the one, supreme authority for the Church is Christ (Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18), ...

(Ephesians 5:32 NIV) This is a profound mystery-but I am talking about Christ and the church.

(Acts 14:21-23, 27 NIV) They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

(Acts 20:17, 28 NIV) From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

(Galatians 1:2 NIV) and all the brothers with me, To the churches in Galatia:

(Philippians 1:1 NIV) Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

(1 Thessalonians 1:1 NIV) Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

(2 Thessalonians 1:1 NIV) Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

(1 Corinthians 11:18-20 NIV) In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval. When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat,

(Hebrews 10:25 NIV) Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

(Ephesians 1:22 NIV) And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

(Colossians 1:18 NIV) And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

... and that the order, discipline, and worship are appointed through His sovereignty. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) . . .

... and deacons, both of who must fit biblical qualifications (I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-5).

(Acts 20:28 NIV) Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

(Ephesians 4:11 NIV) It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,

(I Timothy 3:1-13 NIV) Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

(Titus 1:5-9 NIV) The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless-not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

(I Peter 5:1-5 NIV) To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

We teach that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (I Timothy 5:17-22) . . .

(1 Timothy 5:17-22 NIV) The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages." Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning. I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism. Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

. . . and have His authority in directing the Church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

(Hebrews 13:7, 17 NIV) Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

We teach the disciplining of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of I Corinthians 5:1-13; II Thessalonians 3:6-15; I Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16.

(1 Corinthians 5:1-13 NIV) It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast-as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth. I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people- not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

(2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 NIV) In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall

not eat." We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

(1 Timothy 1:19-20 NIV) holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.

(Titus 1:10-16 NIV) For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach—and that for the sake of dishonest gain. Even one of their own prophets has said, "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons." This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth. To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

We teach the autonomy of the local church, 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. We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. However, each local church through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation as on all matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government (Acts 15:19-31, 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

(Acts 15:19-31 NIV) "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath." Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers. With them they sent the following letter: The apostles and elders, your brothers, To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings. We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul—men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell. The men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message.

(Acts 15:20 NIV) Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from

blood.

(1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13 NIV) When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast-as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

(Titus 1:5 NIV) The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

(1 Peter 5:1-4 NIV) To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

We teach that the purpose of the Church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) . . .

(Ephesians 3:21 NIV) to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

. . . by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), . . .

(Ephesians 4:13-16 NIV) until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

. . . by instruction of the Word (II Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), . . .

(2 Timothy 2:2, 15 NIV) And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17 NIV) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

... by fellowship (Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3), ...

(Acts 2:42 NIV) They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

(1 John 1:3 NIV) We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

... by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42), ...

(Luke 22:19 NIV) And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

(Acts 2:38-42 NIV) Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-for all whom the Lord our God will call." With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

... and by advancing and communicating the Gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8).

(Matthew 28:19 NIV) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

(Acts 1:8 NIV) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

We teach the calling of all saints to the work of the ministry (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12).

(1 Corinthians 15:58 NIV) Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

(Ephesians 4:12 NIV) to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

We teach the accomplishment of God's purpose in the world. For the accomplishment of that purpose He has given the Church spiritual gifts. First, He gives gifted men for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:7-12).

(Ephesians 4:7-12 NIV) But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

He also gives unique and special abilities to each member of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; I Corinthians 12:4-31; I Peter 4:10-11).

(Romans 12:5-8 NIV) so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

(I Corinthians 12:4-31 NIV) There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

(I Peter 4:10-11 NIV) Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To

At the moment of spiritual birth every believer receives such a gift or gifts. These gifts are sovereignly bestowed and cannot be sought (1 Corinthians 12:11).

It is essential that every believer discover, develop and employ his or her spiritual gift or gifts for the edification of the Body and the accomplishment of the work of Christ in the world (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

We teach that there were two kinds of gifts given to the early church: temporary confirming gifts and permanent edifying gifts. We teach that the temporary confirming gifts—healing, speaking in tongues (intelligible languages), interpretation and the working of sign miracles—were given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message but gradually ceased as normative church practice as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established (compare Acts 19:11-12; 1 Corinthians 13:8-10; II Corinthians 2:12; Hebrews 2:3-4).

