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The Holy Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. Thus, the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God.¹ The Word of God is verbally inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed. ² God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship.³ The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man⁴ without error in the whole or in the part⁵. The single, true interpretation of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the contextual, literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation, taking account of its literary forms and devices.⁶ This interpretation can only be found in dependence on the enlightenment given by the Holy Spirit.⁷ The truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.⁸ Being infallible, the Bible is sufficient to make the believer complete, equipped for all things related to life and godliness.⁹ The Scripture will remain unchanged in its authority and efficacy forever.¹⁰

¹2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21 ²2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 6:18 ³John 16:12-13 ⁴2 Peter 1:20-21 ⁵Matthew 5:18 ⁶2 Timothy 2:15 ⁷1 John 2:27 ⁸John 12:47-48; Hebrews 4:12 ⁹2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; Psalm 19:7-10 ¹⁰Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:23-25

God

There is one and only one living and true God¹. He is an intelligent,² spiritual,³ and personal Being,⁴ the Creator,⁵ Redeemer,⁶ Preserver,⁷ and Ruler of the universe.⁸ God is infinite in holiness⁹ and perfect in all His attributes.¹⁰ To Him is owed the highest love,¹ reverence,¹² and obedience.¹³ The eternal God is one in essence,¹⁴ eternally existing in the Trinity (three Persons as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).¹⁵

¹1 Corinthians 8:4 ²Romans 11:33-34 ³John 4:24 ⁴Exodus 3:14 ⁵Revelation 4:11 ⁶Colossians 1:13-14 ⁷Colossians 1:14 ⁸Isaiah 66:1; Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:9-11 ⁹1 Peter 1:16 ¹⁰Matthew 5:48 ¹¹Matthew 22:37 ¹²Psalm 33:8 ¹³John 3:36; 2 Thessalonians 1:8 ¹⁴Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7 ¹⁵Matthew 28:19

God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the course of human history disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. ¹ He is all powerful, all loving, and all wise.² He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption.³ God is Father in both His designation in the Trinity⁴ and in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.⁵ As creator He is Father to all men⁵ but He is Spiritual Father only to believers.⁶ He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass and He works all things after the counsel of His own will.⁷ He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events.⁸ In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin,⁹ nor does He abridge the accountability of men as moral, intelligent creatures.¹⁰ He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own;¹¹ He saves from sin all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption Father to His own.¹²

¹Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 104; 1 Corinthians 8:6 ²Psalm 62:11; 1 John 4:8; Psalm 36:7; Psalm 147:5 ³Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 103:19; Ephesians 3:9; Romans 11:36 ⁴John 5: 17-26; 8:54; 14:12-13 ⁵1 John 3:1; Matthew 6:6-15; Romans 8:16 ⁶Ephesians 4:6; 3:15 ⁷Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18 ⁸Ephesians 1:11; 3:15 ⁹1 Chronicles 29:11 ¹⁰Exodus 34:6-7, Matthew 16:27 ¹¹1 Peter 1:17; Matthew 16:27 ¹²Ephesians 1:4-6 ¹³John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5

God the Son

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God¹, possessing all the fullness of the divine nature and attributes². In these, He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father³. God the Father created all things according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ⁴. In Christ, all things continue in existence and in operation⁵.

In His incarnation, Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary⁶. In the incarnation, Christ willingly surrendered only the prerogatives of deity⁷ but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind⁸. In His incarnation, Christ took upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature and identified Himself completely with mankind⁹ yet without sin¹⁰. Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness¹¹.

Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God¹². In His death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin.¹³ His death was voluntary¹⁴, vicarious¹⁵, substitutionary¹⁶, propitiatory¹⁷, and redemptive¹⁸.

He was raised from the dead¹⁹ with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion²⁰. Our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead²¹. In the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son²² and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross²³. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers²⁴.

He ascended into heaven²⁵ and is now exalted at the right hand of God²⁶. In heaven, He is now the One Mediator, serving as our Advocate, making intercession for those who draw near to God²⁷.

