

What We Believe

THE SCRIPTURES



WE BELIEVE that the Holy Bible was written by human persons divinely inspired. God is its author. In the totality of Scripture God reveals Himself. Salvation is its end. Truth, is its essence. It reveals the principles by which God has saved us, and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true basis for Christian living, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions are to be measured.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That you may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works. (2Ti.3:16-17; 2 Pe. 1:21; 2 Sam. 23:2; Ac.1:16; 3:21; Jn. 10:35; Lu.16:29-31; Ps.119:3; Ro.3:1-2)

Additional references: (Pr.30:5-6; Jn. 17:17; Rev.22:18; Ro.3; Ro.2:12; Jn.12:47-48; 1Co.4:3-4; Lu.10:10-16; 12:47-48)

THE TRUE GOD

WE BELIEVE that there is one living and true God, an infinite, all intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the eternally self-existent, self-revealed I AM, (Isa.44:6; 45:18) the creator and supreme ruler of heaven and earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love. In the unity of His being, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one in divine perfection, and have accomplished the great work of the redemption of humankind.



God is a Spirit. (Jn.4:24) His understanding is infinite. (Ps.147:5) You whose name alone is Jehovah, are the most high over all the earth. (Ps.83:18; Heb.3:4; Ro.1:20; Jer. 10:10)

Additional references (Ex.15:11; Isa.6:3; 1Pe.1:15-16; Re.4:6-8; Mk.12; Rev.4:11; Mt. 10:37; Col.1:19-20; Jn.1:14; Ep.1:22-23)

THE FALL OF HUMANKIND



WE BELIEVE that the scriptures teach that God created humankind, both male and female, *in His own image*, (Ge. 1:27) to share His own life, love and purpose. They were of infinite value to Him. He asked only that they trust His word, but they chose to disbelieve it and that opened the way for deterioration and death. They were separated from God to become the slaves of Satan, and the seed of distrust was bred

into all of their descendants.

So God created humankind in his own image. (Ge.1:27) And God saw everything he had made, and behold it was very good. (Ge.1:31; 2:16; Ac.17:26)

Additional references: (Ge.3:6-24; Ro.5:12; Ro.5:19; Jn.3:6; Ps.51:5; Ro.5:15-19; 8:7; (Isa.53:6; Ge.6:12; Ro.3:9-18; Eph.2:3; Ro.1:18-32; 2:1-16; Ga.3:10; Mt.20:15)

THE WAY OF SALVATION

WE BELIEVE that the salvation of people is by grace alone, through Jesus Christ, who assumed our nature, yet without sin; then, He endured the judgment of our sins when He died on the cross, and He justified us, restoring us to God as though we had never sinned. Being raised from the dead, He now lives as our Representative, Savior and Lord.

By grace you are saved. (Eph.2:5; Mt.18:11; 1 Jn.4:10; 1Co. 3:5-7; Ac.15:11)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (Jn.3:16; 1:1-4; Heb.4:14; 12:24)

Additional references: (Phil.2:6-7; Heb.2:9,14; 2Co.5:21; Isa.53:4-5; Heb.7:25; Col.2:9; Heb.2:8; 7:26)



REGENERATION



WE BELIEVE that regeneration, or the new birth, is the miracle experienced by those who believe that Jesus redeemed them. They receive the impartation of His life and righteousness, and experience a re-creation, a re-birth, a transformation from sinfulness to righteousness, from deterioration to the nature and the life of God. Jesus Christ is accepted by faith and embraced as the source of their new life.

Verily, verily, I say to you, except you be born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God. (Jn.3:3)

Additional references: Jn.3:6; 1Pe.1:23; Jas.1:18; 2Co.5:17; 1 Jn.2:29 Eph.4:24; Col. 2:13; Ro.6:13; Col.1:13; Jn.1:13; 1Co.6:11)

REPENTANCE

WE BELIEVE that repentance is a personal act, prompted by the Spirit of God, by which a change of mind and of will is effected in those who have heard that, because of Christ's divine love, He suffered the judgment of their sins in order to redeem them; and who therefore resolve to turn away from sins and to accept



the righteousness of Jesus by faith.

