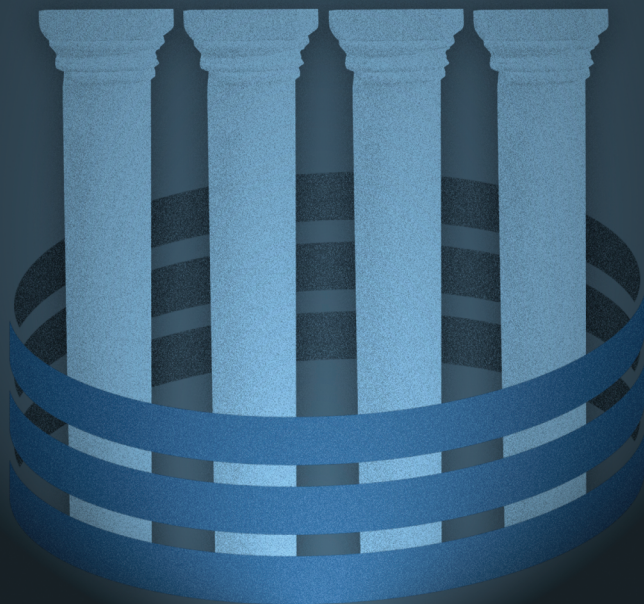


WE BELIEVE

GATE
Articles of Faith



COMPILED BY
THAMO NAIDOO

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Note: Scriptural references used in this book are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) of the Bible.

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THAMO NAIDOO

1. THE BIBLE

- 1.1. The Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testament Scriptures (66 Books), in its original form, is the fully inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God (Psalm 119:142, 160; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- 1.2. The Scriptures are Sacred, Complete and the Supreme and Final Authority. They are the Absolute Rule in all matters of truth, doctrine, faith, life and conduct, superseding all views that contradict the interpretation of the Scriptures. (Psalm 19:7-9, 119:160; Acts 15:13-20).
- 1.3. The Scriptures are the self-revelation of God's nature, purpose and will to Humanity (Psalm 138:2; John 1:1-4, 5:39; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 John 1:1-3; Revelation 19:13).
- 1.4. The Church partakes of the Divine nature of Christ through its reception of, and submission and obedience to God's Word, and is able to know the will and purpose of God for the creation of all things in Heaven and in the Earth (Psalm 111:10; Matthew 13:1-23; John 3:5, 14:21-23; Ephesians 1:13, 5:27; Hebrews 4:11-12; James 1:18-21; 1 Peter 1:22-23; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:9).

2. DEITY

We believe in the mystery of God (Colossians 2:2; Revelation 10:7), presented as ONE God (Deuteronomy

6:4), expressed to creation in the persons of FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT. In Christ, the mystery of Deity is presented to all of creation (Colossians 1:19, 2:9; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Hebrews 1:1-3).

2.1. CHRIST

- 2.1.1. When we refer to Christ we refer to the pre-existent, eternal and uncreated Being in whom presided the fullness of Deity. The historical Jesus is the incarnation of Christ in a body. Christ Jesus is the resurrected, ascended Son seated at the right hand of the Father.
- 2.1.2. In Christ we discover the image of God (*imago dei*), presented to creation as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Accordingly we believe, that in the name of God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) is contained the image and glory of God (Colossians 2:9).
- 2.1.3. The pre-existent, pre-incarnate Christ is a mystery, which was hidden in God from eternity (Ephesians 3:4-9, 5:32; Colossians 1:26-27, 2:2, 4:3).
- 2.1.4. The mystery of Christ is visibly presented and expressed to creation in the person of Jesus (Colossians 2:9). Therefore, in the humanity of the historical Jesus, the fullness of Deity is made manifest (Colossians 1:19).
- 2.1.5. The believers are introduced to the knowledge of God (Theology) by receiving and understanding the revelation of Christ (Christology). We believe

that ‘Christology’ informs ‘Theology’. By this we mean that Christ is the only access to the knowledge of God (John 14:6; Ephesians 2:18).

