



FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

A concise teaching on the important beliefs and practice of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Scripture references are taken from the ESV unless otherwise specified.

This document was prepared so believers can quickly grasp the foundational doctrines of the church. The thought originated from the Assemblies of God’ “Standard of Christian Doctrine and Practice.” Some material was gathered from Wayne Grudem’s work on Christian Doctrine. May pastors find this a useful tool to teach their congregations.

Rev. Dr. Michael Ali

PART ONE: WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”
(2 Tim. 3:16–17)

“Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:20–21)

We believe that the Bible is the inspired, infallible word of God and has authority over our lives.

- Facts about the Bible
 - The word Bible comes from a Greek word ‘biblos’ meaning ‘a book’.
 - It is a library of sixty-six books of various literary forms, such as letters, history, narrative, epic poetry, song lyrics, and apocalyptic, but with one theme, the redemption of man.
 - It was compiled over a period of 1500 years – from 1400 B.C. to 100 A.D.
 - Its forty writers included shepherds, fishermen, warriors, priests, prophets, kings, a physician, a scholar, and a cupbearer to the king. For so many people to write a book without contradiction is a miracle. Such a diverse literature of truth affecting every generation of every culture, nation and tribe could only be put together by the hand of God.

- The Bible is the **inspired** Word of God. Inspired means “God-breathed.” God was supernaturally in control of the recording of scripture.
 - The bible does not contain the Word of God; it is the Word of God.
 - No teaching of man or modern revelation can be placed on par with God’s Word.
- The Bible is the **infallible/inerrant Word of God**.
 - Infallibility means incapable of error.
 - Inerrancy (a newer term) means the absence of any error.
 - This does not mean that the Bible report events in exact, scientific detail nor tell us everything we need to know about a subject.
- The Bible is **authoritative**.
 - It is our rule and guide for living. It is our only source to learn God’s will and way.
 - It is God’s manual to us on how to live and enjoy life. It must be our highest authority on all subjects.
- Evidence of the inspiration of Scripture.
 - It is the world’s bestseller.
 - Over 6 billion copies have been printed and this currently continues at approximately 100 million annually.
 - By 2020, eleven years after it was introduced, the ‘YouVersion’ Bible app was installed in over 450 million devices.
 - Jesus gave the Old Testament His full sanction. Matt.5:17,18
 - Bible prophecies have been fulfilled. Almost 25% of the verses of Scripture are prophetic.
 - The Bible has one theme - the redemption of man through the sacrifice of Jesus (Despite it being written by so many people over such a long time.)

- Attempts to destroy it have failed. The French philosopher Voltaire boasted that within 100 years of his death, the Bible would disappear from the face of the earth. 50 years after his death, the Geneva Bible Society moved into his former house and used his printing presses to print thousands of Bibles.
- It reveals a high moral standard.
- It is the product of one Mastermind.
- Its fruits reveal its life-changing power. Lives are changed by the power of God's Word.

Many today question the authenticity of the Bible. They claim it has been corrupted or changed without providing any evidence for this. The study of textual criticism can lay such fears to rest. The great textual scholar of the last century, Sir Frederic Kenyon writes **"The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true Word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries."** (Sir Frederic Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, New York, Harper, and Row, 1958, p. 55.)

2. GOD

The Existence of God

"In the beginning, God ..." (Genesis 1:1)

"The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." (Psalm 14:1)

The Bible reveals the God of the universe to mankind. It does not attempt to prove the existence of God since it assumes man's innate of God by reason and intuition.

Some arguments for the existence of God are:

- **The cosmological argument.**
 - Everything that begins to exist has a cause.
 - The universe began to exist.
 - Therefore, the universe must have a cause.
- **The teleological argument.** This is the argument of design in the universe. Scientists have discovered that just about everything about the basic structure of the universe is balanced on a razor's edge for life to exist. This has given rise to the debate on Intelligent Design.
 - Complexity implies a designer.
 - The universe is highly complex.
 - Therefore, the universe has a designer.
- **The moral argument.** All human beings have a sense of right and wrong and the need for justice. There exists a moral law. A moral law can only be explained a Moral Lawgiver, God.
- **Man's inner sense of God.** Many religions abound in the world. About 84% of the world's population believe in the existence of a deity. "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools," (Romans 1:19–22)

The Nature of God¹

“God is an infinite, eternal spirit, the self-existent Creator of the universe and the sovereign over it.”²

Many misconceptions about God prevail in society but the Bible reveals God to us.

God is eternal. He has no beginning or end. He is from everlasting to everlasting, the first and last. “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:8)

God sees and knows all events—past, present, and future — with equal vividness.

God Is Omnipotent. He is all powerful. “Is anything too hard for the LORD?” (Genesis 18:14)

God Is Omniscient. God knows everything. His knowledge never changes or grows. Nothing takes Him by surprise. Nothing is hidden from him.

God Is Omnipresent. “God is here, there and everywhere.” “Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.” (Psalm 139:7–10)

God Is Spirit. John. 4:24. He is not made of matter, not flesh and blood like we are.

God Is Invisible. Because God is spirit, God is also invisible. “No one has ever seen God” (John 1:18).

God Is Perfect. Matthew 5:48, “Your heavenly Father is perfect.”

God Is Unchangeable. God is unchangeable in his being, attributes, purposes, and promises.

Attributes: ““For I the LORD do not change.” (Malachi 3:6)

Purposes: Once he has determined he will do something, it will be done. “The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations.” (Psalm 33:11)

Promises: “God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?” (Numbers 23:19)

God Is Independent. He does not **need** mankind. He is not dependent on anyone for anything. “For from him and through him and to him are all things.” (Romans 11:36) Yet God chose man to be significant. He made us and crowned us with glory and honor.

God is knowable. We cannot fully know God because He is so great, but we can personally know Him in our heart. “And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (John 17:3)

God Is Wise. He always chooses the best possible goals and the best possible means to meet those goals. He is “the only wise God” (Rom. 16:27).

God Is Truthful. Jesus said He is the truth (Jn. 14:6). God’s Word is true (John 17:17). “It is impossible for God to lie” (Hebrews 6: 18).

God Is Good. Jesus said, “No one is good except God alone” (Luke 18:19). God is the final standard of good; all He is and does is good. He is the ultimate standard and source of goodness. God’s goodness can often be seen through his mercy and grace.

God Is Love. The Scripture says it clearly: “God is love” (1 John 4:8). His love is boundless. Paul prayed that we “may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge....” (Ephesians 3:18–19)

God Is Holy. “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.” (Leviticus 19:2) He is separated from sin.

God Is Righteous and Just ““The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.” (Deuteronomy 32:4) “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne.” (Psalm 89:14) He is righteous and just. He will judge everyone in all fairness.

¹ Christian Beliefs by Wayne Grudem

² New Christian Handbook, Max Anders, p3

God Is Wrathful toward Sin God hates all sin and is angry when He sees all the evil and wickedness in the earth. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men...” (Romans 1:18) A God who does not judge evil and punish the wicked is not a God who is worthy of worship.