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Mt.3:1-2)

Additional references: (Mt.4:17; Mk. 1:15; Ac.3:19; Ac.17:30; Ac.20:21; 2Co.7:10; Lu. 24:47; Ac.5:31; Ro.2:5; Isa.55:7)

FAITH



WE BELIEVE that faith is accepting, without question, the fact that God's word is infallible and unequivocally trustworthy. It is an assent of the mind and a consent of the heart, by which the believer is brought into vital relation with God, freely justified, and lives fully trusting Christ for salvation, and it commits the heart and life to Him.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.

(Ac.16:31)

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes. (Ro.10:4)

Additional references: Ro.5:1; Heb.11:1; Heb.11:6; Ro.1:17; Jas.2:23; Jer.17:7; Ps. 125:1; Ps.34:22; 2 Co.5:7; Ro.3:22; Ro.10:10)

JUSTIFICATION

WE BELIEVE that justification is the state of being restored to God, as His friend and partner, as though no sin had ever been committed, because Jesus Christ endured all of the judgment of our sins on the cross. By God's infinite favor, we are regenerated and redeemed as though we had never sinned.

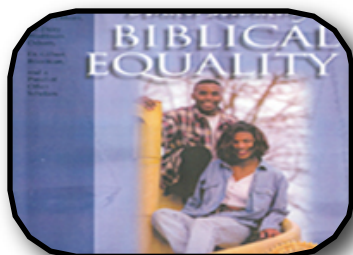
And of his fulness we have all received. (Jn.1:16; Eph.3:8)

And by him all that believe are justified from all things. (Ac.13:39; Isa.3:11-12; Ro.8:1)

Additional references: (Ro.5:9; Zec.13:1; Ac.10:43; Ro.5:1-2,8; 6:11; 1Co.1:30-3; Mt. 6:33; 1Ti.4:8)



BIBLICAL EQUALITY



WE BELIEVE that the Bible teaches the full equality of men and women in creation and in redemption, in the Church and in the family. (Ge.1:26-28, 2:23, 5:1-2; 1Co.11:11-12; Ga. 3:13, 28, 5:1)

A. Enumeration.

The Bible teaches that God has revealed Himself in the totality of Scripture, the authoritative Word of God. (Mt.5:18; Jn. 10:35; 2Ti.3:16; 2Pe.1:20-21)

We believe that Scripture is to be interpreted holistically and thematically. We also recognize the necessity of making a distinction between inspiration and interpretation: inspiration relates to the divine impulse and control whereby the whole canonical Scripture is the Word of God; interpretation relates to the human activity whereby we seek to apprehend revealed truth in harmony with the totality of Scripture and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To be truly biblical, Christians must continually examine their faith and practice under the searchlight of Scripture.

B. Equality in Creation.

1. The Bible teaches that both man and woman were created in God's image, had a direct relationship with God, and shared jointly the responsibilities of bearing and rearing children and having dominion over the created order. (Ge.1:26-28)

2. The Bible teaches that woman and man were created for full and equal partnership. The word "helper" (ezer), used to designate woman in Genesis 2:18, refers to God in most instances of Old Testament usage (e.g. 1 Sa.7:12; Ps.121:1-2). Consequently the word conveys no implication whatsoever of female subordination or inferiority.

3. The Bible teaches that the forming of woman from man demonstrates the fundamental unity and equality of human beings. (Ge.2:21-23) In Genesis 2:18, 20 the word "suitable" (kenegdo) denotes equality and adequacy.

4. The Bible teaches that man and woman were co-participants in the Fall: Adam was no less culpable than Eve. (Ge.3:6; Ro.5:12-21; 1Co.15:21-22)

5. The Bible teaches that the rulership of Adam over Eve resulted from the Fall and was therefore not a part of the original created order. Genesis 3:16 is a prediction of the effects of the fall rather than a prescription of God's ideal order.

C. Equality in Redemption.

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ came to redeem woman as well as man. Through faith in Christ we all become children of God, one in Christ, and heirs to the blessings of salvation without reference to racial, social, or gender distinctives. (Jn.1:12-13; Ro. 8:14-17; 2Co.5:17; Ga.3:26-28)

Section D. Equality in the Church.