- 2.1.6. The mystery of Christ comes to the Church by divine revelation through the teaching on the doctrine of Christ (Ephesians 1:17; 3:1ff; 2 John 1:9). The key to unlocking this mystery is the grace and ministry of apostles and prophets as revealed by the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:49-52; Ephesians 3:3-5).
- 2.1.7. In the incarnate Christ we discover one God, co-equal, eternal, self-existent, self-revealed, immutable and manifested to creation as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:26; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10; 1 Kings 8:60; Matthew 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 14:26, 15:26; Acts 2:33; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 1:3-14, 4:4-6; Colossians 2:9; James 2:19; 1 Peter 1:2, 3:18; 1 John 5:7; Revelation 1:4-5).

2.2. THE FATHER

- 2.2.1. The Father is co-equal and co-eternal in Deity.
- 2.2.2. In Christ, the Father is the functional head within Deity (1 Corinthians 11:3, 15:24-28).
- 2.2.3. In Christ, the Father is presented as the head of the family in heaven and on earth (Ephesians 3:15).
- 2.2.4. In Christ, believers should function according to the scope and pattern of the Divine Father/Son

relationship emulated in the relationship of Jesus with His Heavenly Father (John 17:23, 14:7-11).

- 2.2.5. In Christ, there is one Father who is over all, through all and in all creation (Ephesians 4:6).

2.3. JESUS CHRIST, THE SON

2.3.1. Jesus Christ is co-equal and co-eternal in Deity.

2.3.2. Christ, The Eternal Word, was born by immaculate conception (through the Holy Spirit) of the virgin Mary and became fully man, known to us as Jesus Christ; suffered, was crucified, died as the sacrificial lamb for humanity under Pontius Pilate, was buried and on the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end¹ (John 1:1,14; Acts 2:32-36; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Hebrews 9:11-14; 1 Peter 2:24).

2.3.3. In the person of Jesus, the mystery of Christ is unveiled and fully presented to the Church as the supreme example of how all believers should function as the sons of God (Matthew 16:16; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Galatians 3:26-27; Ephesians 4:21).

¹ Nicene Creed – Refer to Addendum 1

- 2.3.4. Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man (John 1:1,14).
- 2.3.5. To creation, both in Heaven and on Earth, Jesus Christ is presented as the only-begotten, unique and ineffable Son of God, who patterns how all sons of God should conduct their lives in and to the whole of creation (Luke 3:22; John 3:16; Ephesians 1:3; 2 John 1:3).
- 2.3.6. The gift of Christ, the Eternal Word, is freely given to every believer as the incorruptible seed (*sperma*) of God (Galatians 3:16; Ephesians 4:7; 2 Timothy 2:8; 1 Peter 1:23).
- 2.3.7. The formation of Christ in every believer is the hope of glory (Ephesians 3:17-19; Colossians 1:26-27).
- 2.3.8. The formation of Christ in the believer brings the believer into the knowledge of what it means to be a son of God (Ephesians 4:13).
- 2.3.9. In receiving Christ by grace through faith, the believer is born again into a new creation order and is incorporated into the Body and family of Christ (1 Corinthians 12; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:8-9).
- 2.3.10. Therefore the believer, in his/her status as a son of God, obtains an inheritance in Christ of things both in the Heavens and on Earth (Romans 8:17; Ephesians 1:10-11).
- 2.3.11. Every believer must come to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ (Ephesians 4:13).

2.4. THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 2.4.1. The Holy Spirit is co-equal and co-eternal in Deity.
- 2.4.2. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father [and the Son]; who together with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets to the fathers and who in these last days speaks in and through the Son (John 15:26; Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:9ff; Hebrews 1:1-2)².
- 2.4.3. The Holy Spirit is the Executor of the New Covenant.
- 2.4.4. The supreme example of the role and function of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is evidenced in every facet of the earthly life of Jesus Christ, from His conception to His ascension (Matthew 1:18-20, 4:1; Luke 1:35, 4:1; Acts 10:38; Romans 8:11). The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is now active in the sons of God (Romans 8:11).
- 2.4.5. The advent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost marked the birth of the Church and fulfilled the divine promise made to Abraham and his Seed. The Church has since been under the executive leadership of the Holy Spirit (Genesis 12:1-3; Acts 1:4-5, 2:33-39, 13:23, 32-39, 26:6-7; Galatians 3:14-29; Romans 4:13ff).
- 2.4.6. We believe that the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to endow the believer with power to

² Adapted from Nicene Creed – See Addendum 1

witness (Acts 1:8, 5:32), and that His empowering is after the same manner as in Biblical days. We believe that this baptism is usually accompanied by the gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, etc. (Acts 2:4, 9:17-18, 10:44-46, 19:1-6). We believe that these gifts are presently available to all who believe (Acts 2:38-39).