The Trinity

The God of the Bible is revealed as a Holy Trinity, consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They are three distinct personalities and roles but constitute one Godhead. Although, the word ‘Trinity’ itself is not used in the Bible, the concept clearly presented.

The Bible teaches that there is only one God. ““Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” (Deuteronomy 6:4). All other gods and idols are deceptions of Satan.

References to the Trinity:

The baptism of Jesus. “and the **Holy Spirit** descended on **him** in bodily form, like a dove; and a **voice came from heaven**, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”” (Luke 3:22)

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” (Matthew 28:19)

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” (2 Corinthians 13:14)

The Meaning of the Trinity. Because God is three distinct persons, the Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit, the Son is not the Father or the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.

Each of the persons of the Trinity is fully God.³

Our inability to understand this revelation does not by any means negate its truth.

The Distinct Roles of the Trinity. All three members of the Trinity have different roles. The different roles are seen in creation and redemption. The Scripture shows the obedience of Jesus to the Father and the role of the Holy Spirit to bring glory to Jesus. In the Trinity we see a unity in diversity.

The Trinity also answers the question about God: How can we say God is love if there was no Trinity?

3. ANGELS, SATAN AND DEMONS

ANGELS

- Angels are created spiritual beings with moral judgment and high intelligence. They are God’s warriors and are often referred to as the host (or armies) of heaven.
- They have not always existed; they are part of the universe God created. (Neh. 9:6)
- Angels are spirits (Heb. 1:14) and as such do not have physical bodies. They are not usually visible to us except God allows us or they appear in human form (e.g., Balaam, Jesus’ resurrection).
- Angels have great power. One angel destroyed an entire army of 185,000 men (Is. 37:36.)
- They join our worship of God. (Heb. 12:22) and are constantly praising God (Rev. 4:11)
- Angels obediently carry out God’s plans by doing “his word” (Ps. 103:20). We should be aware of the unseen presence of angels as we go about our daily lives. They may be joining us in worship, protecting and guarding us, or even visiting us as strangers seeking hospitality (Ps. 91:11, Heb. 13:2).
- We are not to pray to or worship angels (Rev. 19:10)

³ Christian Beliefs, Wayne Grudem

SATAN AND DEMONS

Demons are evil angels who sinned against God and now continually work evil in the world. They did not start out as evil. They are the angels whom God “did not spare ... when they sinned but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness” (2 Peter 2:4). God made everything ‘good.’ Sometime between God’s creation and Eve’s temptation, there was a rebellion against God.

Satan’s names

- Satan is the personal name of the head of the demons. He is mentioned by name 1 Chronicles 21:1, Matt. 4:10. “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Luke 10:18).
- The devil (Matt. 4:1)
- The serpent (Gen. 3:1)
- Beelzebub (Matt. 10:25)
- The ruler of this world (John 12:31)
- The prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2)
- The evil one (Matt. 13:19).

His activities

- Satan was a “murderer from the beginning.”
- The “father of lies” (John 8:44).
- “The devil has been sinning from the beginning.” 1 John 3:8.
- The tempter. He tempted Eve (Gen. 3) and Christ (Matt. 4:1 – 11)
- He will try to use every type of destructive tactic to blind people “from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ” (2 Cor. 4:4).
- He will also use similar destructive tactics—such as temptation, doubt, lies, murder, guilt, fear, confusion, sickness, envy, pride, and slander—to hinder a Christian’s witness and usefulness.
- Satan and his demons cannot know the future, for only God can declare “the end from the beginning.”

Our power over Satan

- The devil and his demons are limited both in their own power and by God’s control in what they can and cannot do.
- Jesus broke/destroyed/nullified the power of Satan on the cross.
 - During His earthly ministry He ministered deliverance to many affected by demons (the man at Gadara who had a legion of demons in Mark 5.)
 - “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.” (1 John 3:8)
 - “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might **destroy** the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,” (Hebrews 2:14)
 - “He **disarmed** the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by **triumphing** over them in him.” (Colossians 2:15)
- Satan himself can be successfully resisted through the authority of Christ:
 - We must “give no opportunity to the devil” (Eph. 4:27).
 - “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).
 - “For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.” (2 Corinthians 10:4)
 - “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him....” (1 Peter 5:8–9)

- “Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.” (Luke 10:19)
- We have authority to pray for those affected by demons.
 - “And these signs will accompany those who believe in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues;” (Mark 16:17)
- We can speak directly to an evil spirit, commanding it to leave in the name of Jesus (see Luke 9:1; 10:17; Acts 8:7; 16:18; James 4:7).
- We should not fear demons, for “he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).
- In Romans 16:20, Paul tells Christians, “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” As the good news of the gospel is preached and people come to believe in Jesus, another spiritual battle is won.

Satan’s End

Satan’s end is fast approaching. He knows that his days are numbered. His wrath is great. His destiny is the lake of fire. “...and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Revelation 20:10) See also Rev. 20:1 – 3.

4. JESUS

John 1.1” In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Jesus is God physically entering our world, from eternity into time, from glory into our depravity. He was and forever will be, fully God and fully man in one person.

Jesus:

Pre-existed before He was born in Bethlehem. John 1:1, Micah 5:2

- Was born of a virgin.
- Lived a sinless life.
- Demonstrated by numerous miracles His power over sickness, nature, demons, and death.
- Repeatedly mentioned that He came to die for our sins.
- Was crucified on Calvary as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world.
- Was resurrected on the third day as He predicted.
- Made many post-resurrection appearances. He “presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs” (Acts 1.3)
- Promised that He will return.

Jesus — Fully Man

- He was conceived in the womb of his mother by a miraculous work of the Holy Spirit. Matt. 1:18
- As a child, he “grew and became strong” (Luke 2:40), and as he grew older, he “increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52).
- He was weary from a journey (John 4:6); after a fast, “he was hungry” (Matt. 4:2); and on the cross, he said, “I thirst” (John 19:28).
- Jesus had to grow mentally also. Luke says he “increased in wisdom” (Luke 2:52).
- In his human nature he did not know the day he would return to earth, “But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Mark 13:32).

- He experienced a full range of emotions:
 - he “marveled” at the faith of the centurion (Matt. 8:10)
 - he “wept” at the death of Lazarus (John 11:35)
 - he prayed to God “with loud cries and tears” (Heb. 5:7).
 - Before his crucifixion, he said, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death” (Matt. 26:38) and “Now is my soul troubled” (John 12:27).
- However, although human, he was without sin.
 - Paul said “him ... who knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21).
 - Peter tells us that Jesus “committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:22).
 - John tells us that “in him there is no sin” (1 John 3:5).
 - The writer of Hebrews states Jesus is “one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).