1. The Bible teaches that at Pentecost the Holy Spirit came on men and women alike. Without distinction, the Holy Spirit indwells women and men, and sovereignly distributes gifts without preference as to gender. (Ac.2:1-21; 1Co.12:7, 11, 14:31)

2. The Bible teaches that both women and men are called to develop their spiritual gifts and to use them as stewards of the grace of God. (1Pe.4:10-11) Both men and women are divinely gifted and empowered to minister to the whole Body of Christ, under His authority. (Ac.1:14, 18:26, 21:9; Ro.16:1-7, 12-13, 15; Phil.4:2-3; Col. 4:15; Mk.15:40-41, 16:1-7; Lu.8:1-3; Jn.20:17-18; Judges 4:4-14, 5:7; 2Chr.34:22-28; Pr.31:30-31; Mi.6:4)

3. The Bible teaches that, in the New Testament economy, women as well as men exercise the prophetic, priestly and royal functions. (Ac.2:17-18, 21:9; 1Co.11:5; 1Pe.2:9-10; Rev.1:6, 5:10)

4. The Bible defines the function of leadership as the empowerment of others for service rather than as the exercise of power over them. (1Co.11:2-16, 14:33-36; 1Ti. 2:9-15)

E. Equality in the Family.

1. The Bible teaches that husbands and wives are heirs together of the grace of life and that they are bound together in a relationship of mutual submission and responsibility. (1Co.7:3-5; Eph.5:21; 1Pe.3:1-7; Ge.21:12) The husband's function as "head" (kephale) is to be understood as self-giving love and service within this relationship of mutual submission. (Eph.5:21-33; Col.3:19; 1Pe.3:7)

2. The Bible teaches that both mothers and fathers are to exercise leadership in the nurture, training, discipline and teaching of their children. (Ex.20:12; Lev.19:3; Deu.6:6-9, 21:18-21, 27:16; Pr.1:8, 6:20; Ep.6:1-4; Col.3:20; 2Ti.1:5; Lu.2:51)

THE CHURCH - THE BODY OF CHRIST

WE BELIEVE that the church is the body of Christ, consisting of all who accept Jesus Christ as their only Savior from sin, who trust the merits of His sacrifice and of His blood as the only remission of their sins, and who confess Him as Lord and master of their own lives. The body of Christ is collectively all believers, and individually each believer. Christ lives in the believer, and He expresses His ministry of compassion, His love, His life, and His words through every Christian believer, who is His church, His body, regardless of gender, race, age or class.



Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (1Co.12:27; Ro.12:4-5; Eph. 1:20-23; Col.1:18-24)

What? Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? (1Co.6:19-20; Phil.1:20-21)

Additional references: (2Co.6:16; He.3:6; Eph.2:21-22; Ga.3:28; Eph.5:30; 1Co. 12:12-20; Eph.4:15-16; Phil.1:20-21)

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM



WE BELIEVE that those who believe in and confess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior follow His example by being baptized in water.

It is an outward sign of an inward work, a public testimony that symbolizes the fact that, as Christ died on the cross, so we reckon ourselves now dead to sin.

As Christ was buried, so we are buried with Him by baptism. As Christ was raised from the dead, so we are raised from the water with His new life in us.

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Ro.6:4)

Additional references: (Ac.8:36-38; Mt.3:5-6; 28:19; Mk.16:16; Jn.3:22-23; Ac.2:38; 8:12; 16:32-34; 18:8; Mt.28:19; Ac.10:47-48; Ac.2:38; Ac.10:47-48; Ga.3:27-28; Ac. 2:41-42)

THE LORD'S SUPPER

WE BELIEVE that the Lord's Supper consists of bread and wine, as symbols of Christ's body and blood, partaken of by Christian believers, in memory of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. By these emblems, Christians show their faith in Christ's love, in His redemption of our lives, in His acceptance of all judgment which we deserved for our sins and their consequences, and in eternal life through His resurrection.