- 2.4.7. The promise of the Holy Spirit is the gift of God that seals and guarantees the adoption of believers into the status of sonship in the family of God the Father (Romans 8:15,23,29; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 4:5-6; Ephesians 1:5,13, 4:30; Revelation 7:2-8, 14:1).
- 2.4.8. The Holy Spirit, in His ministry to sinners, convicts humanity of sin, thereby bringing every person to a place of decision, and those who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour are reconciled to God the Father (John 16:8; Romans 8:15; 2 Corinthians 5:17ff; Galatians 4:6).
- 2.4.9. The ministry of the Holy Spirit, as executor over the Church, enables and empowers all members of the Body of Christ to represent their Father in the advancement of the Kingdom of God in the earth (Joel 2:28-29; Matthew 3:11; Mark 16:17; Acts 1:5, 2:1-4, 8:14-17, 10:38, 44-47, 11: 15-17, 19: 1-6).
- 2.4.10. The Holy Spirit sovereignly administrates and distributes offices, gifts and assignments to the Body of Christ for effective function in the world (Acts

2:39; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1ff; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:11).

- 2.4.11. The Holy Spirit, within the epochs of time (Gk: *kairoi*), searches the heart of the Father and reveals His will to the Church in the earth (Ecclesiastes 3:1; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16), and through the Church to principalities and powers (Ephesians 3:8-10).

2.5. THE FATHER AND THE SON

- 2.5.1. We believe that to accept Christ is to accept the Father and the Son (John 1:18, 14:9-10; 1 John 2:18-22; 2 John 1:9).
- 2.5.2. If anyone is in Christ he/she abides in the Father and in the Son (1 John 4:9,15, 5:1,19,20). To abide in Christ is to abide in an intimate relationship with the Father as a son of God. Whoever abides in Christ abides in the doctrine/teaching of Christ and has both the Father and the Son (2 John 1:9-11).
- 2.5.3. If any person is in Christ, he/she is a new creation, belonging to a new family, and is a part of the Body of Christ (Romans 8:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17).
- 2.5.4. The goal of every believer who is in Christ is to become the exact representation of the Father to all of creation (Ephesians 4:13-15; Hebrews 1:1-3).

3. MAN³

The identity, nature and function of man can only be comprehensively understood by having a complete view of all the Scriptures relative to man in both the Old and New Testaments (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

3.1. PRE-FALL MAN

- 3.1.1. God foreknew man and predestined and elected him to function as His son in and to the whole creation (Romans 8:29).
- 3.1.2. Man owes his existence to God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things (Genesis 1:26-28, 2:7; Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30, 139:14-16; Isaiah 45:12; 1 Corinthians 11:9; Revelation 4:11).
- 3.1.3. Before everything was created, the creation of man was foremost in the mind of God (Job 7:17; Psalm 8:4-6, 144:3; Hebrews 2:6-7).
- 3.1.4. The original divine intent for the creation of man was that God wanted to make His image and likeness visible. (Romans 8; Ephesians 3:10).
- 3.1.5. Man was created as a free moral being (Genesis 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21; Philippians 1:22).

³ The use of the term 'man' in this document is not gender specific, unless otherwise stated.

- 3.1.6. The image and likeness of God is expressed most completely in the creation of man, both male and female (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:2; Isaiah 43:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15).
- 3.1.7. The image and likeness of God is the glory of God (2 Corinthians 3:18; Hebrews 1:3).
- 3.1.8. Every eschelon in creation, both in Heaven and on Earth, was subjected to serve man in the fulfillment of God's purpose (Genesis 2:1; Hebrews 1:1-14, 2:1-18).
- 3.1.9. Man was not created to own the earth but to faithfully steward it on behalf of his Father, and to enjoy the benefits of his/her labour (Exodus 19:5-6; Psalm 24:1; Ecclesiastes 5:19; 1 Corinthians 10:26).
- 3.1.10. Man was intended to function in a dynamic and intimate relationship with the Creator as a son would relate to a father. God would meet with man in the Lord's Garden in Eden, and there the Father would reveal aspects of creation which would endow His son to unveil the secrets locked up in the creation of all things (Genesis 3:8).
- 3.1.11. Through Adam's rule and dominion, the image of God would be expressedly communicated to the rest of creation (Genesis 1:26-28).
- 3.1.12. Adam, the first of all men, as a tripartite being consisting of spirit, soul and body was the direct result of the creative act of God (Genesis 1:26-31, 2:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:23). As such man is uniquely