Jesus - Fully God

- The virgin birth was God coming to live with man. Matt. 1:23 “‘The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel’ (which means ‘God with us’).”
- The Bible declares that Jesus existed as God the Son long before He was born of the Virgin Mary (John 1: 1, Micah 5: 2)
- God Himself took on flesh! (John 1: 1, 2, 14).
- Jesus claimed to be God. He calls Himself by the name God gave for Himself, “I AM” (John 8: 57; Exodus 3: 13, 14) making Himself equal with God. The Jews wanted to kill Him for this. Jn. 8: 59
- “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count **equality with God** a thing to be grasped,” (Philippians 2:5–6)
- “For in him all the **fullness of God** was pleased to dwell,” (Colossians 1:19)
- Jesus: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”” (Revelation 22:13) compare with Rev. 1.8

Please study the following passages: Phil. 2:6-11; Col.1:15-20; Heb.1:1-9, especially v.3 and 8; Rev. 22:12-16

5. MAN

Today we are taught that we evolved over millions of years from primordial slime. We are “space dust,” made up of chemicals and have no eternal purpose. The Bible teaches us otherwise.

“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion ...” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion ... and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ... And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. (Genesis 1:26–31)

From this passage we see:

- Man was created man in the likeness and image of God.
 - We are spiritual beings – we are spirit and soul living in a physical body.
 - We are also moral creatures with the innate sense of right and wrong.

- We are social beings. There is relationship in the Trinity, so we are to relate with others.
- We were made to rule, have dominion.
- Man is blessed by God.
- Man was created to be productive, fruitful.
- God was pleased with man. It was very good.

We are the pinnacle of God's creation, higher beings than the animals. "...everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made." (Isaiah 43:7) We were created for God's glory, to worship God and enjoy His fellowship. Augustine said "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee."

Our world and nature changed when the first Man and Woman disobeyed God's explicit command in Eden. [Gen. 3]. The consequence was sin entering into the heart of Adam, Eve and their descendants and affecting nature itself. The rest of the Bible is about God restoring man back to the perfect state, back to Eden.

For the new believer, the marred image of God is being restored in Christ. We are being transformed into Christ's image (2 Cor. 3.18.)

6. SIN

Man's greatest problem is sin. Sin is missing the mark, transgressing God's law, all the evil and wickedness in our hearts and deeds. It is our failure to conform to God's moral code revealed in His Word, e.g., the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. God's Word not only reveals the prevalence of sin but also man's propensity to sin.

The entrance of sin into the world did not surprise God. He decided that He will allow moral creatures to voluntarily choose to sin. For man to have free will, there must necessarily be the option for sin.

When Adam disobeyed, sin entered the world and Adam's nature became sinful. That sinful nature is inherited by every human being.

- "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23)
- "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8)
- "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—" (Romans 5:12)
- "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out." (Romans 7:18)
- "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9)
- "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51:5)

Every part of our lives is affected by sin.

With sin comes guilt, shame, and judgement. "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6.23).

Jesus paid the price for our sins on Calvary. "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree." (1 Peter 2:24.) "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures," (1 Corinthians 15:3)

Our sins are completely forgiven when we believe the gospel. When we sin as Christians, our legal standing as children of God is not affected but our fellowship with God is hindered. We lose His peace and presence, so we ought to move quickly to repentance. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

Although we may sin, we are not to continue in a pattern of perpetual sin and disobedience. John said, "No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God." (1 John 3:9)

7. SALVATION

Salvation means to be saved from sin and its effects.

The ABCs of salvation:

- God created man in perfection, declaring him 'good'.
- Man disobeyed God and became a sinner. (See **SIN** above)
- Our sin separates us from a holy God and deserves the penalty of death and hell. Rom. 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
- God in His great love sent His precious Son to die on Calvary as the perfect, complete, atoning (atone-to cover) sacrifice for our sins. Jn. 3:16
- Salvation is by grace through faith, a free gift of God. Ephesians 2:8,9 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast." No one can be saved by good works!
- There is no other way to be saved.
 - "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)
 - "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."" (Acts 4:12)
 - "For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," (1 Timothy 2:5)
 - No one is saved by their personal righteousness, good works or religion.

The method of salvation.

- Repentance: "The true sorrow for sin, with sincere effort to forsake it." It means turning away from sin and turning towards God or an inward change of heart resulting in an outward change of behavior. Mk. 1:15
- Faith (believing): We are saved by believing the gospel. Jn. 3:16; Eph. 2:8.
- Receiving: Jn. 1:12 "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."
- Confession: "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." (Romans 10:9–10)

The experience of salvation

This is known as **the new birth** or regeneration. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3-7 "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being **born again**." ⁴ "How can anyone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, '**You must be born again.**'

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Salvation is not by blind faith. We have the assurance by an inner spiritual, life-transforming experience.

The assurance of salvation.

How can I know that I am truly saved?

Review the method above.

- Did you receive Jesus?

- Has your life been changed?
- Our immature faith and Satan will cause us to doubt many things. That is NORMAL.
- Remember salvation is a free gift, not earned by works of righteousness. You will never be perfect.
- Conviction of sin demonstrates that the Holy Spirit resides in you.
- “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may **know** that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13
- The inner witness of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 8:16 “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.”

8. SANCTIFICATION

1 Peter 1:15 “But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do.”

Heb. 12:14 “Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”

- Sanctification simply means to be separated unto God and become holy. God is holy and requires holiness in His people.

The means of sanctification.

- The Word of God. John 17:17 “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” (Also Ps. 119:9; Jn15:3)
- The blood of Jesus Heb. 13:12 “And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.” (see also Heb 10:29)
- The Holy Spirit 1 Peter 1:2 “...through the sanctifying work of the Spirit...”

The timing of sanctification.

- Instantaneous: at the time of salvation. 1 Cor. 6:11 “And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (Also 1 Cor. 1:2)
- Progressive: a lifelong, continuous process. Phil. 2:12 “...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” (1 John 2:3)

The purpose of sanctification

- to make us more and more like Jesus. Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18

A righteous lifestyle does not save us, but it proves to the world we are saved. The Christian witness is rendered ineffective when the believer walks contrary to the commands of Scripture.

9. DIVINE HEALING

Read the following records of healings by Jesus. Note some common factors between the events: (Mark 7:31-35; Luke 4:38-44; 5:12-16; 5:17-26; John 9:1-7).

