

STATEMENT OF FAITH

THE SCRIPTURES

The Bible, with its 66 books, is the very Word of God. The Bible is verbally and plenary inspired as originally given and it is divinely preserved in the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Received Text. The Bible is our sole authority in all matters of faith and practice. The King James Version in English is an example of an accurate translation of the preserved Hebrew and Greek texts; we believe it can be used with confidence. We reject modern textual criticism and the modern versions that this pseudo-science has produced, such as the American Standard Version, the New American Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, and the New International Version). We also reject the dynamic equivalency method of Bible translation which results in a careless version that only contains the general ideas rather than the very words of God. Examples of dynamic equivalency versions are the Today's English Version, the Living Bible, and The Message.

2 Samuel 23:2; Psalm 12:6-7; Proverbs 30:5-6; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 17:17; Acts 1:16; 3:21; 1 Corinthians 2:7-16; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Revelation 22:18-19

THE GODHEAD

The Scriptures testify that God is a spirit whose nature is light, love, and holiness; He is infinite, eternal, all wise, all powerful, all knowing. There is only one God, but that God is revealed as three distinct Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is the traditional doctrine of the Trinity.

Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14; Psalm 115:3; Luke 1:37; Psalm 139:1-16; 145:17; 1 Peter 1:16; Malachi 3:6; John 3:16; Psalm 103:8; John 4:24; 5:26; 1 Thessalonians 1:19; Deuteronomy 6:4; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19-20; John 14:16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 5:7; 1 John 3:16

THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, measureless in power. We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all that come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:1; 17:1; Exodus 6:3; Deuteronomy 4:35; Psalm 90:2; 139:7-10; Isaiah 40:28; John 4:24; 1 John 1:5

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The second Person of the triune God is the Son, whose name is the Lord Jesus Christ. He existed eternally with the Father. At His incarnation, without change in His deity, the eternal Son of God became a man through the miracle of the virgin birth. Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He lived a sinless life, performed miracles to prove that He was the Messiah, died a substitutionary death for all men, was buried, and arose from the grave bodily the third day. Thereafter He ascended into Heaven and is presently fulfilling His intercessory and mediatorial ministry. He has promised to return to Rapture the

church age saints prior to the Tribulation and to return to the earth to establish His millennial reign at the end of the Tribulation.

Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 18:11; 20:28; John 1:1,14; 3:16; 8:58; Romans 3:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Philippians 2:6-11; Hebrews 2:9-15; 1 Peter 1:19

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Godhead (Matt. 28:20; 1 Jn. 5:7). He is eternal (Heb. 9:14). He was active in creation (Gen. 1:2). He fashions men and imparts life to them (Job 33:4). He anointed and empowered Israel's judges, kings, and prophets (Jud. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 1 Sam. 16:13). He inspired the Scriptures, imparting the words of God to holy men of old (Jn. 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:11-13; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; 2 Pet. 1:19-21). He convicts the world of sin and draws men to Christ (Gen. 6:3; Jn. 16:7-11). He came upon the church age saints at Pentecost to empower them for world evangelism (Acts 1:8). He regenerates those who believe (Jn. 3:5-8) and seals them unto the resurrection (Eph. 1:13-14). He indwells all who are born again, sanctifies them (1 Pet. 1:2), equips and empowers them for service (Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 12), and illuminates their understanding of the truth. He calls and sends missionaries (Acts 13:1-4).

THE CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of Creation and that it is to be accepted literally and not figuratively; that the world was made in six 24-hour days; that man was created directly in God's own image and did not evolve from any lower form of life; that all animal and vegetable life was made directly and made subject to God's law that they bring forth only "after their kind."