endowed to engage both the heavenly and earthly realms. With his spirit, man was designed to access the Heavens through the engagement with the Spirit of his Father. With his soul as the seat of intellect, emotion and will, man was designed to relate to the physical environment through the engagement with the body. Man is thus distinct from and superior to the rest of creation.

- 3.1.13. The order of man's functionality was that his spirit would engage the Spirit of his Father and thereby inform the soul how his flesh should engage the physical environment in which he existed (1 Corinthians 15:45).

3.2. THE FALL OF MAN

- 3.2.1. Through Adam's disobedience, the human race sinned and came short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23; 5:15-19).
- 3.2.2. The penalty for disobedience was spiritual and physical death (Isaiah 59:2; Jeremiah 5:25; Ezekiel 21:24; Romans 6:23).
- 3.2.3. As a consequence of the Fall, all of creation was subjected to futility and to the bondage of corruption (Romans 8:20-21). Apart from receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, fallen man cannot fully bear the image of God. Man lost his privileged position as expressed through his residency in the

Garden of the Lord. He was subjected to toil by the sweat of his brow (Genesis 3:17-19).

- 3.2.4. Man, at the point of making the decision to disobey, chose to function from the realm of his soul, independent of his spirit, and thus man was relegated to a soulish being (1 Corinthians 15:45-47).
- 3.2.5. The promise made to fallen man was that the Seed of the woman will bruise the head of the serpent, pointing to the day of man's salvation and liberation through the birth of Jesus Christ by the Virgin Mary (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14, 9:6; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:41-45).

3.3. THE NEW MAN

- 3.3.1. Man is restored to the original intent of God through the Last Adam, the Second Man, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:45-47). The historical Jesus is the supreme example and template for all people to receive and to follow.
- 3.3.2. In and through the person of Jesus Christ, salvation is brought to the whole of humankind (John 3:16) by the reconstitution of all things that suffered the consequences of the Fall (Acts 3:19-21).
- 3.3.3. Through the act of obedience, Jesus Christ reconciled the human race to God, the Father (Romans 5:15-19). Those who have received Jesus Christ are reconstituted and re-incorporated into the family of God, and function as God's chosen generation,

royal priesthood, holy nation and His own special people for the primary purpose of being a spiritual sacrifice, modelling the excellencies of God to all of creation (Exodus 19:5-6; Deuteronomy 14:2; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 1:6).

- 3.3.4. The divine expectation is that once a man is restored, he becomes an exact representation of the image and likeness of his Father (Hebrews 1:1-3).

4. SALVATION

- 4.1. The principal definition of sin must be situated against the backdrop of what was originally in the mind of God for man and all created things.
- 4.2. Sin (Gk - 'hamartia'⁴) by definition means to 'miss the mark' or 'to aimlessly wander from the original intent' and 'to lose one's share' (Romans 3:23). God created man to function as His son, as an exact representative of Him in creation. To disobey the original covenantal relationship is therefore considered as the first sin. Original sin is man disobeying his Father and thus becoming an orphan. Man transgressing from the boundaries that defined sonship man chained to darkness, producing characteristics and behaviours reflective of fleshly patterns, for example, murder and adultery. (Galatians 5:16, 19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

