

## **Article III: STATEMENT OF FAITH**

### **Section A: The Scriptures**

We believe that the Holy Bible, as originally written, was verbally inspired and the product of Spirit-controlled men. Therefore, it has truth without any mixture of error. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21).

### **Section B: The True God**

We believe there is only One living and true God and infinite Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love; that in unity of the Godhead there are three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, equal in every divine perfection, executing distinct, but harmonious, offices in the great work of redemption (Ex. 20:2, 3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rev. 4:11; John 5:7).

### **Section C: Jesus Christ**

We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God, the Son (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14).

We believe the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who, by the appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, and honored the divine law by His personal obedience, thus qualifying Himself to be our Savior. Thus Christ, by the shedding of His blood in His death, fully satisfied the just demands of a Holy and righteous God regarding sin. His sacrifice was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place.

Jesus Christ, the Just, who died for the unjust, and bore our sins in His own body on the tree, rose bodily from the dead the third day, according to the Scriptures, and is enthroned in heaven now, sitting at the right hand of the Father. He is coming to rapture His saints, and then to set up the Throne of David and establish His Kingdom. His coming is imminent and will be personal, pre-tribulational, and pre-millennial.

Faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. Repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit, and is an integral part of saving faith (Eph. 2:8; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24, 25; John 3:16; Phil. 2:7, 8; Col. 3:1; Heb. 2:14-17; Isa. 53:4-7; John 4:10; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; 2 Pet. 2:24; John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 2 Thess. 2:6-8; Acts 3:16; 4:12).

#### **Section D: The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the “evil one” until God’s purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the new birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer (John 14:16, 17; Matt. 28:19; Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Gen. 1:1, 3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5, 6; Eph. 1:13, 14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Rom. 8:14, 16, 26, 27).

We further believe that the Holy Spirit equips believers for service by bestowing upon them spiritual gifts. Some gifts listed in the New Testament (such as tongues, prophecy, and healing), however, were temporary in nature, intended for the infancy of the Church, and ceased when the Canon closed (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 13:8-10; Heb. 2:4).

#### **Section E: Satan**

We believe in the personality of Satan, that he is the unholy god of this age, the originator of sin, the ruler of the powers of darkness, and is destined for eternal justice in the Lake of Fire (Matt. 4:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:10).

#### **Section F: Creation**

We accept the Genesis account of creation and believe that man came by direct creation of God and not by evolution (Gen.1, 2; Col. 1:16, 17; John 1:3).

#### **Section G: The Fall of Man**

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but, by voluntary transgression, fell from his sinless and happy state. Consequently, men are condemned sinners, not only by the sin principle within them, but also of choice. Therefore, he is under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Gen. 3:1-6, 24; Rom. 1:18, 32; 5:10-19).

#### **Section H: Grace and Salvation**

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the repentance, faith, and newness of life of the believer (John 3:3, 6-8; 2 Cor. 5:7; 1 John 5:1; Acts 16:30-33; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1; 2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 2:13).

## **Section I: Justification**

We believe that:

- (1) the great gospel blessings which Christ secures for those who believe in Him are justification.
- (2) justification includes the pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life based on principles of righteousness.
- (3) it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood. His righteousness is thus imputed to us (Acts 13:39; Isa. 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Rom. 5:1; 8:1; 9).

## **Section J: Faith and Salvation**

We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation (Acts 16:31).

## **Section K: The Local Church**

We believe that a local church is a congregation of believers, baptized by immersion, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word. Its officers are pastors and deacons whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in Scripture. We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men and the edification of believers for the glory of God. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy, individuals, or organizations, and the one and only head is Christ, through the Holy Spirit. Each local church determines its policy on fellowship with area churches, membership, government, discipline, and benevolence, after careful study of the Scriptures (Acts 2:41; 15:13-18; 20:17-28; 1 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:11; 5:23, 24; 1 Tim. 3:17; Col. 1:18).

## **Section L: Baptism and The Lord's Supper**

We believe there are two ordinances for the local church:

- (1) Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, resulting in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. It is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.
- (2) We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination (Acts 8:26-39; John 3:23; Rom. 6:35; Matt. 3:16; Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 11:23-28).

## **Section M: The Security of The Saints**

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6; John 10:28, 29; Rom. 8:35-39; Heb. 7:25; Jude 1). We believe in the Lord's imminent pretribulational and premillennial return for the Church (See Section S).

## **Section N: Marriage**

We believe in the sanctity of marriage, that it is an institution ordained of God, a relationship between one man and one woman, divinely intentioned to be severed only by death (Mark 10:9; Rom. 7:2, 3; Eph. 5:22, 23)

## **Section O: Separation**

We believe in the biblical doctrine of separation, which encompasses the following:

- (1) The separation of the local church from all affiliation, fellowship, and cooperation with those who deny the true Christian faith.
- (2) The separation of the individual believer from all worldly practices that would dishonor the Savior.

