

**DOCTRINAL STATEMENT
OF
SKIFF LAKE BIBLE CHURCH**

PREFACE

We believe that the Bible is the only standard of faith and practice for the believer in Jesus Christ and to the church. The Bible alone is infallible and complete.

There is an unchanging emphasis upon doctrine in the Bible. In fact, doctrine is referred to in the New Testament about 50 times. An emphasis upon what man believes was established in the first church assembly, for in Acts 2:42, it is recorded that the new converts "continued steadfast in the apostle's doctrine..." In the Epistles, Paul writes to Timothy and exhorts him again and again about the matter of knowing specific doctrine. Timothy was left in Ephesus that he might "charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:3). Again, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou has attained." (1 Timothy 4:6). Twice Paul exhorts Timothy to devote himself to doctrine (1 Timothy 4:13, 16). Indeed, Paul's final appeal, shortly before his own death, was to "preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." (2 Timothy 4:7, 3).

We believe the days are upon us when men desire to "heap to themselves" teachers who will tickle the ears of their hearers with words of little substance. The need of the hour is for strong doctrine. The cry of the day is for clarity of statement. The yearning of the believing heart is for confidence in that which is explicit and implicit in the Word of the living God. We at Skiff Lake Bible Church affirm without equivocation the doctrine of the early church. Therefore, we take upon ourselves the responsibility to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3)

The doctrinal statements which follow do not by any means exhaust the content of our beliefs, which encompass the whole Word of God, and they are not intended to set a limit beyond which faith cannot go within His Word. However, we do believe that in so far as these statements extend they are a true presentation of the sound doctrine taught in the Scriptures and, therefore, binding upon us as Christian believers.

Article I – THE SCRIPTURES

We believe the Scriptures to be completely infallible and inerrant as originally given by God in the original text. The entire writings of the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired in the sense that "holy men of God" were moved by the Holy Spirit to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writing — historical, poetical, doctrinal, prophetic, and scientific, thus the sixty-six books of the Bible constitute the Word of God as given to man by the Holy Spirit.

We believe that all Scripture centers around the Lord Jesus. Therefore no portion, even the Old Testament, is properly read or understood, until it leads to Him.

We believe that the Scriptures are the supreme and final revelation of God's will for man until the Lord returns and are, therefore, altogether sufficient in and of themselves as our only infallible rule of faith and practice.

We believe that all Scriptures are to be interpreted literally, giving due consideration to the common usage of the various literary forms.

We believe that there is but one correct interpretation of any given passage of Scripture. This one interpretation may have several applications, however, they should not corrupt the literal interpretation. (Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21)

Article II – THE GODHEAD

We believe in one triune God who is personal, spirit, and sovereign. The Godhead eternally exists and is self revealing in three distinct persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All three persons have precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections and each one is to be honored and worshipped equally as true God. (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6)

Article III – THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that, as provided and purposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin and received a human body and a sinless human nature. (Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18; 3:16; Hebrews 4:15)

We believe that, on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man, but sinless throughout His life. Yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man. His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine. (Luke 2:40; John 1:1-2; Philippians 2:5-8)

We believe that in fulfillment of prophecy He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that being rejected of that nation He, according to the eternal counsels of God, gave His life a ransom for all. (John 1:11; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Timothy 2:6)

We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, He voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sin of the world bearing the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose. His death was, therefore, substitutionary in the most absolute sense —the just for the unjust —and by His death He became the Savior of the lost. (John 1:29; Romans 3:25-26; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Hebrews 10:5-14; 1 Peter 3:18)

We believe that, according to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died, and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers. (John 20:20; Philippians 3:20)

We believe that, on departing from the earth, He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. (Hebrews 1:3)

We believe that He became Head over all things to the church which is His body. In this ministry He continually functions as advocate for the redeemed with unceasing intercession. (Ephesians 1:22-23; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1)

Article IV – THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third person of the triune God and not a mere force or influence. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine agent in creation, revelation, and redemption. He is involved in distinct ministries in relation to salvation, including the conviction of man with respect to sin, the regeneration of all who place their faith in Christ, the spiritual baptism of the redeemed into the body of Christ, the indwelling and anointing of all who are saved; thereby sealing them unto the day of redemption, and the continued filling for power, teaching, and service of those among the saved who are yielded to Him and who are subject to His will (John 3:6; 16:7-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:30;5:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7; 1 John 2:20-27)We believe that the Holy Spirit provides spiritual gifts for the equipping of the body of Christ. These gifts are multiple, varied, and provide Divinely given ability for Christian service. He distributes these gifts sovereignly and specifically to individual believers to the extent to which He deems best.