“For I am the LORD, your healer.” (Exodus 15:26)

“But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5)

“And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. So his fame spread throughout

all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them.” (Matthew 4:23–24)

“And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.” (Matthew 10:1)

- God revealed Himself to Israel as the Healer (Exodus 15: 26). He is Jehovah Rapha, The Lord, our Healer. His will is to remove sickness from among them that serve Him. (Exodus 23:25, 26).
- Jesus revealed His compassion, willingness, and ability to heal throughout His ministry. Since Jesus is God in the flesh, He treated the sick the way God treats them.
- He wanted to heal (Matt 8:1-3)
- He showed compassion for the sick (Matt. 14:13,14)
- He healed all that came to Him (Matt.12:14,15; 14:35,36)
- He healed all sicknesses and diseases (Matt. 15:30,31)
- Divine healing is a part of the redemptive work of Christ. The prophets predicted physical and spiritual healing by Jesus Christ (Isa. 53:1-5).
- Jesus appointed others to help Him heal: The Twelve Disciples (Matt 9:37, 38; 10:1) and The Seventy (Luke 10:1:10:8, 9)
- The Church followed Jesus’ instructions to heal. The Book of Acts reveals a continued healing ministry. Prayer for the sick was an established ordinance of the Church. In James 5: 14-16 we are told that the prayer of faith heals the sick and we should pray for one another and expect healing to occur.
- Healing is a sign that follows all believers. Jesus commissioned all believers to heal the sick. God will do the healing if we lay hands on the sick, pray and believe. (Mark 16:15,16)

10. THE CHURCH

The church is the community of all true believers in Jesus Christ for all time. The word ‘Church’ in the New Testament comes from a Greek word ‘ecclesia’ which refers to a meeting of a people called out and summoned together.

There is a visible and invisible church. The invisible church is the church as God sees it (2 Tim. 2:19). He sees the hearts of all and knows the true believers. The visible church is the church as we see it. We must be aware that the visible church will contain genuine and non-genuine believers.

- The NT word for ‘church’ is used to describe different groups of believers:
 - A small house church (Rom. 16:5)
 - The church in an entire city (1 Cor. 1:2)
 - The church in an entire region (Acts 9:31)
 - The worldwide church (Eph. 5:25)
- The church began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)
- The church of Christ is a people who:
 - Are born-again (Jn. 3:3)
 - Are separated from the world (2 Cor. 6:16-18)
 - Believe in the Holy Bible (Jn. 20:31)
 - Practice its Christian precepts (Tit. 2:11-14)

Metaphors/Symbols of the church.

The symbols used in the Holy Scriptures for the church reveal its spiritual nature.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

- **A Family** “Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.” (1 Timothy 5:1–2). We are to relate to each other as members of a large family with love, respect, and care!
- **A Body** “And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” (Ephesians 1:22–23)
 - Christ is the head (Eph. 1: 22, 5: 23)
 - Believers are the members (1Cor. 12: 12,17)
 - This symbol points out first the spiritual relation that exists between Christ and the believer and the union between believers, secondly that the spiritual authority of the church rests in Christ and not in any intermediary on earth. Each member is important and has his own function/role in the church.
- **A Temple or Building** (1Cor. 3:9-16)
 - Christ is the “Foundation” and the “Chief Cornerstone” (1Pet. 2:6-8).
 - The prophets and the apostles form a part of the foundation, together with Christ. (Eph. 2:20-22)
 - The believers are “living stones” used in the building of the spiritual temple. (1 Pet. 2:5)
 - The Holy Spirit dwells in this temple.
 - This symbol emphasizes first, that Christ is the “Rock” upon which the church is founded; second, that it is an error to teach that the church is founded upon the Apostle Peter; and third, it teaches that God dwells in His spiritual temple by the Holy Spirit, to guide, bless and illuminate it.
- **The True Vine** (Jn.15: 1-2)
 - Christ gives of His own life to the believers in the same manner that the vine gives of its life to its branches (2Pet.1: 4)
 - The believer, as a branch, should bear fruit (Jn.15: 16)
 - God the Father, the Husbandman, will cleanse and purify each believer that He may bear more fruit (Heb.12: 5,6,11)
 - This symbol teaches us first, that the believer in Christ must continuously abide in Christ to be fruitful and that God, as a Father, disciplines His children to direct them in holiness and fruitful service.

The marks of a true church.

Many ask, “How can I recognize the true church?”

- The Word of God is central and abounds in all its teaching/preaching.
- The congregants are engaged in worship – singing, praying, clapping, lifting hands in praise.
- The sacraments/ordinances i.e., water baptism, the Lord’s Supper are observed.
- The believers express love freely expressed and are not judgmental.
- The members of the church pursue a lifestyle of righteousness and holiness.
- There is unity. There should be freedom from divisions. “that they may all be one” (John 17:21)
- The Presence of God is there.

The purpose of the church

WIFE (Acts 2: 42-47). Our mission statement is “Worship God, Win the Lost, Nourish the Found.”

- **Worship God** in spirit and in truth (Jn.4: 23-24; Ps.117) “...singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (Colossians 3:16)
- **Instruction** in the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures for growth in the following areas:
 - Spiritual understanding (2Pet.3:18; 2Tim.3:14-17)

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- Holiness and moral strength (Ps.119: 9; 2Cor.7: 1)
- Love to God and our neighbor (Jn.13:34)
- The establishment of a godly, Christian home.
- Fellowship one with another.
- Evangelism- “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” (Matthew 28:19)
 - By the testimony of a faithful life
 - By the preaching and teaching of the word of God.
 - By faithful intercessory prayer.
 - By acts of mercy. “Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.” (Galatians 2:10) Wayne Grudem writes: “While there seems to be a primacy placed on caring for the physical needs of fellow believers (Acts 11.29, 2 Cor. 8.4, 1 John 3.17), all members of the church, as they have opportunity, are to do good to everyone.” (Gal. 6.10)

Remember the church is the Lord’s. Jesus said: “I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matt.16:18 KJV). Jesus empowered the disciples and us today to fulfil His mandate for the church. “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”” (Acts 1:8)

He has done this by imparting Spiritual Gifts to each one of us.

What is your gift/ability/talent/passion/calling?

Church Discipline

In any church, people will eventually offend one another. The Bible tells us how to deal with offense.

If a brother or sister has something against us:

Matthew 5:23-24 “So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

If someone sins in the church:

Matthew 18:15-17 “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

If a brother is consistently immoral:

1 Corinthians 5:11-13 “But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. Purge the evil person from among you.”

11. THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jn. 14: 16 “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth.”

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity. He is sent to indwell and guide believers.

He is God, possessing divine attributes:

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- Eternal (Heb. 9:14)
- Omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-10)
- Omniscient (1 Cor. 2:10,11)
- Omnipotent (Luke 1:35)

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON!

He is not “the active force of God” as some claim. Jesus and the New Testament writers refer to the Holy Spirit as a person. They use “HE” and “HIM”, never “IT”. (John 14:15-18, 26; 15: 26). Two exceptions are KJV Rom. 8: 16 and 8: 26 which are errors corrected in other versions.