⁴ Strong's #G266

- 4.3. Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, was offered as the Lamb of God and as a propitiation for the sins of fallen man (John 1:29-36; Romans 3:25-26; 1 John 2:1-2, 4:10).
- 4.4. On the cross of Calvary He fully paid, with His blood, the redemption price for the sins of humanity (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38, 10:43; Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:22, 10:18).
- 4.5. Through the redemptive work accomplished on the cross, humankind was once and for all reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18,19) and given the right of access into the family of God (Colossians 1:20-21).
- 4.6. As the Lamb and High Priest, Jesus presented the offering of His life for the blotting out of the sin of all people, and as the mediator, reconciled them into the family of God (Colossians 2:13-14; Hebrews 9:26-28).
- 4.7. Through the finished work on the cross of Calvary, the New Covenant between God and man was sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:15-20; Romans 3:24-27; 1 Corinthians 11:23ff).
- 4.8. Through the establishment of the New Covenant, all who receive Jesus Christ enjoy the legal position (justification) of being sons of God and living in accordance with the royal law of sonship (sanctification) (Romans 3:24, 5:1,9; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11; Galatians 2:16, 5:16-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11, 10:10).

- 4.9. Through the redemptive offering on the cross, those who would receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour are brought into the status of a firstborn son, thereby becoming an heir of the Father and a joint heir with the Son (John 1:12; Romans 8:17,28,29).
- 4.10. Salvation allows us to share in His death and resurrection. Those who accept Jesus Christ identify with His death, resurrection and ascension, thus enjoying deliverance from the power of sin and death (Romans 6:1-11; 2 Corinthians 4:10-11; Philippians 4:8-10).
- 4.11. In and through the work of salvation by Jesus Christ, all believers enjoy the privilege of firstborn status in the family of God and thereby, into the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ according to the order of Melchizedek, thus functioning as kings and priests unto God (Revelation 1:5-6).
- 4.12. Through the finished work of Christ, humanity is invited to receive salvation by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, *“for by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast”* (Ephesians 2:5-9). Salvation is God’s free gift to man and cannot be earned or merited by the works of man.
- 4.13. There is no other way for the salvation of the human race except through faith in Jesus Christ (Isaiah 45:22-23; Acts 4:12; Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10).
- 4.14. While the will of God is that none should perish but that all should be reconciled to Him, it is incumbent

- upon every person to freely choose to receive Christ. All who receive Jesus Christ thereby enjoy the election of being part of the predestined plan of God, which is to be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29; 2 Peter 3:9).
- 4.15. Only those who have by their own volition freely received salvation through the Cross of Calvary can enjoy the benefit of the atoning Blood of Christ, thereby receiving spiritual covering and immunity from the works of the devil (Genesis 3:21; Leviticus 1:4; Numbers 28, 29; Romans 5:11-19; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:2, 18-19; 1 John 1:7). Through the work of atonement, the believer is covered in the Life of God.
- 4.16. Salvation includes the progressive regeneration of the spirit, soul and body of men from the corruption of sin and evil. The perennial end of the salvation process is realised when all those who are in Christ are restored to the position of incorruptibility and overcome the last enemy, 'death'⁵ (Romans 7:24-25, 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:26; Hebrews 12:22-24).
- 4.17. Salvation is inclusive of the redemption of creation, where all things which have suffered the effects of the Fall will be restored to their original design, encapsulated in the statement, "Behold I make all things new" (Revelation 11:15, 21:5).

⁵ Refer to Article 10 – End Times and Article 12 - Death

- 4.18. Salvation includes the futuristic position that the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ (see Article 5 - 'Kingdom of God') (Matthew 6:10; Revelation 11:15).
- 4.19. Man is conceived in sin (Psalm 51:5, 58:3). While faith in Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation there is a special dispensation of Grace for those without the mental capacity to discern good from evil, as in the case of infants. Such an age where man is able to discern right from wrong is commonly known as the age of accountability (Deuteronomy 1:39; Isaiah 7:14-16). A case in point is David's comment at the death of his infant son, "I will go to him but he will not return to me" (2 Samuel 12:23) implying that the child had an ex officio access to paradise.