Genesis 1; Nehemiah 9:6; Job 38:4-41; Ps. 104:24-30; Jn. 1:1-3; Acts 14:15; 17:24-26; Rom. 1:18-21; Col. 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-3; 11:3

THE FALL OF MAN

By disobedience to the revealed will of God, man became sinful and subject to the power of the Devil. When Adam and Eve sinned, their hearts became fallen and corrupted by sin, and this corrupt nature has been transmitted to the entire human race so that man is not only a sinner by nature and practice, but is guilty and condemned before God and possesses within himself no means of recovery or salvation.

Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-24; Psalm 51:5; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:20-23; Romans 3:9-20; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3

THE WAY OF SALVATION (THE GOSPEL)

Salvation is by the grace of God alone, which means that it is a free gift that is neither merited nor secured in whole or in part by any virtue or work of man or by any religious duty or sacrament. The gift of God's grace was purchased by Jesus Christ alone, by His blood and death on Calvary. The sinner receives God's salvation by repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Though salvation is by God's grace alone through faith, it results in a changed life; salvation is not *by* works but it is *unto* works. The faith for salvation comes by hearing God's Word. Men must hear the gospel in order to be saved. The Gospel is defined in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

John 1:11-13; 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 15:11; 20:21; Romans 10:9-10,13, 17; Ephesians 1:7; 1:12-14; 2:8-10; Titus 3:3-8; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 4:10

THE BENEFITS OF SALVATION:

We believe that all who put their trust in Jesus Christ are justified (declared righteous by God because of Christ); their sins are pardoned; they are regenerated (born again) and are given spiritual life by the Holy Spirit; they are eternally secure because they are kept by God.

Isaiah 53:11-12; John 10:27-30; Acts 10:43; 13:39; 15:11; Romans 3:21-25; 5:1-2, 9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Titus 3:7; 1 Peter 1:2-5; 1 John 5:10-13

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is presented in three phases in Scripture, past, present, and future: that the believer *has been* sanctified in Christ; that he is *being* progressively sanctified through the working of the indwelling Spirit, and that he *will be* completely sanctified at resurrection; that there is no complete eradication of the old nature in progressive sanctification during this present life; that speaking in tongues was not a sign of either regeneration or sanctification; that the New Testament gift of tongues is not in existence today, but ceased with the completion of the Scriptures.

John 17:17; Romans 1:17; 6:1-18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; 1 Corinthians 13:8-13; 14:20-22; Ephesians 4:15; 5:26-27; Philippians 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; Hebrews 10:10; 1 Pet. 1:15-16

THE SPIRIT WORLD

Prior to the creation of man, God made a great host of creatures known as angels (Col. 1:16). They are called “sons of God” in Job 38:4-7 and were witnesses of the creation of the earth. Angels are spirit beings (Ps. 104:4). They do not marry (Mat. 22:30). One of these, perhaps the very highest, was Lucifer. Becoming proud he determined to be like God and led a rebellion of angels against God (Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19). Since then Lucifer is called Satan or the devil and those angels that followed him are devils or demons (Mat. 25:41; Rev. 12:9). Some of the rebellious angels are in hell (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6), while others are free and are assisting the devil (Mat. 9:34). The angels that did not join the rebellion are called “the elect angels” (1 Tim. 5:21) and “holy angels” (Rev. 14:10). They are innumerable (Heb. 12:22). They minister to the saved (Heb. 1:14). Satan is called “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2) and “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4). Satan has opposed the work of God since creation of man and is the power behind the “rulers of the darkness of this world” (Eph. 6:12). He is the power behind idolatry (Deut. 32:17; 1 Cor. 10:20; Rev. 9:20). Satan is currently opposing the progress of the Gospel (2 Cor. 11:14-15; 1 Tim. 4:1). The devil was defeated at the cross of Christ (Heb. 2:14). He is not greater than or equal to God (Job 1; 1 Jn. 4:4). He can be resisted (Jam. 4:7) and overcome (1 Jn. 2:13; Rev. 12:11). He will be cast into the bottomless pit at the return of Christ (Rev. 20:1-3), will be released briefly after the millennial kingdom, and will be cast into the lake of fire to be punished for ever and ever (Rev. 20:7-10).