And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: This do in remembrance of me.

Likewise also the cup after supper saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. (Lu.22:19-20; Mk.14:20-26; Mt.26:26-30; 1Co.10:16; 11:27-30)

Additional references: (1Co.11:26; Mt.28:20; 1Co.11:28; Ac.2:24-46; 20:7-11; Ac.2:42)

SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL HEALING



WE BELIEVE that God created humankind in perfect harmony with himself. It is His will for our spirit, soul and body to be strong. In the Old Testament, God's covenant includes healing for our physical sicknesses and diseases. This covenant was ratified by Christ's ministry of healing in the gospels. The apostolic church taught and practiced divine healing for the physical body. The ministry of the

Church, as instituted by Christ and confirmed by the Holy Spirit through the apostolic church remains unchanged today.

As many (sinners) as received him were born of God. (Jn.1:12-13) As many (sick) as touched him were made whole. (Mk.6:56)

Additional references: (Ex.15:26; Ps.103:3; Isa.53:5; Mt.8:16-17; 1Pe.2:24; 3Jn.1:2; He. 13:8; Jas.5:14-15)

EVANGELISM AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

WE BELIEVE that the mission of Jesus Christ to the world is to provide redemption for humankind and to demonstrate God's love to every person. He commissioned all believers to announce to all people the good news that He died for their sins, that He was raised for their justification and that He lives as their only Savior and Lord. To do this effectively, Jesus



told His followers to be endued with the power of the Holy Ghost.

We believe that the "sign" of being baptized in the Holy Ghost is the same today as was originally experienced when they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance; and that the subsequent "evidence" of this Baptism is the experiencing of spiritual power in the believer to witness of Christ and to give proof of His resurrection through miracles being wrought which are similar to those which Christ performed prior to His crucifixion, showing that He is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. (1Ti.1:15; Isa.53:4-5; 1Co.15:3; Tit. 2:14; Ga.3:13; He.7:25; 1Pe.2:24; 3:18; 1Jn.3:5)

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. (Lu.19:10; Jn.3:17; Ac.5:31; He.7:25; 1Pe.1:18-20)

Additional references: (1Co.15:1,3-4; Ro.10:9-10; Mk.16:15; Mt.28:19; Lu.24:49; Ac. 10:38; Lu.4:18; 24:48-49; Jn.15:16; Ac.1:8; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; Mt.24:14; Ac.2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6; Ac.4:33; 5:12-15; 8:5-7; Ro.15:18-19; He.2:3-4; 13:8; Mk.16:20; Mt. 28:20; He.13:5)

GIVING AND RECEIVING



WE BELIEVE that the primary responsibility, and privilege, of all Christians is to give the Gospel to every creature in all the world. To accomplish this, all Christians are enjoined by the scriptures to contribute financially of their material means for the ministries of the church.

Inasmuch as God created the wealth of this planet for the use and the prosperity of His children who do His will, the financial support for all ministries of His church is to be provided by Christians who: (a) honor the Lord with their firstfruits; (b) who bring their tithes into the storehouse, and; (c) who give of their gifts for the Gospel ministries of the church.

In so doing, God wills that they prosper financially, and that they be in health, even as their souls prosper. God wills that they increase in material possessions, according to His law of sowing and reaping, in the same way that a farmer reaps more than is sown, in order to have more to sow and thus more to reap.

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord. (Hag.2:8; Ex.19:5; Lev.25:23; Ps.50:10)

Honor the Lord with your substance, and with the firstfruits of all your increase: So shall your barns be filled with plenty. (Pr.3:9-10)

Additional references: (Mal.3:10; Lu.6:38; 2Co.9:8; 1Ti.6:17-19; Pr.10:22; Ec.5:19; Ps. 112:1-3; 2Co.9:6; 7:11; Ga.6:7; Ac.20:35)

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

WE BELIEVE that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society. Officials are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in



things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

The powers that be are ordained of God, for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. (Ro.13:1-7)

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of law, for the Lord's sake. (1Pe.2:13)

Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. (Mt.22:21; Tit.3:1; 1Pe.2:13; 1Ti.2:1-8)

Additional references: (Ac.5:29; Mt.10:28; Tit.3:1; 1Pe.2:13; 1Ti.2:1-8; Mt.23:10; Ro. 14:4; Rev.19:16; Ps.72:11;Ro.14:9-13)

THE WORLD TO COME



WE BELIEVE that the end of the world is approaching. At the Last Day, a final separation will take place. Unbelievers will be sentenced to endless sorrow, and the righteous to endless joy and eternal perfection.