5. KINGDOM OF GOD

- 5.1. The Kingdom of God is God's royal rule, authority and dominion over heaven and earth and every created thing (Genesis 1, 2:1-4).
- 5.2. When we refer to the Kingdom of Heaven, we refer specifically to the rule of God in Heaven that we seek to bring to Earth (Matthew 6:10; Luke 11:2).
- 5.3. When reference is made to the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, we interpret this as those domains created for and brought under the rule of Christ and all who are in Him, functioning as the exact regency

- of Deity in creation (Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 1:13; 2 Peter 1:11; Revelation 11:15, 12:10).
- 5.4. The use of the term 'Kingdom of the Father' denotes the unique and intimate familial relationship that God engages with those who, in Christ, have become His sons and are thereby heirs in His Kingdom (Matthew 13:43).
- 5.5. Because God is Spirit, His rule is spiritual and wherever His everlasting, unshakeable and indestructible Kingdom comes, its presence becomes visible and unmistakable (Psalm 45:6; Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 2:44; Luke 1:33; Hebrews 1:8) and its effect is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (John 18:36; Romans 14:17).
- 5.5.1. The Kingdom of God is not of this world and is therefore neither social, political nor economic, neither is it analogous to any earthly kingdom (John 18:36).
- 5.5.2. Since God's kingdom is spiritual and neither social, political nor economic, it must be administered spiritually first from within the hearts of those who are in Christ (Luke 17:20-21).
- 5.5.3. By spiritual we mean that the principles of righteousness which govern the Kingdom of Heaven must be planted (like a seed - Matthew 13:19,31) into every domain of human existence and systematically permeate, influence and preserve the heavenly culture and nature of God in creation (Like

light - permeate - Matthew 5:14-16, John 8:12;
Like yeast - influence - Luke 13:20-21; Like salt -
preserve - Matthew 5:13; Colossians 4:6).

- 5.6. Access or entry into the Kingdom of God takes place through repentance and being born again from above by the Holy Spirit and cleansed by the washing of water which is the Word of God (Mark 1:15; John 3:3-5; Ephesians 5:26; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23). Sons of God are translated out of the domain of darkness into the Kingdom of the Son of His love (Colossians 1:13).
- 5.7. All those who come into the Kingdom of God must seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness for effective living in this present world (Matthew 6:33; 1 Thessalonians 2:12).
- 5.8. The Kingdom of God cannot be inherited by the unrighteous, namely those who do the deeds of the flesh, the immoral or covetous. When the Scriptures say that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, we interpret this to mean that the humanistic and humanitarian effort alone cannot give the right of access to any individual into the Kingdom (John 3:3-5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 15:50; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:5).
- 5.9. To live in the Kingdom of God is to live under God's rule. The Kingdom of God is ruled in righteousness (Isaiah 16:5, 32:1; Hebrews 1:8). For example, Matthew 5, 6 and 7 describe the core values and ethics required by those who live in the Kingdom.

- 5.10. The Church was given the authority by Jesus to represent the Kingdom of Heaven and establish its purposes on the earth (Matthew 16:19). The Church, by functioning as the son of God and the regent of Heaven, is mandated to preach the Good News/Gospel of the Kingdom of God in all the world (Matthew 24:14), inviting all men to enjoy the benefits of the Kingdom (Wedding Feast - Matthew 22:2; Pearl of Great Price - Matthew 13:45; Debts Cancelled - Matthew 18:23).
- 5.11. The kingdoms of this world are presently under the rule of the devil. The primary objective of God's Kingdom is to establish God's sovereign domain by dethroning the kingdoms of this world (Matthew 4:8-10; Luke 11:20).
- 5.12. The Kingdom is, was and is to come. (Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 11:15). The Kingdom of God came at the point of Divine recognition of Jesus as the Son of God at the River Jordan; thereafter Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God had come. The Scriptures indicate that while the kingdom has come, it continues to progressively increase and will reach its fullness at the end of the aeons of time (Isaiah 9:6, 11:1-10, 32:1; Daniel 2:44, 7:18,27; Micah 4:7; Matthew 4:17; Luke 1:32-33). Refer to parables of the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-32; Luke 13:18-21; Mark 4:30-32). Therefore, we embrace the prayer of Jesus which teaches us to daily pray that His Kingdom come (Luke 11:2).