Jesus Christ will return to receive the church unto Himself at the rapture²⁸. Returning in glory, He will establish His kingdom on earth and reign for 1000 years²⁹. The Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind³⁰. As the mediator between God and man³¹, the head of His body the church³², and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David³³, He is the final judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior³⁴.

Jesus Christ now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord³⁵.

¹John 1:9, 17:5, 24 ²Colossians 1:19, 2:9 ³Psalms 110:1; John 10:30-33, 14:9; Philippians 2:6 ⁴John 1:3; I Corinthians 8:6 ⁵Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3 ⁶Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:34-35 ⁷Philippians 2:8 ⁸Colossians 1:19, 2:9 ⁹Hebrews 2:17-18 ¹⁰Hebrews 4:15 ¹¹Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 10:30, 14:9 ¹²John 5:30, 8:28-29 ¹³Romans 3:24; Hebrews 7:25-27; 1 Peter 1:18-19, 3:18 ¹⁴John 10:14-15, 17-18 ¹⁵Romans 5:8, 6:4; Galatians 2:20 ¹⁶2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18 ¹⁷Romans 3:25; I John 2:2 ¹⁸Romans 3:24; Titus 2:14 ¹⁹Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:6-7 ²⁰John 20:16, 19-20, 26; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8 ²¹Romans 4:23-25, 5:10, 18 ²²Romans 4:25; ²³Acts 2:32-36 ²⁴John 5:25-29; Romans 4:25, 6:3-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23 ²⁵Acts 1:9 ²⁶Acts 2:34; Hebrews 1:3, 10:12 ²⁷Hebrews 7:25, 9:15, 24; 1 John 2:1 ²⁸Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ²⁹Revelation 20:6 ³⁰Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:22-23; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15 ³¹1 Timothy 2:5 ³²Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18 ³³Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 1:31-33 ³⁴Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-3; Revelation 20:11-15 ³⁵Romans 8:10; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:27

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a divine person possessing all the attributes of deity including personality,¹ intellect,² emotions,³ will,⁴ eternity,⁵ omnipresence,⁶ omniscience,⁷ omnipotence,⁸ and truthfulness.⁹ In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son¹⁰.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind.¹¹ We recognize His sovereign activity in creation,¹² the incarnation,¹³ the written revelation,¹⁴ and the work of salvation.¹⁵

A unique work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost¹⁶ when He came from the Father as promised by Christ¹⁷ to initiate¹⁸ the building of the body of Christ.¹⁹ The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor those He gifts by ostentatious displays,²⁰ but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith.²¹ He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment,²² effects regeneration,²³ and baptizes all believers into the body of Christ.²⁴ His presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer into full redemption of their body.²⁵

The Holy Spirit bestows the spiritual gifts²⁶ by which believers serve God through His church²⁷ for the perfecting of the saints today.²⁸ Gifts such as speaking in tongues, prophecy and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles and prophets as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers.²⁹ The Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible.³⁰ Through illumination, He enables men to understand truth.³¹ He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship,³² evangelism,³³ and service.³⁴

The Holy Spirit permanently indwells the believer.³⁵ He sanctifies,³⁶ instructs,³⁷ empowers them for service,³⁸ and seals them unto the day of redemption.³⁹ It is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled by the Spirit.⁴⁰