We believe that certain gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings, were temporary. The primary purpose of these gifts was to authenticate supernaturally the ministry of the apostles and to confirm the message which they preached and that these gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism, indwelling, and infilling of the Holy Spirit. The deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection. (Acts 4:8, 31; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 13:8)

Article V – THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was directly and immediately created by God and in His image, free from sin and not in any sense the product of an animal ancestry. He was created with a rational nature, great intellect, and moral responsibility to God. Man was originally created with the divine intention that he should glorify God, enjoy His fellowship, and fulfill His will and purpose in the earth. But by personal disobedience to the revealed will of God, man became a sinful creature and the progenitor of a fallen race, which is universally sinful in both nature and practice. As a consequence, man became subject to the wrath of God, inherently corrupt, and incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from Divine grace. Thus, man is hopelessly lost apart from the salvation which is in the Lord Jesus Christ. The fall of man was a historical and non-repeatable act, the effects of which are transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ alone being the exception. All men thus are sinners by Divine pronouncement, nature, and deed. (Genesis 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Psalm 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6;5:40; 6:35; Romans 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 5:6; 1John 3:8)

Article VI – CREATION

We believe in special creation by God, which holds to the literal interpretation of the Genesis account. No gaps of time nor day-age theory is allowed by the text of Scripture. Creation was completed by God in a literal six-day period and the seventh day God rested, not out of necessity, but as an example for men to follow.(Genesis 1:5-2:3; Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 4:32; Psalm 8:3; 33:6-9;Isaiah 40:28; Matthew 19:4-7; Mark 10:6; 13:19; John 1:1-3; Colossians1:16-17; Hebrews 11:2-3; Revelation 3:14; 4:11)

Article VII – SALVATION ONLY THROUGH CHRIST ALONE

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again. No degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven. But a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are sons of God. We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus

Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our place and on our behalf. No repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity.(Leviticus 17:11; Isaiah 64:6; Matthew 26:28; John 3:5, 18; Romans 5:6-9;2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; Philippians 3:4-9;Titus 3:5;James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:18-19,23) We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ and that repentance is a vital part of believing, and is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation. Nor are any other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation.(John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 1:16-17;3:22,26; 4:5;10:4; Galatians 3:22)

Article VIII – SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is that work whereby the believing sinner is set apart to God from sin. Sanctification involves three aspects: positional, progressive and final. Positional sanctification is a setting apart, once and for all, of the believing sinner as God's own possession by means of the blood of Christ. Therefore, in his standing before God the believing sinner is reckoned holy. Progressive sanctification is the present work of God whereby the believer, in his experience, is progressively set apart from sin and brought toward holiness. While the standing of the believer in Christ before God is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. Final sanctification is the work of the future wherein God will wholly finish the process of perfection at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 5:25-27; 1Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 12:10)

Article IX – THE EXTENT OF SALVATION

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises that faith in Christ which is illustrated and described in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion linked to Him, and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is, therefore, in no way required by God to seek a so-called "second blessing" or a "second work of grace". (John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 2:10; 1 John 4:17; 5:11-12)

Article X – ETERNAL SECURITY

We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritorless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love. But having

undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son. (John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Romans 8:29; 11:29; 1Corinthians 6:19; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2; 5:13; Jude 24)

Article XI – THE ASSURANCE OF THE BELIEVER

We believe it is the privilege of all who are born again by the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation. This assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience. (Luke 10:20; 21[or 22]:32; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 10:22; 1 John 5:13)

Article XII – THE CHRISTIAN'S WALK

We believe that believers are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Holy Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit that they will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. We believe that every child of God possesses their God created but sin infected human nature and the Adamic/sin nature (which in this life is never eradicated). They also possess the Divine nature of God the Father as a result of Holy Spirit regeneration and the permanent indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Although they will never achieve sinless perfection while in their mortal bodies, they can experience victory over the sin nature in their daily Christian living. According to Ephesians 2:8-10, it is God's desired will for the believer to walk in the good works that God prepared before hand.