We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today but that God does supernaturally heal and answer the prayer of faith on the part

him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

(1 Corinthians 12:11 NIV) All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

(Romans 12:3-8 NIV) For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

(1 Peter 4:10-11 NIV) Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

(Acts 19:11-12 NIV) God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

(1 Corinthians 13:8-10 NIV) Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

(2 Corinthians 2:12 NIV) Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me,

(Hebrews 2:3-4 NIV) how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

(Luke 18:1-6 NIV) Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither

of every believer (Luke 18:1-6; James 5:16b) . . .

feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!' " And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says.

(James 5:16 NIV) Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

. . . and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will (I John 5:14-15) . . .

(I John 5:14-15 NIV) This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-we know that we have what we asked of him.

. . . for the sick, suffering and afflicted (John 5:5-9; II Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-15).

(John 5:5-9 NIV) One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me." Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath,

(2 Corinthians 12:6-10 NIV) Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say. To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

(James 5:13-15 NIV) Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

We teach that private or personal prayer languages are a misunderstanding of the meaning of I Corinthians 13:1 ("tongues of angels") and that such private prayer languages have no basis in Scripture. We teach that these private prayer languages are not a fulfillment of Romans 8:26 ("groanings too deep to be uttered"). We

(Matthew 28:19 NIV) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

teach that based on Matthew 6:7, prayer should be intelligible and coherent conversation with God. We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism (Matthew 28:19) . . .

. . . and the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) . . .

. . . is the testimony of a believer showing forth in solemn and beautiful emblem his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin, and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11).

It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes (1 Corinthians 11:26) . . .

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26 NIV) For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

(Acts 8:36-39 NIV) As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

(Romans 6:1-11 NIV) What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

(Acts 2:41-42 NIV) Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

(1 Corinthians 11:26 NIV) For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

... and should always be preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28).

We teach that while Christ's flesh and blood are not actually present, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshiping with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

ANGELS

HOLY ANGELS

We teach that angels are created beings and, therefore, are not to be worshipped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man (Hebrews 2:7),...

... they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; Revelation 5:11; 19:10; 22:8-9).

(1 Corinthians 11:28 NIV) A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

(1 Corinthians 10:16 NIV) Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

(Hebrews 2:7 NIV) You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor

(Luke 2:13-14 NIV) Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

(Hebrews 1:6-7, 14 NIV) And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire." Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

(Revelation 5:11 NIV) Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.

(Revelation 19:10 NIV) At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

(Revelation 22:8-9 NIV) I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

FALLEN ANGELS

We teach that Satan is a created angel (Ezekiel 28:13-15) . . .

(Ezekiel 28:13-15 NIV) You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.

. . . and the author of sin (Ezekiel 28:15-16; 1 John 3:8).

(Ezekiel 28:15-16 NIV) You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones.

(1 John 3:8 NIV) He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:14-18), . . .

(Isaiah 14:12-15 NIV) How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.

(Ezekiel 28:14-18 NIV) You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. By your many sins and dishonest trade you have desecrated your sanctuaries. So I made a fire come out from you, and it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching.

. . . involving numerous angels in his fall (2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 12:9) . . .

(2 Peter 2:4 NIV) For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;

(Revelation 12:9 NIV) The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

. . . and introducing sin into the human race (Romans 5:12) . . .

(Romans 5:12 NIV) Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death

through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned-

... by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-6; II Corinthians 11:3).

(Genesis 3:1-6 NIV) Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' " "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

(2 Corinthians 11:3 NIV) But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1; Ephesians 6:11-12; Revelation 12:9-10), ...

(Isaiah 14:13-14 NIV) You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

(Matthew 4:1 NIV) Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

(Ephesians 6:11-12 NIV) Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

(Revelation 12:9-10 NIV) The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

... the prince of this world who was defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (John 12:31-33; Hebrews 2:14; I John 3:8), ...