¹John 14:26, 16:13 ²1 Corinthians 12:10–13 ³Ephesians 4:30 ⁴1 Corinthians 12:11 ⁵Hebrews 9:14 ⁶Psalms 139:7–10 ⁷Isaiah 40:13–14 ⁸Romans 15:13 ⁹John 16:13 ¹⁰Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3–4; 16:6–7; 28:25–26; 1 Corinthians 12:4–6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 10:15–17 ¹¹John 16:8–11 ¹²Genesis 1:2, 26 ¹³Matthew 1:18 ¹⁴2 Peter 1:20–21 ¹⁵John 3:5–7 ¹⁶Acts 2:4 ¹⁷John 14:16–17; 15:26 ¹⁸John 16:13–14; Acts 1:8 ¹⁹Ephesians 2:22 ²⁰1 Corinthians 12:4–11 ²¹2 Corinthians 3:18 ²²John 16:8 ²³Titus 3:5 ²⁴1 Corinthians 12:13 ²⁵Ephesians 1:13–14; 1 John 4:13 ²⁶1 Corinthians 12:4–11 ²⁷Acts 2:4; Ephesians 2:22 ²⁸Ephesians 4:7–16 ²⁹1 Corinthians 13:8–10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:19–20; 3:4–5; Hebrews 2:1–4 ³⁰John 16:13; 2 Peter 1:20–21 ³¹1 Corinthians 2:14–16 ³²Ephesians 5:18–20 ³³1 Peter 4:10–11 ³⁴Acts 1:8 ³⁵Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16 ³⁶Galatians 4:6 ³⁷1 John 2:27 ³⁸2 Corinthians 3:6 ³⁹Ephesians 1:13 ⁴⁰Ephesians 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

Man

God created man for His own glory.¹ Man was directly and immediately created by the special act of God, in His own image and likeness, and is the crowning work of His creation.² In the beginning man was innocent of sin³ and was endowed by his Creator with intelligence,⁴ volition,⁵ and moral responsibility to God.⁶ God provided everything necessary for man to glorify God enjoy God's fellowship and live his life in the will of God.⁷

By his free choice man sinned against God⁸ and brought sin into the human race.⁹ In Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God,¹⁰ man lost his innocence;¹¹ incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death;¹² became subject to the wrath of God;¹³ and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God.¹⁴ All men are sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration.¹⁵ Man is spiritually dead in his sins and is incapable of saving himself; therefore salvation is wholly of God's grace.¹⁶

¹Isaiah 43:7 ²Genesis 1:26–31; Genesis 2:7; Psalm 8:5; James 3:9 ³Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 7:29 ⁴Genesis 2:19–20 ⁵Genesis 2:16–17, 3:6 ⁶Romans 1:18–20 ⁷Genesis 1:31 ⁸Genesis 3:6 ⁹Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:21–22 ¹⁰Genesis 2:16–17 ¹¹Genesis 3:7–8; Romans 5:18–19 ¹²Genesis 2:16–17; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1 ¹³Genesis 3:16–24; John 3:36; Ephesians 2:3 ¹⁴Genesis 6:5; Job 14:4; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:19, 6:44 ¹⁵Psalms 14:1–3; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:3 ¹⁶Ephesians 2:1–9

Salvation

Salvation is the redemption of the whole man, involving both his immaterial soul¹ and material body.² Salvation is offered freely³ to all who believe in Jesus Christ,⁴ who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer.⁵ Salvation is wholly of God by grace and not on the basis of human merit or works.⁶ In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration,⁷ sanctification,⁸ and glorification.⁹

¹James 1:21, 5:20 ²1 Corinthians 15:51–53, 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 ³Romans 5:15–17, Ephesians 2:8 ⁴John 1:12, Acts 16:31 ⁵Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 9:12, 1 Peter 1:18–19 ⁶Romans 3:28, Ephesians 2:8–9; 2 Timothy 1:9 ⁷Ephesians 2:5 ⁸1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Peter 1:1–2 ⁹Romans 8:30, 2 Timothy 2:10

Election

Election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies.¹

Sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust in Christ.² Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines.³ All whom the Father calls will come in faith and all who come the Son will receive.⁴

The unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will,⁵ but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy.⁶

Election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love.⁷ This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁸ God's sovereign election excludes boasting⁹ and promotes humility.¹⁰

¹Matthew 25:34, Romans 8:28–30; Ephesians 1:4–11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1–2 ²Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18–19; 5:40; Romans 9:22–23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10–12; Revelation 22:17 ³Ephesians 1:5, Philippians 2:13, Colossians 1:19–20 ⁴John 6:37–40, 44; Acts 13:48 ⁵John 1:12–13; Ephesians 1:4–7; 1 Peter 1:2 ⁶Titus 3:4–7 ⁷Romans 9:11–16 ⁸Matthew 11:25–28; John 5:19–20; 2 Timothy 1:9 ⁹1 Corinthians 1:29–31; Ephesians 1:9 ¹⁰Romans 9:20–21