THE CHURCH

We believe that the church on earth is a congregation of scripturally baptized believers bound together by a common New Testament faith and fellowship in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The church was established and built by Jesus Christ (Mat. 16:18). The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). Each church is autonomous (self-governing, self-disciplining, self-supporting, self-propagating) and stands on its own feet under its one Head Jesus Christ, which is what we see in Acts and the Epistles. Its officers are pastors (also called elders and bishops) and deacons (1 Tim. 3). Its two ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are performed as memorials of Christ's death and resurrection (Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor. 11:23-24). Baptism is for believers only and is by immersion and is called a burial (Rom. 6:1-4). It is not for salvation and is not a part of salvation but follows after salvation as a public testimony thereof and as a picture of the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with Christ (Acts 8:36-39; 16:30-33; 18:8). Baptism is not the gospel but is a picture of the gospel, being the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for our sins (1 Cor. 1:17; 15:1-4). The church's sole authority is the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Its Great Commission is the work of world evangelism and discipleship (Mat. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 13:1-4).

CIVIL GOVERNMENT AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for (1 Tim. 2:1-4), conscientiously honored and obeyed (Mat. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-14), except only in the things opposed to the will of God (Acts 4:18-20; 5:29); that church and state should be separate, as we see in Scripture; the state owing the church protection and full freedom, no ecclesiastical group or denomination being preferred above another. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal.

FUTURE EVENTS

We believe the Scriptures teach that at death the spirit of the believer passes instantly into the presence of Christ and dwells there in conscious joy until the resurrection of the body when Christ comes for His own (Mk. 9:4; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:6; Rev. 6:9-11). At death, the spirit of the unbeliever descends immediately into Hell to await the resurrection of the wicked into judgment; there the conscious soul is tormented in fire (Mk. 9:43-49; Lk. 16:22-31). The blessed hope of the believer is the personal, pre-tribulational, pre-millennial appearance of Christ to rapture the church age saints away before the Tribulation (1 Cor. 15:51-57; 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 4:13-18; 5:1-9; Titus 2:13). This coming of Christ is imminent (Mat. 24:42-44; 25:13; 1 Thess. 5:2-4). God's righteous judgments will then be poured out on an unbelieving world during the Tribulation (Dan. 12:1; Joel 2:2; Mat. 24:21; Rev. 6-18). This is the seventieth week of Daniel -- Dan. 9:24-27). The climax of this fearful era will be the physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth in great glory to establish the Davidic Kingdom (Mat. 16:27; 24:30-31; 26:64; Rev. 1:7; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:11-21; 20:1-4). Israel will be saved and restored completely to their land and kingdom (Isaiah 2:2-5; 60; 66:20-24; Joel 3:1-2; 18-21; Zech. 14; Rom. 11:25-29). Satan will be bound, and the curse will be lifted from the physical creation (Isaiah 11:6-9; Rev. 20:1-4). Following the Millennium, Satan will be loosed from the bottomless pit, will lead one last unsuccessful rebellion, and will be cast into the lake of fire to be tormented forever and ever (Rev. 20:7-10). This will be followed by the Great White Throne judgment of the unsaved dead (Rev. 20:11-15) and the establishment of the New Heavens and the New Earth (Rev. 21-22; 2 Pet. 3:10-13).

SEPARATION FROM HERESY AND APOSTASY

We believe that the Bible requires separation from all forms of heresy and ecclesiastical apostasy (Rom. 16:17; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 1 Thess. 3:6; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:5; Titus 3:10-11; 2 John 10-11; Rev. 18:4). The Bible teaches that the course of the church age is characterized by increasing apostasy (2 Timothy 3:1 - 4:6).

SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

We believe the Bible also requires strict separation from the evil things of the world (Mat. 6:24; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 6:3; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:22; Titus 2:11-14; James 1:27; 4:4; 4:8; 1 John 2:15-17; 5:19).