(John 12:31-33 NIV) Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

(Hebrews 2:14 NIV) Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil-

... and that he will be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

LAST THINGS (ESCHATOLOGY)

DEATH

We teach that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Matthew 10:28; Luke 16:22-25; Revelation 6:9-11), ...

... that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23), .

..

(1 John 3:8 NIV) He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

(Matthew 25:41 NIV) "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

(Revelation 20:10 NIV) And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

(Matthew 10:28 NIV) Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

(Luke 16:22-25 NIV) "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.

(Revelation 6:9-11 NIV) When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

(Luke 23:43 NIV) Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

(2 Corinthians 5:8 NIV) We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

(Philippians 1:23 NIV) I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;

... that there is a separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21-24),
...

(Philippians 1:21-24 NIV) For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

... and that such separation will continue until the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-15) ...

(Revelation 20:4-15 NIV) I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

... when spirit, soul, and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Philippians 3:21; I Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54; I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

(Philippians 3:21 NIV) who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

(I Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54 NIV) But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. All flesh is not the same: Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor. So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual

body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed- in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

(1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 NIV) For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Until that time, the souls of the redeemed remain in joyful fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. We teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:46; John 5:29).

(Daniel 12:2 NIV) Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

(Matthew 25:46 NIV) "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

(John 5:29 NIV) and come out-those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades where they are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:22-24; II Peter 2:9; Revelation 20:11-15) . . .

(Luke 16:22-24 NIV) "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

(2 Peter 2:9 NIV) if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

(Revelation 20:11-15 NIV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.

The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

... when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29).

(John 5:28-29 NIV) "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

Then they shall appear before the great white throne to be judged by Christ and will be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15), ...

(Revelation 20:11-15 NIV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

... cut off from the life of God forever (II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

(2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 NIV) and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

We teach the personal, bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation (Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13) ...

(Acts 1:11 NIV) "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

(1 Thessalonians 4:16 NIV) For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

(Titus 2:13 NIV) while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

... to remove His Church from this earth (John 14:1-3; I Corinthians 15:51-53; I Thessalonians 4:16-17), ...

(John 14:1-3 NIV) "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come

back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

(1 Corinthians 15:51-53 NIV) Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed- in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

(1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 NIV) For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

. . . and to reward believers according to their works (I Corinthians 3:11-15; II Corinthians 5:10), . . .

(1 Corinthians 3:11-15 NIV) For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

(2 Corinthians 5:10 NIV) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

. . . with sufficient time elapsing between this event and His glorious return with His Church to allow for the judgment of believers' works.

THE TRIBULATION PERIOD

We teach that immediately following the removal of the Church from the earth (John 14:1-3; I Thessalonians 4:16-17), . . .

(John 14:1-3 NIV) "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

(1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 NIV) For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

. . . there will be a time of great tribulation (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel

(Jeremiah 30:7 NIV) How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of

9:27; 12:1; Matthew 24:21) . . .

. . . during which the righteous judgments of God will be poured out (Revelation 16:1-21) . . .

trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it.

(Daniel 9:27 NIV) He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

(Daniel 12:1 NIV) "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people--everyone whose name is found written in the book--will be delivered.

(Matthew 24:21 NIV) For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again.

(Revelation 16:1-21 NIV) Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth." The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died. The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged; for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve." And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments." The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire. They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him. The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done. The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty. "Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed." Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!" Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake. The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath.

Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

... upon an unbelieving world (II Thessalonians 2:7-12).

(2 Thessalonians 2:7-12 NIV) For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

These judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matthew 24:15-31), ...

(Matthew 24:15-31 NIV) "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time. "So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather. "Immediately after the distress of those days " 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

... at which time the Old Testament and Tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged (Daniel 12:2; Revelation 6:9-11; 20:4-6).

(Daniel 12:2 NIV) Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

(Revelation 6:9-11 NIV) When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true,

THE SECOND COMING AND THE MILLENNIAL REIGN

We teach that after the tribulation period Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:29-30) . . .