- The following show Him as a person.
 - He has a will. 1 Cor.12: 11 “All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines (will).”
 - He possesses knowledge. 1 Cor. 2:11 “For who knows a person’s thoughts except that person’s own spirit within? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.”
 - He can be grieved. Ep. 4:30 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
 - He searches the deep things of God. 1 Cor. 2:10 “The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.”
 - He speaks. Rev. 2:7 “Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”
 - He intercedes. Rom. 8:26 “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.”
 - He leads. Rom. 8:14 “For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.”
 - He commands. Acts 16:6, 7 “Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.”
 - He calls men to work. Acts 13:2 “While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”
 - He teaches. Jn.14: 26 “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”
- He is our Advocate, our “parakletos”- “one alongside.” He is our best Friend, our Helper, Strengtheners, Teacher, Guide and Comforter. Jn. 14:16
- The Holy Spirit was active in the Old Testament.
 - Creation - Gen. 1:2
 - Anointing Bezalel to build the tabernacle - Ex. 31:3
 - Samson - Judges 14:6, 19; 15:14
 - Saul - 1 Sam 10:10
 - The prophets- Micah 3:8
- Jesus promised to send the Spirit to be with us and to do Christ’s work.
- He promised to come to us through the Holy Spirit. He said that the Spirit would represent Him and act in His place. In His last message to His disciples before His crucifixion, He taught about the coming Holy Spirit and His ministry (John 16:7-16).
- The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.
- The Holy Spirit will show you things to come.

- The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth.
- The Holy Spirit will impart the wisdom of God to your heart.
- Jesus dwells in the believer by the Holy Spirit.

The Fruit of the Spirit.

This is the evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

The gifts of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit equips the church and its saints to do the work of God.

Motivational (or Service) Gifts: Romans 12:6-8 “Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”

Ministry (or Leadership) Gifts: Ephesians 4:11 “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”

Manifestation gifts: 1 Corinthians 12:7 -11 “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

12. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:4.) The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience after salvation that is available to every child of God.

- Jesus promised the baptism in the Holy Spirit. “On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 1:4, 5
- God fulfilled this promise on the day of Pentecost: [Acts 2:1-4]. God came to dwell in them through His Holy Spirit.
- Five examples of Spirit Baptism in the book of Acts. Note that they all spoke in tongues.
 - Pentecost [Acts 2:1-4].
 - Cornelius’ household [Acts 10:44-46].
 - Disciples at Ephesus [Acts 19:1-6].
 - Samaritans [Acts 8:5, 12, 14-17].
 - Saul’s conversion [Acts 9:17, 18; 1Cor.14:18].
- Tongues are the physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Why speak in tongues?
 - I am speaking to God. [1 Cor.14: 12].
 - I am building up myself with power [1Cor. 14:4]

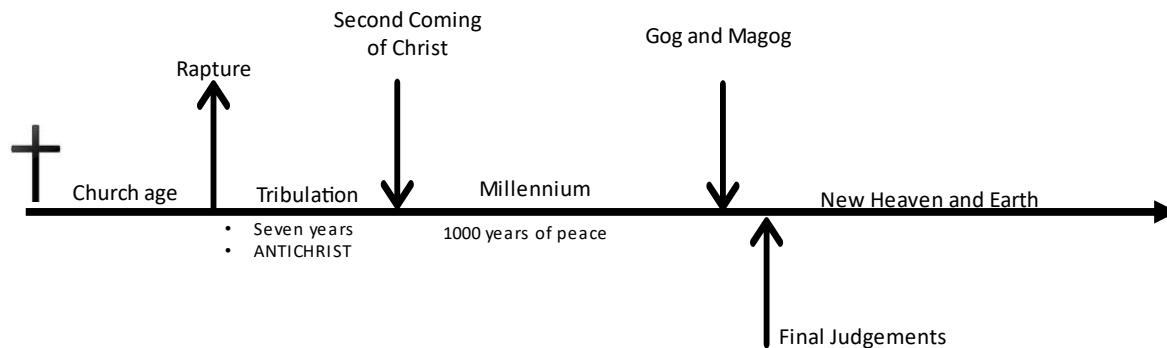
- I open the door for the gifts of the Spirit.
- Other results of being Spirit-filled:
 - Power to be effective witnesses [Acts1: 8].
 - Boldness [Acts 4:8-13; 19:21].
 - Singing and giving thanks to God [Eph.5.18, 19].
- Every believer has the privilege of speaking in tongues. 1 Corinthians 14:5 Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.
- Praying in tongues is akin to praying in the Spirit.
 - 1 Corinthians 14:14–15 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. 15 What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also.
 - Jude 20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,
 - Ephesians 6:18 “praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.”
 - Romans 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”
- God gives His Spirit to believers for divine, supernatural power.
 - God communicates to humans by His Spirit to our Spirit. Those who pray in the Spirit become sensitive to God’s voice.
 - The Holy Spirit helps us pray for things that we do not understand or have trouble praying about (Romans 8:26).
 - The Holy Spirit gives us power for signs and miracles.
- People receive the Holy Spirit by:
 - The laying on of hands.
 - Asking.

We must continue to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18; 1Cor. 14:14, 15). We can and should pray in the Spirit daily.

13. END-TIME EVENTS

The Bible clearly teaches that this present world system will come to an end. The sequence of events is as follows:

- I. The Rapture
- II. The Tribulation
- III. Second Coming of Christ
- IV. The Millennium
- V. Battle of Gog and Magog
- VI. The Great White Throne Judgement
- VII. New Heaven and New Earth



The Return of Christ.

Jesus promised that He will return. “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:3.) Yet “no one knows” (Mark 12:32) the exact time. We are to always be ready, “Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (Matthew 24:44) He said His return is near ““Surely I am coming soon.” (Revelation 22:20)

Although we do not know the day or hour, Jesus mentioned some signs that will precede His coming to indicate its imminence:

- “And you will hear of **wars and rumors of wars**. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be **famines** and **earthquakes** in various places.” (Matthew 24:6–7)
- “There will be great **earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences**. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.” (Luke 21:11)
- “But understand this, that in the last days there will come **times of difficulty**.” (2 Timothy 3:1)
- “And this **gospel** of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:14)
- “For in those days there will be such **tribulation** as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be.” (Mark 13:19)
- “For **false Christs and false prophets** will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect.” (Mark 13:22)
- “Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ ... Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.” (2 Thessalonians 2:1–4)

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

There are different views on the timing of the return of Christ. Many churches believe there are two separate comings – a secret return, also known as the Rapture, then after a period of seven years, a second public, visible return. There is the other view that there is only one return of Christ.

For those who believe in the Rapture, this can either pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation, or post-tribulation [before, midway or after the Tribulation.]

The Rapture.

- According to 1 Thess. 4:16-18; 1Cor.15: 51-53:
- The Lord Himself will come from heaven.
- The dead in Christ will rise first.
- Then the saints who are alive will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.
- We will be with Christ forever!

The Tribulation.

This refers a seven-year period of sorrow and tribulation that the world has never seen before. Read Revelation chapters 6-18.

- First 3.5 years
- Second 3.5 years that some call ‘The Great Tribulation.’
- Seven Seals [Rev. 6-8]
- Seven Trumpets [Rev. 8-9]
- Seven Bowls [Rev.15-18]
- Two Witnesses [Rev. 11] who work mighty miracles.