Justification

Justification before God is an act of God¹ by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins² and confess Him as sovereign Lord.³ This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man,⁴ it's a gift of God's grace,⁵ and involves the placing of our sins on Christ⁶ and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us.⁷ By this means God is enabled to be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.⁸ Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.⁹

¹Romans 8:33 ²Acts 2:38; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6–7 ³Romans 10:9–10; 1 Corinthians 12:3 ⁴Galatians 2:16; Titus 3:5 ⁵Romans 3:25 ⁶Isaiah 53:6; Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24 ⁷Romans 4:5–8; 2 Corinthians 5:21 ⁸Romans 3:26 ⁹Isaiah 61:10; Romans 5:1

Sanctification

Through justification, every believer is declared to be just and holy and thus is sanctified (set apart from sin) unto God.¹ By this sanctification, the believer is identified as a “saint,” and that identification has to do with the believer's position in God's eyes, not with his present walk.²

This instantaneous work of sanctification should not be confused with the Holy Spirit's work of progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the obedience to the Word of God.³ By the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is enabled to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.⁴ Furthermore, any person who shows no evidence of the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work in their life has no claim to genuine faith.⁵

Every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the knowledge of the Word and the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.⁶ It is the believer's responsibility to actively appropriate the resources provided by God's Spirit through God's Word in order to overcome the sinful patterns in their lives.⁷ The struggle with the sinful flesh will stay with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended.⁸ Therefore, all claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural.⁹

¹Acts 20:32; Hebrews 10:10 ²1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11 ³John 17:17; Romans 6:17-22 ⁴2 Corinthians 3:18 ⁵Romans 8:12-14; 1 John 3:5-9 ⁶Psalms 119:9-11, Galatians 5:16-24 ⁷John 17:17; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16 ⁸Colossians 3:3-4; 1 John 3:2-3 ⁹1 John 1:8-2:1

Regeneration

Regeneration, or new birth, is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit whereby man, who is dead in sin, is made alive and becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.¹ Regeneration is a work of God's grace by which the divine nature is given.² It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God.³ As a result of the Spirit's work, the sinner repents and responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation.⁴ Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct.⁵ Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit.⁶

¹2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:5 ²Titus 3:5; 2 Peter 1:4 ³John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:23 ⁴Ezekiel 11:19; John 1:13 ⁵Luke 3:8; Galatians 5:22-23 ⁶Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:14

Repentance

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God.¹ Faith is the response to the call of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.² Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ.³

¹Isaiah 45:22; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 ²2 Chronicles 7:14; James 4:9-10 ³John 3:36, 5:24; Acts 3:19; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:25-26

Preservation

Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit,¹ will progress in sanctification² and shall persevere to the end.³ Although believers may fall into sin,⁴ whereby they grieve the Spirit,⁵ impair their graces and comforts,⁶ bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal chastisements on themselves,⁷ they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.⁸

¹1 Corinthians 6:11 ²2 Corinthians 7:1 ³John 6:37-40; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Philippians 1:6 ⁴1 John 2:1 ⁵Ephesians 4:30 ⁶1 Corinthians 3:9-15 ⁷Hebrews 12:1-6 ⁸John 10:27-29; Romans 5:9-10; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 1:3-5

Glorification

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed when they will be separated from the presence and the power of sin forever.¹ The souls of believers who have already died are alive with Christ in heaven.² They will receive new bodies at the resurrection and rapture of the church, when those alive on earth will have their bodies transformed.³ The believers new body will be like Christ's after His resurrection, and will be redesigned and adapted for heaven.⁴ All believers will receive a glorified body after the likeness of Christ's resurrected body⁵ at the time of their resurrection⁶ or at the rapture of the church.⁷