. . . and establish His Messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth (Revelation 20:1-6).

until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

(Revelation 20:4-6 NIV) I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

(Matthew 25:31 NIV) "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

(Luke 1:31-33 NIV) You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

(Acts 2:29-30 NIV) "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

(Revelation 20:1-6 NIV) And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand

years.

During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel (Ezekiel 37:21-28) . . .

(Ezekiel 37:21-28 NIV) and say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms. They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God. ' 'My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever.' "

. . . and all the nations of the earth (Daniel 7:13-14, 22, 27; Revelation 19:11-16).

(Daniel 7:13-14, 22, 27 NIV) "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.'

(Revelation 19:11-16 NIV) I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the false prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Revelation 19:20; 20:1-6).

(Revelation 19:20 NIV) But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

(Revelation 20:1-6 NIV) And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

We teach that the kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17) . . .

(Deuteronomy 30:1-10 NIV) When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations, and when you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you. Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back. He will bring you to the land that belonged to your fathers, and you will take possession of it. He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live. The Lord your God will put all these curses on your enemies who hate and persecute you. You will again obey the Lord and follow all his commands I am giving you today. Then the Lord your God will make you most prosperous in all the work of your hands and in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your land. The Lord will again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as he delighted in your fathers, if you obey the Lord your God and keep his commands and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law and turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

(Ezekiel 37:21-28 NIV) and say to them, "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms. They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God. " 'My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and David my

servant will be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever.' "

(Zechariah 8:1-17 NIV) Again the word of the Lord Almighty came to me. This is what the Lord Almighty says: "I am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her." This is what the Lord says: "I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the Lord Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "It may seem marvelous to the remnant of this people at that time, but will it seem marvelous to me?" declares the Lord Almighty. This is what the Lord Almighty says: "I will save my people from the countries of the east and the west. I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "You who now hear these words spoken by the prophets who were there when the foundation was laid for the house of the Lord Almighty, let your hands be strong so that the temple may be built. Before that time there were no wages for man or beast. No one could go about his business safely because of his enemy, for I had turned every man against his neighbor. But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as I did in the past," declares the Lord Almighty. "The seed will grow well, the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its crops, and the heavens will drop their dew. I will give all these things as an inheritance to the remnant of this people. As you have been an object of cursing among the nations, O Judah and Israel, so will I save you, and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Just as I had determined to bring disaster upon you and showed no pity when your fathers angered me," says the Lord Almighty, "so now I have determined to do good again to Jerusalem and Judah. Do not be afraid. These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this," declares the Lord.

... to restore them to the land which they forfeited through disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68; 30:1-10).

(Deuteronomy 28:15-68 NIV) However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country. Your basket and your kneading trough will be cursed. The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. You will be cursed when you come in and cursed when you go out. The Lord will send on you curses, confusion and rebuke in everything you put your hand to, until you are destroyed and come to sudden ruin because of the evil you have done in forsaking him. The Lord will plague you with diseases until he has destroyed you from the land you are entering to possess. The Lord will strike you with wasting disease, with fever and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, with blight and mildew,