Antichrist

He will

- Enter a seven-year peace treaty with Israel (Dan. 9.27) but after 3.5 years will break that covenant.
- Desecrate the temple sacrifice, also known as ‘The Abomination of Desolation’. Dan 12:11, Matt. 24:15
- Be empowered by Satan Rev. 13:2, 7.
- Become a great world ruler.
- Claim that he is god and demand the worship of all.
- Blaspheme the God of heaven. Rev. 13:6
- Persecute the saints intensely. Rev. 13:7
- Have the False Prophet promote his worship. Rev.13:11-15
- Perform great signs, wonders and miracles to deceive the world. 2 Thess. 2:9
- Be defeated by Christ at His Second Coming.

The Second Coming of Christ.

Rev. 19:11-21. This refers to the physical, visible return of Christ to end the Tribulation.

- The world rulers will gather their armies at Armageddon to fight Him. Rev 16:16
- The Antichrist and False Prophet will be thrown into the lake of fire. Rev. 19:20
- Satan will be bound for 1000 years. Rev. 20:1-2

The Millennium.

This refers to a thousand-year period of peace on earth. Rev. 20:1-6

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. Then I saw thrones and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also, I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:1–6)

There are different views on the Millennium:

- **Amillennial.** The Millennium is not a literal 1000-year period, essentially, there is no Millennium. Christ defeated Satan at His first coming and is ruling from heaven presently with His church on the earth. He will return to set up his kingdom.
- **Postmillennial:** The millennium will come gradually as the church triumphs in its mission. This is followed by the return of Jesus. This is an optimistic view that suggests the church will grow and have an increasingly greater influence in the world. We will usher in a millennial age of peace and righteousness. Then Christ will return.
- **Premillennial (our view):** The Millennium will come suddenly after the return of Jesus.
 - The Rapture of the Church then the Tribulation
 - Jesus returns after the Tribulation.
 - The saints will be resurrected and reign with Him.
 - Jesus Christ will reign out of Jerusalem.
 - Satan is bound for 1000 years.

Regardless of the differences, we all agree that Christ will return triumphantly, conquer Satan to usher in peace.

Battle of Gog and Magog.

“And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Revelation 20:7–10)

Satan will be released and will again deceive the nations. They march for an attack on Jerusalem but fire from heaven destroys them. This reveals the depravity of the human heart. Despite enjoying 1000 years of peace, man still succumbs to Satan.

The Judgement. (below)

The New Heaven and Earth.

In the end God will create a new heaven and a new earth as He promised. Christians will live forever with God in this new world. (Rev. 21:1, 10, 11; 21:21-27; and 22:1-7). This is Paradise restored for the children of God to live in eternal fellowship with their loving Father.

14. THE FINAL JUDGEMENT

After the thousand-year reign of Christ, the Millennium, God will judge the world through Jesus Christ. This is called the Great White Throne Judgement. "Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them." (Revelation 20:11)

- There are many precursors of judgment in Scripture: Eden, The Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah.
- God warns throughout Scripture that He will judge mankind. "For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil." (Ecclesiastes 12:14)
- Jesus is the one appointed to be judge. "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:" (2 Timothy 4:1). See also John 5:27, Acts 10:42
- Those who rejected Christ as Savior will be judged.
 - They will face eternal torment in hell. "*And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*" (Revelation 20:15)
 - They will be judged according to their works. "And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done." (Revelation 20:12).
 - We can trust God to be just in His judgement.
- Believers will stand Before the judgment seat of God to give an account of themselves to God. "So then each of us will give an account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12)
 - This is not a judgement for punishment but reward. "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment but has passed from death to life." (John 5:24)
 - "If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. (1 Cor. 3. 14-15)
- Angels will also be judged (Jude 6, 2 Peter 2.4)
- The Final Judgement is not for God to determine our heart's condition but to reveal to all His justice, grace, and mercy.
- The Final Judgement:
 - Enables us to entrust all evil done in this world and to us personally into the hand of God. Our response to the offender is to forgive as Jesus has freely forgiven us but we are reminded that He will repay. "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."" (Romans 12:19)
 - Encourage us to "lay up ... treasures in heaven" (Matt. 6.20) knowing we will be rewarded for our righteous works.
 - Stir us to evangelism knowing that "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

15. HELL

References: Matt. 13: 42, 50; 25: 41, 46; Mk. 9: 42-49; Luke 16: 19-31; Rev. 20: 15; 21: 8

Many are offended by this doctrine but although it is highly uncomfortable, we cannot remain true to Scripture without accepting it. The Bible teaches a literal hell and there are 162 NT references to it.

““Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’” (Matthew 25:41)

“‘... where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’” (Mark 9:48)

“And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:15)

Those who reject Jesus Christ, and His free gift of salvation will go there. Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels, not for people.

- **Hell is a place of:**
 - Fire. “and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 13:42, 50) “And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:15)
 - Torment and punishment. “... in Hades, being in torment, ... for I am in anguish in this flame.” (Luke 16: 22-24)
 - Consciousness. Luke 16.23
 - Worms. Mark 9.48
 - Eternal suffering and not annihilation as some teach. “And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matthew 25:46)
- No one escapes hell once he arrives there. There is no change of mind after death!
- Some ask: “How can a God of love punish people in hell?” The Bible tells of God’s love, goodness and mercy but also His holiness and justice. We also know there is great evil in the world, and this calls forth the just wrath of a holy God. Evil cannot go unpunished. God will judge all the evil and wickedness perpetrated by ungodly men on the earth. Finally, justice will be done.
- People choose hell by rejecting God’s offer of salvation.

16. HEAVEN

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.” (Isaiah 65:17)

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”” (Revelation 21:1–5)

“They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.” (Revelation 22:4–5)

Read Rev.21.1-22.5.

- Heaven is the dwelling place of God. Jesus said, “Our Father in heaven.”

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- It is a place of beauty, splendor, majesty, and glory. The cherubim, seraphim and angelic are all there worshiping God. (See Isaiah 6.)
- Heaven is the eternal home of those who have submitted their lives to the Lordship of Christ.
- The heavens and earth as we know it will be recreated. Paradise will be restored.
- Satan will be forever removed.
- The New Jerusalem will be the capital city of the new earth.
- There will be no more sin, pain, evil, sorrow, sickness, or death there. There is an end to life's sorrows, struggles, sicknesses, needs etc.
- There will be no more natural disasters of earthquakes, hurricanes, floods etc.
- There will no more night.
- There will be no need for the light of the sun for the Lamb will be its light.

Believers will:

- Inhabit a glorified, spiritual body that can be recognized by others.
- Eat and drink as did on earth.
- Exercise dominion over the earth. We will rule and reign with Christ.
- Continue to grow in knowledge.
- See God face to face.
- Enjoy the treasures we have laid up as we labored for Christ on earth.

Our minds cannot conceive the joys, glory, and beauty of heaven. It will exceed our highest expectations. What a hope to have! I can anticipate a joyful, peaceful, and glorious future for all eternity.

PART TWO: WHAT WE PRACTICE

1. DISCIPLESHIP

We are called to be disciples.