¹Romans 8:30; Philippians 3:20-21 ²Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8 ³Romans 8: 18-23; 1 Corinthians 15: 51 - 54; 1 Thessalonians 4:16 ⁴1 Corinthians 15:42 -43; 1 John 3:2 ⁵1 Corinthians 15:42-54; 1 John 3:2 ⁶1 Corinthians 15:22-24; Revelation 20:4-5 ⁷1 Thessalonians 4:16

The Church

All who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized, that is placed, by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church,¹ the bride of Christ,² of which Christ is the head.³

The formation of the church, which brought Jews and Gentiles into one body under Christ, constitutes one “new” man in Christ, a work of God that began after the coming of Christ.⁴ That formation began on the Day of Pentecost⁵ and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture.⁶

The church is thus a unique spiritual organism, distinct from Israel,⁷ a mystery not revealed until this age.⁸

The establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures.⁹ The members of the one scriptural body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies.¹⁰

The one supreme authority for the church is Christ and the church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures.¹¹ The biblically designated leadership under Christ and over the assembly are elders (who are also called overseers, bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers).¹² God’s design is that these elders be males¹³ and that each church be lead by a plurality of these men.¹⁴

These leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ¹⁵ and exercise oversight in directing the church.¹⁶ The congregation is to submit to their leadership.¹⁷ These elders superintend the church and are joined in service to the church by deacons. Both elders and deacons must meet biblical qualifications to serve in their appropriate roles.¹⁸

An importance is to be placed in the church on discipleship.¹⁹ This discipleship encompasses mutual accountability within the body and discipline for sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture.²⁰

The local church is autonomous, 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.²¹ It is scriptural for true churches, under the oversight of their elders, to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith.²²

The purpose of the church is to glorify God.²³ It accomplishes that purpose as it fulfills God’s will by building itself up in the faith,²⁴ by instruction of the Word,²⁵ by maintaining unity in fellowship,²⁶ by keeping the ordinances,²⁷ by the ministry of their individual gifts,²⁸ and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world.²⁹

It is God Who, by His Spirit, gives the church spiritual gifts to accomplish His purpose in the world.³⁰ First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry³¹ and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ.³²

There were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles’ message;³³ and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another.³⁴ With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man’s message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message.³⁵ Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan to deceive even believers.³⁶ The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification.³⁷

No one possesses the gift of healing today but God does hear and answer the prayers of the saints and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted.³⁸

¹1 Corinthians 12:12–13 ²2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23–32; Revelation 19:7–8 ³Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18 ⁴Ephesians 2:14–20 ⁵Acts 1:5; 2:37–47 ⁶1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 ⁷Romans 11:13–24; 1 Corinthians 10:32 ⁸Ephesians 3:1–6 ⁹Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1 ¹⁰Hebrews 10:25 ¹¹1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18 ¹²Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9 ¹³1 Timothy 2:12–3:1 ¹⁴Acts 14:23; 15:2; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1–2 ¹⁵1 Peter 5:1–5

¹⁶1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:2-3 ¹⁷Hebrews 13:7, 17 ¹⁸1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9 ¹⁹Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2 ²⁰Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16 ²¹Acts 20:28-30 ²²Romans 15:24-26 ²³Ephesians 3:21 ²⁴Ephesians 4:13-16 ²⁵2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-4:2 ²⁶John 17:20-23; Acts 2:47; Ephesians 4:1-6 ²⁷Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42; 1 Corinthians 11:26 ²⁸1 Peter 4:10-11 ²⁹Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:46-47 ³⁰1 Corinthians 12:4-7 ³¹Ephesians 4:7-12 ³²Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11 ³³Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12 ³⁴Romans 12:3-8 ³⁵1 Corinthians 13:8-12 ³⁶2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10; Revelation 13:13-14 ³⁷Romans 12:6-8 ³⁸Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Two ordinances have been given to the church: baptism¹ and the Lord's Supper.² Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water³ in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.⁴ It is a physical act of obedience symbolizing the spiritual reality of the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.⁵ Baptism is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the body of Christ.⁶ The ordinance of water baptism imparts no grace.⁷