which will plague you until you perish. The sky over your head will be bronze, the ground beneath you iron. The Lord will turn the rain of your country into dust and powder; it will come down from the skies until you are destroyed. The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You will come at them from one direction but flee from them in seven, and you will become a thing of horror to all the kingdoms on earth. Your carcasses will be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away. The Lord will afflict you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors, festering sores and the itch, from which you cannot be cured. The Lord will afflict you with madness, blindness and confusion of mind. At midday you will grope about like a blind man in the dark. You will be unsuccessful in everything you do; day after day you will be oppressed and robbed, with no one to rescue you. You will be pledged to be married to a woman, but another will take her and ravish her. You will build a house, but you will not live in it. You will plant a vineyard, but you will not even begin to enjoy its fruit. Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will eat none of it. Your donkey will be forcibly taken from you and will not be returned. Your sheep will be given to your enemies, and no one will rescue them. Your sons and daughters will be given to another nation, and you will wear out your eyes watching for them day after day, powerless to lift a hand. A people that you do not know will eat what your land and labor produce, and you will have nothing but cruel oppression all your days. The sights you see will drive you mad. The Lord will afflict your knees and legs with painful boils that cannot be cured, spreading from the soles of your feet to the top of your head. The Lord will drive you and the king you set over you to a nation unknown to you or your fathers. There you will worship other gods, gods of wood and stone. You will become a thing of horror and an object of scorn and ridicule to all the nations where the Lord will drive you. You will sow much seed in the field but you will harvest little, because locusts will devour it. You will plant vineyards and cultivate them but you will not drink the wine or gather the grapes, because worms will eat them. You will have olive trees throughout your country but you will not use the oil, because the olives will drop off. You will have sons and daughters but you will not keep them, because they will go into captivity. Swarms of locusts will take over all your trees and the crops of your land. The alien who lives among you will rise above you higher and higher, but you will sink lower and lower. He will lend to you, but you will not lend to him. He will be the head, but you will be the tail. All these curses will come upon you. They will pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the Lord your God and observe the commands and decrees he gave you. They will be a sign and a wonder to you and your descendants forever. Because you did not serve the Lord your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity, therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, you will serve the enemies the Lord sends against you. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you. The Lord will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping down, a nation whose language you will not understand, a fierce-looking nation without respect for the old or pity for the young. They will devour the young of your livestock and the crops of your land until you are destroyed. They will leave you no grain, new wine or oil, nor any calves of your herds or lambs of your flocks until you are ruined. They will lay siege to all the cities throughout your land until the high fortified walls in which you trust fall down. They will besiege all the cities throughout the land the Lord your God is giving you. Because of the suffering that your enemy will inflict on you during the siege, you will eat the fruit of the womb, the

flesh of the sons and daughters the Lord your God has given you. Even the most gentle and sensitive man among you will have no compassion on his own brother or the wife he loves or his surviving children, and he will not give to one of them any of the flesh of his children that he is eating. It will be all he has left because of the suffering your enemy will inflict on you during the siege of all your cities. The most gentle and sensitive woman among you--so sensitive and gentle that she would not venture to touch the ground with the sole of her foot--will begrudge the husband she loves and her own son or daughter the afterbirth from her womb and the children she bears. For she intends to eat them secretly during the siege and in the distress that your enemy will inflict on you in your cities. If you do not carefully follow all the words of this law, which are written in this book, and do not revere this glorious and awesome name--the Lord your God-- the Lord will send fearful plagues on you and your descendants, harsh and prolonged disasters, and severe and lingering illnesses. He will bring upon you all the diseases of Egypt that you dreaded, and they will cling to you. The Lord will also bring on you every kind of sickness and disaster not recorded in this Book of the Law, until you are destroyed. You who were as numerous as the stars in the sky will be left but few in number, because you did not obey the Lord your God. Just as it pleased the Lord to make you prosper and increase in number, so it will please him to ruin and destroy you. You will be uprooted from the land you are entering to possess. Then the Lord will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods--gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. Among those nations you will find no repose, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the Lord will give you an anxious mind, eyes weary with longing, and a despairing heart. You will live in constant suspense, filled with dread both night and day, never sure of your life. In the morning you will say, "If only it were evening!" and in the evening, "If only it were morning!"--because of the terror that will fill your hearts and the sights that your eyes will see. The Lord will send you back in ships to Egypt on a journey I said you should never make again. There you will offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you.

(Deuteronomy 30:1-10 NIV) When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations, and when you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you. Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back. He will bring you to the land that belonged to your fathers, and you will take possession of it. He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live. The Lord your God will put all these curses on your enemies who hate and persecute you. You will again obey the Lord and follow all his commands I am giving you today. Then the Lord your God will make you most prosperous in all the work of your hands and in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your land. The Lord will again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as he delighted in your fathers, if you obey the Lord your God and keep his commands and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law and turn to the Lord your God with all

your heart and with all your soul.