We believe that the church should refuse to be drawn into compromising alliances, even with well-meaning evangelical people, whereby our testimony would be impaired and our position confused (2 Cor. 6:14-17; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 John 9-11; 1 Tim. 4:1, 2; 1 Tim. 6:3-6; 2 Chron. 19:2; Matt. 7:15-20; Acts 20:28-31; Rev. 18:4, 5; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14; Eph. 5:11; 2 Tim. 3:5)

## **Section P: Israel**

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people. While Israel is now dispersed, she will be regathered in the Holy Land and will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ (Gen. 13:14-17; Rom. 11:1-32; Ezek. 37)

## **Section Q: The Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. Only those who, through faith, are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and are sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous. All others who continue in impenitence and unbelief are wicked in His sight, and under the curse. This distinction will continue among men both in and after death, in the everlasting joy of the saved, and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost (Mal. 3:18; Gen. 18:23; Rom. 6:17, 23; 1 John 5:19; Prov. 14:23)

## **Section R: Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the benefit and good order of human society. Its magistrates are to be prayed for and conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 13:1-7; 2 Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:21, 22; Acts 4:19; 5:20; 23:5; Matt. 22:21; Dan. 3:17, 18)

## **Section S: Future Events**

We believe in:

- (1) The Rapture of the Church (1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4: 13-18; Phil. 3:20-21)
- (2) The Judgment Seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10)

- (3) The Tribulation of the Earth (Jer. 37; Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:29; Rev. 7:14)
- (4) The Second Coming of Christ (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Rev. 19:11-16)
- (5) The Millennial Reign of Christ (1 Cor. 15:25; Isa. 32:1; 11:4, 5; Ps. 72:8; Rev. 20:6, 14)
- (6) The Eternal Reign of Christ (Isa. 66:19-22; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21; 22)

**Section T: Contemporary Issues**

We believe men ought to fear God and obey Him absolutely (Prov. 9:10). We believe God and His Word to be the final and absolute authority for how men must live and conduct themselves (Ps. 33:8-11). To avoid confusion, our church makes the following statements concerning certain specific, pertinent issues:

- (1) We believe the Bible teaches that God created the physical universe out of nothing in a literal seven day week (Gen. 1). Therefore, the false teaching of evolution, theistic evolution, the “gap” theory, and the “day age” theory are contrary to our church’s position. Furthermore, the humanistic approach to life, built upon evolutionary thinking, is also rejected as contrary to the Scriptures (Job 38-40:2; Ps. 8).
- (2) We believe the Bible teaches the dignity and sanctity of all human life (Gen. 1), and that God creates and sustains all human life from conception (Ps. 100:3; 139:13, 16) to death (Ps. 48:14). Therefore, the acts of abortion and euthanasia are contrary to our church’s position (Isa. 49:1; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:41, 44; 2 Sam. 1:9-16; 1 Cor. 6:20)
- (3) We believe the Bible teaches the wholesomeness and blessing of a sexual relationship within the confines of a monogamous marital union--- one man, one woman, one flesh, for one lifetime (Gen. 2:24; Heb. 13:4). Therefore, the following sexual deviations are contrary to our church’s position:
  - (a) fornication (1 Cor. 6:9, 10)
  - (b) adultery (Prov. 6:32; Lev. 18:20)
  - (c) incest (Lev. 18:6)
  - (d) voyeurism [pornography] (James 1:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:11; Ps. 101:3)
  - (e) homosexuality (Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:27)
  - (f) bestiality (Lev. 18:23)
- (4) We believe the Bible teaches that marriage, as designed by God, consists of a unilateral covenant between one man and one woman for one lifetime (Gen. 2:24). We believe divorce was never God’s intention for people (Matt. 19:6) and that if divorce does occur, remarriage is not an option for the believer (1 Cor. 7:10, 11; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13). If, however, there has been a divorce and remarriage has occurred, we believe the Bible teaches that each person should abide in the circumstance of their present commitment (1 Cor. 7:20, 27). Therefore, while extending the full privileges of membership, no divorced person or person married to a divorced person shall be eligible for the position of Deacon or Pastor, as these positions are crucial models for the church and society (Lev. 21:1, 7; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12).
- (5) We believe the Bible teaches the sanctity (God’s ownership) of the believer and his

possessions (1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20). Therefore, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and other misuse of God's possessions are to be totally avoided. Instead, the Christian ought to be a good example as a steward, glorifying God in all things (Rom. 12:1, 2; 14:21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Thess. 4:11, 12)

- (6) We believe the Bible teaches the separation of the believer from anything inconsistent with the standards of God as revealed in His Word (Eph. 5:11). We recognize our responsibility to glorify God and be a witness to the lost. This is best accomplished from a position of separation based on our Articles of Faith. This is true for both the individual believer and the local church (2 Cor. 6:17). Therefore, we can have no organizational involvement with the Ecumenical Movement because of the error inherent in such a philosophy (2 Cor. 6:14). Included in this would be those churches in the National Council of Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals, and any independent organizations or churches that have departed from scriptural truths (Rom 16:17).
- (7) We believe the Bible teaches the duty and right of the local church to serve as the final appeal in all disputes and disciplinary matters (Matt. 18:15-17). For one believer to take another believer to civil court without first seeking settlement within the church indicates complete failure in the matter of love and forgiveness (Eph. 5:32; Col. 3:13, 14). Therefore, the members of this church will refrain from civil legal action against other Christians (1 Cor. 6:1-8).
- (8) We believe the Bible teaches that God has given grace-gifts to every believer (Eph. 4:7) for the purpose of building up and perpetuating the church (Eph. 4:12). We believe, however, that certain sign gifts ceased with the completion and authentication of the New Testament scriptures (1 Cor. 13:8), as they no longer had a purpose after that time (Acts 4:29, 30; Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 13:8; Heb. 2:4). We do recognize God's ability to work in miraculous ways at any time, but these instances would not be considered gifts, but unique occurrences.