The Lord's Supper is an act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize and proclaim the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.⁸ It should always be preceded by solemn self-examination. ⁹The elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ.¹⁰ When we properly share in communion we spiritually participate in fellowship with Jesus Christ and with other believers.¹¹ The Lord's Supper is a command from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself to every believer.¹²

¹Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16 ²Matthew 26:26-27; Luke 22:19 ³Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:38-39 ⁴Matthew 28:19 ⁵Acts 8:36-38, 16:31-33; Romans 6:3-5 ⁶Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27-28 ⁷Acts 2:41, 10:47-48 ⁸1 Corinthians 11:24-26 ⁹1 Corinthians 11:28-32 ¹⁰Luke 22:19-20 ¹¹1 Corinthians 10:16 ¹²Matthew 26:26-28

Angels

Holy Angels

Angels are created beings¹ and are therefore not to be worshiped.² Although they are a higher order of creation than man,³ they are created to serve God⁴ and to worship Him.⁵

Fallen Angels

Satan is a created angel and the originator of sin.⁶ He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator,⁷ and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve.⁸ He is the leader of the angels which he carried with him in his fall.⁹ Satan is the open and declared enemy of God¹⁰ and man.¹¹ He is repeatedly called the ruler of this world¹² who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,¹³ and he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire.¹⁴

¹Psalms 148:2,5; Colossians 1:16 ²Colossians 2:18-19; Revelation 19:10; 22:9 ³Hebrews 2:6-7 ⁴Psalms 103:20-21; Matthew 13:39-42 ⁵Nehemiah 9:6; Hebrews 1:6 ⁶Genesis 3:1,4; John 8:44; 1 John 3 ⁷Isaiah 14: 12-17; Revelation 20:2,10 ⁸Genesis 3:1-15 ⁹Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6 ¹⁰Isaiah 14:13-14 ¹¹Revelation 12: 9-10 ¹²John 12:31; John 14:30; John 16:11 ¹³Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:20 ¹⁴Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10

Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations,¹ and to pray for others to join the effort.² At the heart of all fruitful missionary efforts are workers whose regenerate lives shine forth the light of the gospel into a perverse world.³ It is the duty of every child of God to make the most of every opportunity to share the gospel of Christ.⁴

¹Matthew 28:18-20; John 20:21 ²Matthew 9:37-38 ³Matthew 5:16; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; Philippians 2:15 ⁴Romans 10:14-15; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 2:9-10, 3:15

Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; He is the Creator and rightful Owner of all that we have and all that we are.¹ Christians should recognize that their time, talents, and material possessions have been entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others.² According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means willingly, cheerfully³, systematically⁴, proportionately⁵, and bountifully⁶ for the advancement of the gospel on earth.⁷

¹Deuteronomy 8:18; 1 Chronicles 29:12; Psalm 50:10-12 ²Luke 16:9-13; 1 Timothy 6:17-18 ³2 Corinthians 9:7 ⁴1 Corinthians 16:2-4
⁵2 Corinthians 8:11-12 ⁶2 Corinthians 9:6 ⁷Philippians 4:10-19

The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society.¹ It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime.² It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church³, and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.⁴

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image.⁵ The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people.⁶ A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church.⁷ He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family.⁸ A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ.⁹ She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him¹⁰, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.¹¹

Children, from the moment of conception¹², are a blessing and heritage from the Lord.¹³ Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage.¹⁴ Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them¹⁵, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth.¹⁶ Children are to honor and obey their parents.¹⁷

¹Genesis 2:18-25; Proverbs 18:22 ²Matthew 19:3-6 ³Ephesians. 5:32 ⁴Genesis 1:28, 2:25; Proverbs: 5:18-19; Hebrews 13:4 ⁵Genesis 1:26-27; 2:21-22 ⁶Ephesians 5:22-23 ⁷Ephesians 5:25 ⁸Ephesians 5:33; 1 Peter 3:7 ⁹Ephesians 5:22-23; 1 Peter 3:1 ¹⁰Genesis 2:23-24; 1 Corinthians 7:3-4; 1 Peter 3:8-9 ¹¹Psalms 128:3; Proverbs 31:10-31; Titus 2:3-5 ¹²Psalms 139:13-16 ¹³Psalms 127:3-5 ¹⁴Colossians 3:18-21 ¹⁵Proverbs 6:20-23
¹⁶Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Psalms 78:1-8 ¹⁷Exodus 20:12; Colossians 3:20; Ephesians 6:1-3