This the believer will do by submitting to the control of the Holy Spirit when they yield to His will as declared in the Word of God. (Acts 4:8, 31; Romans 8:23, 1 Corinthians 13:8)

Article XIII – THE CHRISTIAN'S SERVICE

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the Holy Spirit and each is called to his own divinely appointed service by the Holy Spirit. In the apostolic church there were certain gifted men —apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some men are especially called of God to be evangelists, pastors, and teachers. To the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory these shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God.(Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11)We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord. These rewards will be bestowed at the Judgment Seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself. (1 Corinthians 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Corinthians 5:10)

Article XIV – THE CHURCH

We believe in the one true Church, the mystical body and bride of the Lord Jesus, which He began to build on the day of Pentecost and will complete at His second coming. We believe the true Church to be completely distinct from the nation Israel. Believers are members of the true Church regardless of membership or non-membership in the organized churches of Earth. All true believers of the present age who have put their faith and trust in Christ are baptized immediately by the Holy Spirit and thus become members of the true Church, which is Christ's. Having become members of one another, believers are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart. We believe that the New Testament clearly

teaches that the members of this one spiritual body should assemble themselves together in local churches. The local church is to be outwardly characterized by the same unity of the Holy Spirit as is found in the true Church. We believe the basic responsibility of the local church is to do the will of God, which, broadly speaking, is threefold: 1. To seek, by the guidance, leading, and power of the Spirit of God, the salvation of all men, not only at home, but around the world. 2. To edify the saints, the members of the body of Christ. 3. To assemble the believers for worship, prayer, fellowship, teaching, united testimony, and mutual exhortation and encouragement unto good works. (Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-16; Colossians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 4:11-16; Hebrews 10:24-25)

Article XV – THE GREAT COMMISSION

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that, after they are saved, they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world. (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; 1 Peter 1:17; 2:11)

Article XVI – THE ORDINANCES

We believe that water baptism and the communion of the Lord's Table are the only ordinances of the church and that they are a Scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age. We believe in the total immersion of the believer in water in the name of the triune God as the method of baptism. Skiff Lake Bible Church uses this ordinance, being a command of Christ, as a prerequisite for membership. We believe the communion of the Lord's Table was instituted by Christ to believers, walking in fellowship with their Savior and His body, as a commemoration of His atoning death. These two ordinances are to be observed until the Lord shall come again. While holding to the importance and practice of the ordinances, we recognize that they in no way add to the gospel of the redeeming grace of God through faith in Christ and, thus, are not to be considered in any way as a means to attaining salvation. (Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 10:47-48; 16:32-33; 18:7-8; 1 Corinthians 11:26)

Article XVII – ANGELS, FALLEN AND UNFALLEN

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings known as angels. We believe that one of these, Lucifer, son of the morning, the highest in rank, sinned through pride, rebelling against God and thus became Satan. We believe that a great company of the angels followed Satan in his moral fall, some of whom became demons who are active as agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6) We believe that Satan is the originator of sin and that, with God's permission, he, through subtlety, led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power. Satan is the great enemy of God and His people, the leader of all other fallen angels, the deceiver and god of this present world, appearing as an angel of light and even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine, which systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ and of salvation by the grace of God and faith in Christ alone. (Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-14; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:10-12; 2

Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 4:1-3) We believe that, although his powers are supernaturally great, Satan is strictly limited by the permissive will of God, who overrules all his wicked devices for good. Satan was defeated and judged at the cross and, although he now rules as the god of the world, his final doom is certain. At the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, after which time he will be loosed for a short time, and then cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where he shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:1-3, 10) We believe the redeemed are able to resist and overcome Satan with the armor of God and the Blood of the Lamb. We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God, from where they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. (Luke 15:10; Ephesians 1:21; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:12)

