

### ***The Scriptures***

We accept the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, as the written Word of God. The Bible is an essential and infallible record of God's self-disclosure to mankind. It leads us to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Being given by God the Scriptures are both fully and verbally inspired by God<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, as originally given, the Bible is free of error in all it teaches. Each book is to be interpreted according to its context and purpose and in reverent obedience to the Lord who speaks through it in living power. All believers are exhorted to study the Scriptures and diligently apply them to their lives<sup>2</sup>. The Scriptures are the authoritative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice and doctrine. They are not to be added to, superseded, or changed by later tradition or extra-biblical revelation<sup>3</sup>. Every doctrinal formulation must be put to the test of the full counsel of God in Holy Scripture.

<sup>1</sup> 2Tim 3:16; <sup>2</sup> James 1:22-25; <sup>3</sup> Prov 30:5-6

### ***God is Triune***

There is one God<sup>4</sup>, infinite, eternal, almighty, and perfect in holiness, truth and love. In the unity of the godhead there are three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit<sup>5</sup>, co-existent, co-equal, co-eternal. The Father is not the Son<sup>6</sup> and the Son is not the Holy Spirit, yet each is fully Deity, yet within the trinity there exists eternal relationships of authority and submission<sup>6a</sup> within a perfect loving community of wholeness and satisfaction within the triune God. One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is the foundation of Christian faith and life.<sup>6b</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Deut 6:4; <sup>5</sup> Matt 28:19, <sup>6</sup> John 1:1, <sup>6a</sup> 1 Cor 15:25, <sup>6b</sup> 1 Cor 8:6

### ***God the Father***

God the Father is the loving Creator and Sovereign of heaven and earth. By His word and for His glory, He freely created the world from nothing<sup>7</sup>. Through the same Word He daily sustains all His creatures<sup>8</sup>. He is faithful to every promise<sup>9</sup>, works all things together for the good of those who love Him, and in His unfathomable grace He gave His Son Jesus Christ for mankind's redemption<sup>10</sup>. He made man for loving fellowship with Himself<sup>11</sup>, and intended that all creation should live to the praise of His glory.

<sup>7</sup> Gen 1, Col 1:16; <sup>8</sup> Col 1:17; <sup>9</sup> Deut 7:9; <sup>10</sup> John 3:16; <sup>11</sup> John 15:15

### ***Jesus Christ***

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God<sup>12</sup>, was the eternal Word made flesh<sup>13</sup>, supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary<sup>14</sup>. He was perfect in nature, teaching and obedience. He is fully God made fully man. He was always with God and is God. Through Him all things came into being and were created. He was before all things and in Him all things hold together by the word of His power. He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation and in Him dwells the fullness of the godhead bodily. He is the only Saviour for the sins of the world having died on Calvary's cross for all mankind. By His death in our place, He revealed the divine love and upheld divine justice, removing our guilt and reconciling us to God<sup>15</sup>.

Having redeemed us from sin, the third day He rose bodily from the grave, victorious over death and the powers of darkness and for a period of forty days appeared to over five hundred witnesses performing many convincing proofs of His resurrection<sup>16</sup>. He ascended into heaven where, at God's right hand, He intercedes for His people and rules as Lord over all. He is the Head of His body the Church<sup>17</sup> and should be adored, loved, served and accepted by all.

<sup>12</sup> John 3:16; <sup>13</sup> John 1:14; <sup>14</sup> Lk 1:35; <sup>15</sup> 2Cor 5:17-19; <sup>16</sup> Acts 1:3; <sup>17</sup> Eph 4:15-16

### ***The Holy Spirit***

The Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgement<sup>18</sup>. Through the proclamation of the Gospel He persuades us to repent of our sins and confess Jesus as Lord. By the same Spirit a person is led to trust in divine mercy. The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about their new birth, and dwells within them. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son who in turn came to glorify the Father. He will lead the Church into all truth<sup>19</sup>. He is to be respected, honoured and worshipped as God the Third Person of the Trinity.