- Jesus said to his followers: “Follow me.” Then he instructed them to go and make disciples.
- Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Jesus calls for absolute surrender!

- Luke 9:23-24 And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”

What does it cost you to follow Jesus? What are you willing to give up to obey and follow Him?

- Luke 14:27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.
- Paul says it this way in Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

We are called to OBEDIENCE.

Jesus is not only Savior but also our Master.

- Luke 6:46-49 “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”
- Matthew 7:21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
- In the OT, God gave His people the Ten Commandments to obey. Ex. 20: 1-17
- John 14:15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”
- Ephesians 5:3-5 “But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”

Believers are to maintain healthy relationships, avoid those who can corrupt your faith.

- 1 Corinthians 5:11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.
- Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

We are to love one another.

- 1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.

- What is the greatest commandment?
- Matthew 22:36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”
- 1 John 4:20 If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

To be a disciple is to follow Jesus, reach the lost and engage in this process with other believers.

2. PRAYER

The critical importance of prayer to every believer cannot be overemphasized. Volumes have been written on this subject and each one should practice this vital discipline. No one can claim to be a Christian without paying diligence to prayer.

God desires us to stay involved with Him through prayer. Prayer is personal communication with God. It is communing with God, being intimate with Him and getting to know Him.

Prayer is not just about us. It involves us in a bigger story – the kingdom of God. Jesus said we should pray “Thy kingdom come.” We are involved in God’s program on the earth.

Prayer is our means of communication with God. Through it we:

- Praise and worship God for His constant blessings (Phil.4: 6)
- Confess our sins to God.
- Bring our requests to God (Jn.15: 7; Matt.7: 7)
- Make intercession for others (Eph.3: 14-17; 1Sam.12: 23).

Examples of prayer:

- Hannah (1 Sam. 1) She poured out her soul to God asking Him for a son.
- The Lord Jesus set an example for us: “And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.” (Mark 1:35) See also Mk.6:46; Luke 6:12.
- The Early Church was constant in prayer. “All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer...” (Acts 1:14) See also Acts 1:14; 2:42; 4:31; 6:4

Keys to effective prayer:

- Ask. “You do not have, because you do not ask.” (James 4:2b) ““Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” (Matthew 7:7)
- Faith. “Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” (Mark 11:24)
- Abiding in God’s Word. “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” (John 15:7)
- God’s will. “And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.” (1 John 5:14)
- Persistence. “pray without ceasing,” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). “And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.” (Luke 18:1)

The power of Prayer:

- Mark 11:24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

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- John 15:7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

Hindrances to prayer:

- Sin. "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." (Psalm 66:18)
- Unbelief "But let him ask in faith, with no doubting ...For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;" (James 1:6-7)
- Unforgiveness. "And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." (Mark 11:25)
- Wrong motives. "You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions." (James 4:3)

God's ears are open to the cry of the righteous. Prayer is the highest calling of the saint. It holds the secret to the power of the Christian and the church.

Unanswered prayer:

What about unanswered prayer? It is obvious God does not answer all the prayers of everyone on earth. If prayers are unanswered, we must review the list above and ask ourselves, for example, "Is this the will of God?" "Do I have sin or unforgiveness in my heart? Am I abiding in Christ or living in rebellion against Him?" We must be resigned to the sovereign will of God. Remember Jesus asked God to take away the cup from Him but God, the Father did not. (Luke 22.42) Paul also God to take away the thorn from his flesh but that was not answered. (2 Cor. 12.8-9)

Make it a priority to be devoted to a life of prayer. Spend time with our loving Savior and Heavenly Father. Do you have a specific time devoted to prayer? Do you have place to go and pray?

3. WORSHIP

We are called to worship God in spirit and truth and the splendor of holiness. God is worthy of worship. John 4:23-24 "But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

- Psalm 96:9 "Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!"
- The Bible tells us how to worship God:
- Psalm 47:1 "Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!
- Psalm 47:6 Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
- Psalm 98:1 Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
- Psalm 98:4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
- Psalm 98:5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody!
- Psalm 149:3 Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!
- Psalm 150:3 Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!
- Psalm 150:4 Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!
- Psalm 150:5 Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
- Psalm 150:6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!

Whenever we get a glimpse into glory we see powerful worship:

"And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" (Isaiah 6:3)

"And the four living creatures, ... day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" (Revelation 4:8)

God deserves our worship. Our main purpose for gathering in His house ought to be worship!

4. THE STUDY OF GOD'S WORD

Another necessary discipline is the continuous, diligent study of God's Word. Jesus said, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' Matt.4:4. God's word is food for our soul, a guide for life's journey and a manual for spiritual warfare. We read, study, meditate and memorize the Word because:

- It produces spiritual growth. 1Pe 2:2 'As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.' KJV.
- It cleanses us. *"How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word."* (Psalm 119:9)
- It produces faith *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."* (Romans 10:17)
- It transforms our thinking and our lives. *"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."* (Romans 12:1-2)
- It brings about spiritual freedom. 'And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' (John 8:32)
- It is alive, active and powerful. *"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."* (Heb. 4.12)
- It contains promises for everything we need. 2 Peter 1:3, 4.
- It brings success. *"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."* (Joshua 1:8, also Ps. 1.1-3)
- It enables us to defeat Satan. (Matt. 4: 1-11)
- It brings victory over sin. *"I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."* (Psalm 119:11)

We must be hungry for God and His Word (Ps. 42: 1-2.) *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."* Matt. 5:6

We must not only read and listen to God's Word but be OBEДИENT to it. *"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."* James 1: 22

I will encourage you to invest in a good study bible (NIV or ESV Study Bible) and make notes as you study. Read through the Bible every year.

There are many free online Bible study resources:

- <https://biblehub.com/>
- <https://www.blueletterbible.org/>
- <https://www.biblegateway.com/>

Develop a consistent, methodological, in-depth study of God's Holy Word and release the power of God in your life!

5. FASTING

Fasting is probably the most difficult discipline there is. It was used in the Old Testament by Israel when they were on the threshold of spiritual breakthrough, when they drew closer to God or were desperate for Him to intervene. Jesus and the apostles continued this discipline. Jesus fasted for 40 days before He launched into ministry (Matt.4:2). He expects us to fast: "...when you fast..." (Matt.6:17)

Fasting:

- Reflects obedience to God.
- Causes us to focus on Him.
- Enables us to 'deny self.'
- Shows desperation for God and draws us nearer to God.
- Brings about freedom from much clutter in our spiritual lives.
- Makes us more sensitive to God.

Many who fast will testify that it keeps them spiritually focused and near to God. When our prayer lives become dry, fasting turns that around too.

6. FELLOWSHIP

Christians **MUST** be part of a local church. No one who truly believes in Christ can confess Him unless he/she is a part of a local assembly.