Article XVIII – DISPENSATIONALISM

We believe in the dispensational view of Biblical interpretation. We believe that the dispensations are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on the earth through man under varying responsibilities. Dispensationalism should not be construed to mean that God has changed, but rather that His dealings with man have a progressive nature based upon an increase in the revealed knowledge of God within man, and that along with this increase in knowledge has come an increase in accountability. We acknowledge seven dispensations or rules of life, three of which are the subject of extended revelation in the Scriptures: The dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of Grace, and the future dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom. We believe that these are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused, as they are chronologically successive. We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation, that according to the eternal purpose of God (Ephesians 3:11) salvation in the divine reckoning is always "by grace through faith" and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation. (1 Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 3:2; 3:9, ASV; Colossians 1:25; 1 Timothy 1:4, ASV) We believe that it has always been true that "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6), and that the practice of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints. However, it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God (John 1:29). It is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ. We believe also that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ (1 Peter 1:10-12). Therefore, their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in Hebrews 11:1-40. We believe further that their faith thus manifested was counted unto them for righteousness (Romans 4:3 with Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:5-8; Hebrews 11:7). We reject the extreme teaching known as "Hyper-Dispensationalism", such as that which opposes either the communion of the Lord's Table or water baptism as a Scriptural means of testimony for the church in the present dispensation.

Article XIX – RESURRECTION AND THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (John 5:29; Revelation 20:11-14). We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those regenerated in the Church Age shall pass immediately into the Lord's presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of their glorified bodies when Christ returns in the air for His body, the church. Then at His second coming to the earth, He will resurrect Old Testament Tribulation period saints. The redeemed of all ages shall be with Him forever in glory.

We believe the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennial kingdom, when

soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. (Daniel 12:1-2; Luke 16:19-26; 23:42-43; John 5:29; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20:4-6; 11:14)

Article XX – THE BLESSED HOPE

We believe that, according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself both those who are alive and remain until His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus. This event is the blessed hope set forth in Scriptures and referred to by many as the rapture of the church. For this hope believers should constantly watch and pray. The time of the rapture is unrevealed but always imminent. (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14)

Article XXI – THE TRIBULATION

We believe that the translation (rapture) of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of the seven years described in the Scriptures as Israel's seventieth week, during which the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. The whole period of Israel's seventieth week will be a time when Jesus Christ will pour out the righteous judgments of God upon the unbelieving world, at the end of which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. This period will be the time of Jacob's trouble and is called the great tribulation. We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the present age will end with fearful apostasy. (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15-21; Revelation 6:1-19:21)

Article XXII – THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe that the great tribulation on earth will climax with Christ descending from heaven with His church to establish His glorious and literal kingdom over all nations for a thousand years. During this time Satan will be bound, the curse which now rests upon the whole creation will be lifted and the whole world will be brought to the knowledge of God. The nation Israel will be restored to her own land and the covenant promises of God will be realized. (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:15-25:46; Acts 15:16-17; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Revelation 20:1-3)

Article XXIII – THE ETERNAL STATE

We believe that at the close of His millennial reign Christ will raise and judge the unsaved dead and commit them to eternal punishment. The saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God. Then Christ will deliver up His Messianic Kingdom to God the Father in order that, as the Eternal Son, He may reign forever with the Father in the New Heaven and the New Earth. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15; 21-22)

Article XXIV – MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

We believe that the institution of marriage has been ordained by God to join one adult male with one adult female for companionship and procreation, and is the only proper outlet for sexual pleasure. We believe that a person's gender is determined at birth based on physical traits, except in rare cases of genetic anomalies. We deny that any form of marriage has validity from any source other than God, that marriage is valid between any other couple than one adult male and one adult female, that gender may be altered by surgery, attire, or any other artifice, or that sexual activity is permissible outside of a valid

marriage. (Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 2:18-24; Genesis 5:2; Matthew 19:4-9; Mark 10:5-9; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:25-33; Revelation 19:7-9; Revelation 21:2)

As amended on 10-8-2017.