<sup>18</sup> John 16:8-11; <sup>19</sup> John 16:13

### ***Mankind***

God made man - male and female - in His own image<sup>20</sup>, as the crown of creation, that man might have fellowship with Him. Tempted by Satan, man rebelled against God. Being estranged from his Maker, yet responsible to Him, he became subject to divine wrath<sup>21</sup>, inwardly sinful and apart from grace, incapable of returning to God<sup>22</sup>. Fallen, sinful people, whatever their character or attainments, are lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ.

<sup>20</sup> Genesis 1:27; <sup>21</sup> Romans 1:18; <sup>22</sup> Eph 2:1-2

### ***The Gospel***

Jesus Christ is the Gospel. The Good News is revealed in His birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the Gospel<sup>23</sup>, His resurrection is the power of the Gospel<sup>24</sup> and His ascension is the glory of the Gospel<sup>25</sup>. Christ's death is a substitutionary<sup>25a</sup> and propitiatory sacrifice<sup>25b</sup> to God for our sins. It satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases his holy wrath. It demonstrates his mysterious love<sup>25c</sup> and reveals his amazing grace. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man<sup>25d</sup>. There is no other name by which mankind must be saved<sup>25e</sup>. At the heart of all sound doctrine is the cross of Jesus Christ<sup>25f</sup> and the infinite privilege that redeemed sinners have of glorifying God because of what he has accomplished.

<sup>23</sup> 1 Cor 2:2; <sup>24</sup> 1 Cor 15; <sup>25</sup> Phil 2:9-11, <sup>25a</sup> Isaiah 53:4-6, <sup>25b</sup> Romans 3:25, <sup>25c</sup> John 3:16, <sup>25d</sup> 1 Timothy 2:5,  
<sup>25e</sup> Acts 4:12 <sup>25f</sup> 1 Cor 2:2

### ***Mankind's Response to the Gospel***

The Gospel is to be preached to all people<sup>26</sup> but is only effectual to those who genuinely repent of their sins and put saving faith in Christ<sup>27</sup>. Biblical repentance is characterised by a changed life, and saving faith is evidenced by Kingdom service or works<sup>28</sup>. While neither repentance nor works save, unless a person is willing to deny himself, pick up his cross and follow Jesus Christ, he cannot become a disciple<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Matt 24:14; <sup>27</sup> Acts 2:38; <sup>28</sup> James 2:14; <sup>29</sup> Matt 10:38

### ***Mankind's Inheritance through the Gospel***

Salvation, the free gift of God, is provided solely by His grace through faith in Jesus Christ<sup>30</sup>. Anyone turning from sin in repentance and looking by faith to Christ and His substitutionary<sup>31</sup> death is born anew into eternal life by the Holy Spirit and declared to be righteous as a gift. Through Christ's great redemptive act an individual is reconciled to God as Father and becomes His child<sup>32</sup>. The believer is forgiven the debt of his sin and liberated from the law of sin and death<sup>33</sup> into the freedom of God's Spirit<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Eph 2:8-9; <sup>31</sup> 2Cor 5:21; <sup>32</sup> Ro 8:14-16; <sup>33</sup> Ro 6:6-7; <sup>34</sup> 2Cor 3:17

### ***Baptism in Water***

In accordance with the command and example of Christ<sup>35</sup>, water baptism should follow repentance<sup>36</sup> and faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ upon the Cross. Water baptism is the external sign of an internal work. Baptism represents the burial of the old life, and the start of a new life in union with Christ<sup>37</sup>. It is therefore a powerful statement by the believer of the cutting off of the old life and sinful nature, and a commitment to lead a new life in the power of the risen Christ.