Last Things

Death

Physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness¹. At death, the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ,² but the soul of the unredeemed passes immediately into Hades.³ All of the dead will be bodily resurrected, some unto everlasting life and some unto everlasting punishment.⁴ The saved will be resurrected to eternal life in two separate events;⁵ the first for those who died after Christ's resurrection and ascension⁶ and the second for those who died before Christ's ascension and during the tribulation.⁷ The unsaved will be resurrected to appear at the Great White Throne for judgment and everlasting punishment in which they will be cast into the lake of fire.⁸

¹Luke 16:22, Revelation 6:9-11 ²Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23 ³Matthew 11:23, Luke 16:19-23 ⁴Daniel 12:2, Matthew 25:31-34, 41; John 5:28-29 ⁵1 Corinthians 15:23-24 ⁶1 Corinthians 15:23, 52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16 ⁷Revelation 20:4-6 ⁸Revelation 20:11-15

The Rapture of the Church

At the command of Christ, the dead in Christ will rise. Then, those who are alive in Christ will be raptured together with them to meet the Lord in the air.¹ This rapture will occur before the seven-year tribulation.²

¹1 Corinthians 15:51–53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17 ²Revelation 3:10, 4:10–5:2

The Tribulation Period

This is the period explained to Daniel by Gabriel as the seventieth week in the ancient prophecy.¹ Immediately following the removal of the church from the earth² the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world.³ These judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth to destroy the antichrist and the false prophet and the armies of the earth gathered together to make war with Him.⁴ After Christ destroys His enemies, Satan is also bound and thrown into the abyss for 1000 years.⁵

¹Daniel 9:24–27; Matthew 24:15 ²1 Thessalonians 4:15–17; Revelation 3:10, 4:10–5:2 ³Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12; Revelation 16 ⁴Matthew 24:27–31; Revelation 19:11–21 ⁵Revelation 20:1–3

The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign

After the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David¹ and establish His Messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth.² At this time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be resurrected to reign with Christ³ along with His previously resurrected and raptured saints.⁴ The kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel⁵ to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience.⁶ The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside⁷ but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing.⁸ This time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life,⁹ and will be brought to an end when Satan is released.¹⁰

¹Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31–33; Acts 1:10–11; 2:29–31 ²Revelation 20:1–7 ³Revelation 20:4–6 ⁴Revelation 5:10 ⁵Isaiah 65:17–25; Ezekiel 37:21–28; Zechariah 8:1–17 ⁶Deuteronomy 28:15–68 ⁷Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1–26 ⁸Jeremiah 31:31–34; Ezekiel 36:22–32; Romans 11:25–29 ⁹Isaiah 11; 65:17–25; Ezekiel 36:33–38 ¹⁰Revelation 20:7

The Judgment of the Lost

Following the release of Satan after the thousand year reign of Christ,¹ Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city,² at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven.³ Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone⁴ whereupon Christ, who is the judge of all men,⁵ will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne judgment.⁶ This resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment, they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire.⁷

¹Revelation 20:7 ²Revelation 20:8 ³Revelation 20:9 ⁴Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10 ⁵John 5:22 ⁶Revelation 20:11–13 ⁷Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 14:11, 20:14–15

Eternity

After the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers,¹ the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved² and replaced with a new earth wherein only righteousness dwell.³ Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven⁴ and will be the dwelling place of the saints,⁵ where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another.⁶ Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father,⁷ that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever.⁸

¹2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7–15 ²2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 21:1 ³Revelation: 21–22 ⁴Revelation 21:2 ⁵John 14:2–3 ⁶John 17:3; Revelation 21, 22 ⁷1 Corinthians 15:24–28 ⁸1 Corinthians 15:28