The end of the world is coming soon: Therefore, be earnest, thoughtful men and women of prayer. (1Pe.4:7 LB; 1Co.7:29-31; He.1:10-12; Mt.24:35; Mt.28:20; 1Jn.2:17)

This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven. (Ac.1:11; Rev.1:7; He.9:28; Ac.3:21)

Additional references: (Ac.24:15; 1Co.15:12-58; Lu.14:14; Dan.12:2; Jn.5:28-29; 6:40; 11:25-26; 2Ti.1:10; Ac.10:42; Mt.13:49; 13:37-43; 24:30-31; Mt.25:46; 2Pe.3:11-12)

APOSTLES' CREED

WE BELIEVE that the most concise form of the broad transfundamental Christian doctrine is set forth in the historic and revered Apostles' Creed, which has survived since the fourth century, and is regarded as the oldest summary of enduring Christian doctrine in existence. It was pronounced by Augustine as *brevis and grandis* -- brief as to the number of words, grand as to the weight of its teachings. It expresses, in disencumbered clarity, the fundamental essentials of the Christian faith in general, which are as follows:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;

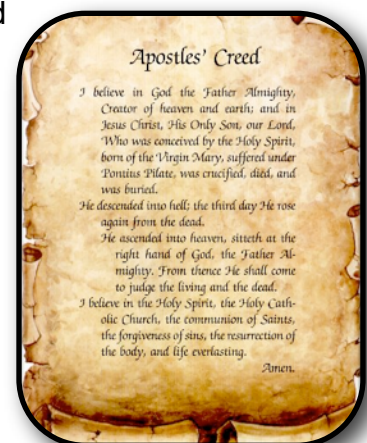
*I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
Born of the virgin Mary,*

*Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead and buried.*

He descended into hades.

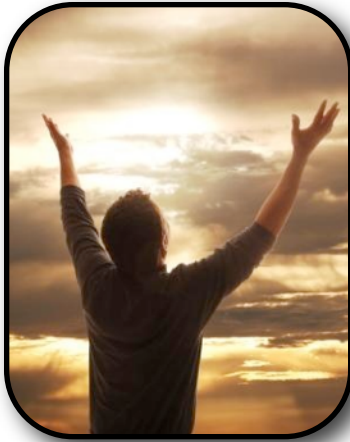
The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God Almighty;



*From there He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the one universal and apostolic Church; the communion of
saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.*

PERSONAL COMMITMENT



HAVING RECEIVED the Lord Jesus Christ, and having given myself wholly to Him, I do now resolve to walk in Him, with love toward others for His glory. Therefore, in His strength, I purpose:

That I will demonstrate genuine concern for others and will take every opportunity to lift and encourage all whom I meet;

That I will enjoy the fellowship of other believers, and will actively identify with a local congregation of Christian believers, in order to observe the ordinances of Christ, to receive instruction and to exercise the gifts which God has given me for the good of others;

That I will publicly acknowledge Jesus as my Savior and Lord;

That I will treasure family worship and teaching at home, and be faithful in scripturally training my children, and those under my influence to show their love for Christ by sharing His life and love with others;

That as I am the light of the world and the salt of the earth, I will practice the awareness of Jesus Christ who is at work in and through me, and allow Him to use my eyes, my hands, my feet, and all that I am to express His life to others;

That I will systematically invest of my substance in the Lord's work, by bringing my firstfruits, my tithes, and my gifts to the church, so that God may prosper me for the expansion of His kingdom as I participate in expressing and propagating the Gospel to people;

That I will in all conditions, even until death, strive to live to the glory of Him who has called me out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Benediction

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (He.13:20-21)