<sup>35</sup> Luke 3:21-22; <sup>36</sup> Acts 2:38; <sup>37</sup> Ro 6:3-5

### ***Sanctification***

The Holy Spirit is the active agent in our sanctification and seeks to produce His fruit<sup>38</sup> in us as we are conformed to the image of Christ. As we are led by the Spirit, we grow in the knowledge of the Lord<sup>39</sup>, freely keeping His commandments and endeavouring so to live in the world so that all people may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> Gal 6:22-23; <sup>39</sup> Eph 1:17; <sup>40</sup> Matt 5:16

### ***Baptism in the Holy Spirit***

From the point of salvation the believer is indwelt<sup>41</sup> by the Holy Spirit. The believer then has the distinct experience of being filled with or baptised in the Holy Spirit. The promise of the Father is freely available to all who believe in Jesus Christ<sup>42</sup>. Jesus baptises the believer in the Holy Spirit thereby enabling him to exercise the powers of the age to come in ministry and mission. The Holy Spirit desires to fill each believer with power to witness and impart His supernatural gifts for the edification of the Body and the work of ministry in the world. All the gifts of the Holy Spirit at work in the church of the First Century are available today<sup>43</sup> and are to be earnestly desired<sup>44</sup> and expected. They are essential in the mission of the Church in the world today.

<sup>41</sup> 1Cor 3:16, Eph 1:13; <sup>42</sup> Acts 2:38-39; <sup>43</sup> Acts 2:17-18; <sup>44</sup> 1Cor 14:1

### ***The Church***

God by His Word and Spirit creates the Church, calling sinful men out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ's Body<sup>45</sup>. By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves that new redeemed humanity.

The Church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the Church universal is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Christ and personally appropriated the Gospel. The Church exists to worship and glorify God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit<sup>46</sup>. It also exists to serve Him by faithfully doing His will in the earth. This involves a commitment to see the Gospel preached in all the world<sup>47</sup>. The ultimate mission of the Church is the redemption of souls to the glory of God. When God transforms human nature, this then becomes the chief means of society's transformation.

All members of the Church universal are to be a vital and committed part of a local church. The local church is to be a loving community where every person is significant, regardless of their age, background or how long they have been saved<sup>48</sup>. In this context they are called to walk out the New Covenant as the people of God and demonstrate the reality of the Kingdom of God. The ascended Christ has given ministries to the church (i.e. apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) for the equipping of Christ's body that it might mature and grow<sup>49</sup>. Through the gift ministries all members of the church are to be nurtured and equipped for the work of ministry. In the context of the local church, God's people receive pastoral care and the opportunity to employ their God-given gifts in His service in relation to one another and the world<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> Eph 1:22-23, 4:4-13; <sup>46</sup> Eph 3:10; <sup>47</sup> Matt 28:18-20; <sup>48</sup> 1Cor 12:12-27; <sup>49</sup> Eph 4:11-13

### **Breaking Bread**

Breaking Bread or the Lord's Supper is to be observed only by those who are genuine followers of Christ. The breaking of Bread symbolises the breaking of Christ's body and shedding of his blood on our behalf<sup>50</sup>. This breaking of bread is best understood as a meal to be regularly shared as a community of believers be that a home, or the local church<sup>50a</sup>. Breaking bread is to be undertaken by faith with an attitude of self-examination<sup>50b</sup>, remembering and proclaiming the death and resurrection of Jesus<sup>50c</sup>, and signifying our unity with others in Christ body.

<sup>50</sup> Matt 26:26; <sup>50a</sup> Acts 2:46; <sup>50b</sup> 1 Cor 11:27-28; <sup>50c</sup> 1 Cor 11:25-26;

### **The Consummation**

The Consummation of all things includes the visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ<sup>51</sup>, the resurrection of the dead and the gathering up of those alive in Christ<sup>52</sup>, the judgement of the just and the unjust and the fulfilment of Christ's Kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. In the Consummation, Satan with his hosts and all those outside Christ are finally separated from the presence of God<sup>53</sup>, enduring eternal punishment, but the righteous, in glorious bodies, shall live and reign with Him forever<sup>54</sup>. Married to Christ as His Bride<sup>55</sup>, the Church will be in the presence of God forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then shall the eager expectation of creation be fulfilled and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God who makes all things new<sup>54</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> 2Thes 1:7; <sup>52</sup> 1Thes 4:16-17; <sup>53</sup> 2Thes 2:8; <sup>54</sup> Rev 21:6-8; <sup>55</sup> Rev 21:1-5

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With small amendments to sections on "The Trinity" "Baptism in Water" "Breaking Bread"