The result of that disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-25) . . .

(Matthew 21:43 NIV) "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

(Romans 11:1-25 NIV) I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah-how he appealed to God against Israel: "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me"? And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened, as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day." And David says: "May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them. May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever." Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches. If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree! I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.

. . . but through repentance will be awakened again to enter into the land of blessing (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Romans 11:26-

(Jeremiah 31:31-34 NIV) "The time is coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like

27).

the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

(Ezekiel 36:22-32 NIV) "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes. " 'For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God. I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you. I will increase the fruit of the trees and the crops of the field, so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famine. Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices. I want you to know that I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Sovereign LORD. Be ashamed and disgraced for your conduct, O house of Israel!

(Romans 11:26-27 NIV) And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins."

We teach that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11:1-9; 65:17-25), . . .

(Isaiah 11:1-9 NIV) A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him-- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord-- and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand

into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

(Isaiah 65:17-25 NIV) "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. "Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the Lord, they and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the Lord.

. . . and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Revelation 20:7).

(Revelation 20:7 NIV) When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison

THE JUDGMENT OF THE LOST

We teach that following the release of Satan after the thousand-year reign (Revelation 20:7), . . .

(Revelation 20:7 NIV) When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison

. . . Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:8-9).

(Revelation 20:8-9 NIV) and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth-Gog and Magog-to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10), . . .

(Matthew 25:41 NIV) "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

(Revelation 20:10 NIV) And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

. . . whereupon Christ, who is the Judge of all men (John 5:22), . . .

(John 5:22 NIV) Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to

... will resurrect and judge the great and small at the great white throne (Revelation 20:11-12).

We teach that this resurrection of the unsaved dead will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment, they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

ETERNITY

We teach that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan and the judgment of the unbelievers (Revelation 20:7-15),...

... the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God; that the elements of this earth are to be "dissolved" (II Peter 3:10)

the Son,

(Revelation 20:11-12 NIV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

(Matthew 25:41 NIV) "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

(Revelation 20:11-15 NIV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

(Revelation 20:7-15 NIV) When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth-Gog and Magog-to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

(2 Peter 3:10 NIV) But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and

...

... and replaced with a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells (Ephesians 5:5; II Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1); ...

... and that the heavenly city that comes down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) ...

... is to be the dwelling place of the saints where they will enjoy fellowship with God and one another forever (John 17:3; Revelation 21:1-4).

The Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (I Corinthians 15:24-28), ...

... that in all spheres the Triune God may reign forever and ever (I Corinthians 15:28).

everything in it will be laid bare.

(Ephesians 5:5 NIV) For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

(2 Peter 3:13 NIV) But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

(Revelation 21:1 NIV) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

(Revelation 21:2 NIV) I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

(John 17:3 NIV) Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

(Revelation 21:1-4 NIV) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

(I Corinthians 15:24-28 NIV) Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

(I Corinthians 15:28 NIV) When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

HOW MAY I BECOME A CHRISTIAN?

Receiving Christ as your Lord and Savior is the most important decision you or anyone will ever make.

TO RECEIVE CHRIST:

- You must acknowledge yourself to be a helpless sinner in God's sight and in need of a Savior (Romans 3:23, 5:12).
- You must believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross to be the very Savior you have just admitted needing (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24a) and rose from the dead (Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 15:4), having accomplished the defeat of sin.
- You must personally repent of your sins (Luke 5:32; 13:3) and confess Jesus Christ as Lord over your life (Romans 10:9-10), believing that as God He can and will forgive your sins (Acts 10:43) and grant you eternal life (1 John 5:11, 13).

This is a personal decision between you and God, but we would like the joy of praying with you and assisting you in this eternally important matter. If you make this decision or desire to know more about it, please call one of our pastors at the church office or come to the front of the auditorium at the close of any of our worship services. We are here to help.