- Jesus set the example for us. He went to worship regularly in the Jewish synagogue and Temple. "He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, **as was his custom.**" (Luke 4:16)
- The Early Church gathered regularly. "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to **fellowship**, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.... **Every day** they continued to **meet together in the temple courts**. They broke **bread in their homes** and ate together with glad and sincere hearts." (Acts 2: 42-46)
- In Hebrews we are warned, "Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, **not giving up meeting together**, as some are in the habit of doing." (Heb. 10: 24, 25)

Many claim to be Christians today but state they are not part of a local church. This is disobedience to God. It perpetuates a sinner's rebellious state and shows an unwillingness to submit to godly leadership. Their lives lack accountability and transparency. God designed the local church for a purpose.

The born-again believer knows the joy of fellowship with his brothers and sisters in Christ and the strength and encouragement they bring.

7. RIGHTEOUSNESS

The challenge to the church today is to "walk the walk." Our belief must be supported by our behaviour, orthodoxy by orthopraxy, confession by character. Our testimony/lifestyle bears a more effective witness of faith in Christ than words do.

Jesus said: "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:48) and "For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20)

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There are a few cultural issues that Christians must face. The mandate of “Be ye holy for I am holy” should be our guide to navigate these questions.

Abortion:

- Murder is explicitly prohibited in Scripture. (Ex. 20:13)
- The baby in the womb is seen as a person by God. (Ps. 139: 13-16)

Drunkenness:

- We must refrain from revelry and drunkenness.

Cigarettes/ Marijuana

- The body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit so we must refrain from anything that will destroy it.
- We ought to follow a healthy diet, exercise and control our weight.
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

Sexuality:

- We live in a hypersexualized and very promiscuous society, but the Scriptures clearly stipulate that sexual activity is to be enjoyed by a man and woman within the confines of marriage only.
- Christians are to avoid pornography, fornication (premarital sex), adultery (sex outside of marriage).
 - “But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.” Ephesians 5:3
 - But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. 1 Corinthians 7:2
 - “Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.” 1 Corinthians 6:18
- God’s word on **homosexuality**:
 - Romans 1:26-27 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.
 - 1 Timothy 1:9-10 “understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, ...”
 - 1 Corinthians 6:9- 10 “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.
 - The phrase “men who practice homosexuality” translates two Greek words ‘*malakos*’ and ‘*arsenokoitēs*’ which refer to the passive and active partners in same-sex relations.
 - Leviticus 18:22 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.
- When we engage someone in this lifestyle, we must be loving and gracious. The Scripture does not teach us to hate, despise or treat them with contempt! However, loving them does not mean agreeing with them. Speaking the truth of God’s Word is the greatest way to love someone.
- Note: Tolerance means to “allow the existence” of different, even opposing opinions. It does not mean acceptance of or agreement with those opinions.

8. WATER BAPTISM

Water Baptism and Communion are the only New Testament rituals/ordinances. An ordinance is a prescribed practice, such as a religious rite. Jesus gave ordinances to the Church as methods to help us act out our faith. Each ordinance is a physical demonstration of a spiritual grace.

- Water Baptism is the immersion in water for new believers. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “to dip under”.
- We practice water baptism because Jesus commanded this. “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.” (Mark 16:16. See also Matthew 28:18, 19). The Apostles also commanded believers to be baptized (Acts 2:38).
- Baptism is only for those who believed the gospel and have decided to serve Jesus as Lord. It is an outward demonstration of an inward faith. Baptism alone does not save anyone.
- In Baptism, the believer identifies with Christ. When I am baptized, I demonstrate what Christ did for me in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-6). I die to sin, I am buried like Christ, and I am raised in the power of the Spirit.
- When I am baptized, I declare that I am a new person in Christ.
- Water baptism is a testimony to others that I am now a child of God. I now follow Jesus.

9. THE LORDS SUPPER (COMMUNION)

The Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion is the ordinance by which the church regularly remembers the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ as He commanded. “For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; **do this in remembrance of me.**” In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, **in remembrance of me.**” For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” (1 Cor.11:23-30)

When we participate in communion, we proclaim what the Lord has done through his death. We are demonstrating outwardly an inward faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

- The wine represents Christ’s blood that was shed to cleanse us from sin.
- The bread represents His body that was broken to provide healing.
- We must partake in a worthy manner. It is not fitting for someone to live a sinful lifestyle and take communion. “Worthy” also refers to the way we approach the Lord’s Table. We must understand what Communion is about and partake reverently.

10. LAYING ON OF HANDS

This is called a foundational doctrine of Christ (Hebrew 6:1, 2.) The Bible gives five reasons for the laying on of hands:

- For healing (Luke 4:40; Mark 16:17, 18).
- For receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17; see also Acts 19:1, 2, 6).
- To confer an office; to separate for a specific duty (Acts 6:2-6).
- To impart blessing (Mark 10:13-16).
- To ordain into the ministry (1Timothy 4:14).

Gifts can be imparted (as the Holy Spirit wills) for ministry by the laying on of hands.

When we lay hands on someone for ordination, we are confirming a call by God, not creating one. If a person does not already both sense and demonstrate a calling in his life for ministry, it is fruitless to lay hands on him and ordain him.

11. ANOINTING WITH OIL

Jesus' disciples anointed the sick with oil for healing (Mark 6:12).

James says: "Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well." (James 5:14, 15). The prayer of faith brings healing, not the oil.

The oil is a symbol of the work of the Holy Spirit.

12. TITHES AND OFFERING

'For God so loved that He gave...' (John 3:16.) The God of heaven is generous, a God who gives and as His children we should also manifest that attribute in our lives. Throughout the Bible we see how much He gives; He fulfils His promises and blesses His people. In the Old Testament, Israel brought Him regular sacrifices, offerings, and tithes. In the New Testament, sacrifices are no longer required but we continue to worship Him, show our appreciation for His goodness, and manifest His nature by continuing to give tithes and offerings.

Tithing is a Biblical principle. It is not confined to the Mosaic covenant, the Law. It preceded the Law.

- "And Abram gave him (Melchizedek) a tenth of everything." (Genesis 14:20)
- Jacob: "And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you." (Genesis 28:22)
- "Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the LORD's; it is holy to the LORD." (Leviticus 27:30)
- God promised to bless those who tithed faithfully and curse those who did not. "Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need." (Malachi 3:8–10)
- Jesus endorsed tithing. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others." (Matthew 23:23)
- Paul made use of the law of tithing as practiced by the Israelites for the support of their priesthood and the ministry of their worship, to teach the Christians how to support their own ministers of worship.
 - "To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service that they do, their service in the tent of meeting," (Numbers 18:21)
 - "Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same

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way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.” (1 Corinthians 9:13–14)

- Some may state that there is no New Testament command to tithe. This is true but consider:
 - Not only 10% but all that we possess belongs to God. We are stewards of all He has provided.
 - Since we are now under grace and have so much more than they had in the Old Testament, why should we do less? We should be even more generous.
 - Is the reluctance to tithe a reflection of our old nature of greed and covetousness hiding behind spiritual arguments?
- “The point is this: “Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:6–7).
- “Give and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38)

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

2 Peter 3: 18