- 5.13. The Kingdom of God superimposes itself and supplants the kingdoms of this world (Daniel 2:34-35). The will of God in Heaven must become the way of humanity (Matthew 6:10).
- 5.14. The sons of God will rule and reign with Christ as kings and priests (Matthew 25:21-23; Revelation 5:9,10, 20:4-6). The Kingdom is part of the inheritance of the sons of God. It is the Father's good pleasure to give them the Kingdom (Luke 12:32; Ephesians 1:5-9; Philippians 2:13).
- 5.15. At the consummation of the ages the Kingdom of our God will rule absolutely over everything in creation (Isaiah 2:1-4; Daniel 2:35; Micah 4:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:24; Isaiah 9:6,7; Revelation 11:15).

6. THE CHURCH

6.1. DEFINITION

- 6.1.1. The Church is a mystery, which for ages was kept hidden in God, but is now unveiled in Christ and progressively disclosed through His apostles and prophets (Ephesians 1:9-22, 3:3-5, 5:32; Colossians 2:2,3,8,9, 4:3).
 - 6.1.1.1. The Church, as a mystery being unveiled, has by divine design many metaphorical descriptions revealing its multi-faceted nature and function. Some of these descriptors are: The Body of Christ,

the City of the Living God, The Holy Nation, the Temple, the Building, the Army, the Field, A Woman, A 'New' Man and the Mount Zion (Isaiah 2:1-4; Joel 2:11; Micah 4:1-4; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 12:12,20; Ephesians 2:15,19-22, 4:24; Colossians 3:10; 1 Peter 2:5; Revelation 12:1-13, 21:2).

6.1.2. The Church has been divinely predestined, elected and adopted to fundamentally function as God's family, comprised of all those who are 'called out' of the kingdom of darkness and assembled in Christ as the corporate, firstborn son in creation (Matthew 16:18; 1 Timothy 3:15; Romans 8:29; Ephesians 1:5ff; Galatians 4:5). In this respect, the church in Christ enjoys the status and privilege of a firstborn son who sits in that executive heavenly position at the right hand of the Father (Romans 8:28-29; Ephesians 1:3,20, 2:6, 3:10; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 12:23).

6.1.2.1. We maintain that the Church is a new creation order (2 Corinthians 5:17), set apart to function as the new human race conformed to the image and likeness of the incarnate Christ (Romans 8:28-29; Colossians 3:10). This position is metaphorically communicated to us in concepts like: first Adam/last Adam; first man/second man;

natural man/spiritual man (1 Corinthians 15:45-49; Ephesians 2:19-22, 4:23-24; 1 Peter 2:9).

- 6.1.2.2. The Church is foreshadowed and historically typified by the nation of Israel. The Old Testament Scriptures graphically depict God as a Father demanding the release of His Son from Egypt - "*Israel is my Son, My firstborn ... Let my Son go that he may serve me ...*" (Exodus 4:22-23; Hebrews 12:23). In the New Covenant, the Church, the new Israel, is comprised of the sons of God, namely those who have accepted, believed and confessed Jesus as Saviour, Lord and Christ (John 1:12; Acts 2:47; Romans 10:9-13). Just as Israel found immunity in the Passover Lamb, the New Testament Church finds salvation and atonement in the Blood of Christ, the supreme Lamb (John 1:29-36; 1 Corinthians 5:7, 10:16; Ephesians 2:13; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:2,18,19; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5).
- 6.1.3 The Church as an assembly of the called out ones, is God's holy nation, which we refer to as the Israel of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ and Zion (Galatians 6:16; Ephesians 2:12; Hebrews 8:10, 12:23; Revelation 22:2).
- 6.1.4. The Church as God's Holy Nation is ubiquitously positioned and scattered in the nations of the world. In this respect, the church functions dualistically within its geographical location.

- 6.1.4.1. It is the nation within a nation(s), the city within a city (ies), the people in and among people.
- 6.1.4.2. If the Church is the Holy Nation and the City of the Living God, then we believe that the Church has its own governmental structure, policies, economy, culture and customs. We are of the conviction that when the Church is assembled according to the divine order in any given geographical location, then the welfare of its citizens is not primarily determined by civic structures and norms of secular societies but by God Himself. Therefore, it can be said that the Church is not *conformed* to this present world (Romans 12:1-2) though the scriptures call for all believers to honour, submit to and pray for those in civic leadership (Romans 13:1ff; 1 Peter 2:13ff)

6.2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND THE CHURCH

- 6.2.1. The Church as the family of God is modelled according to the unique relationship of **Divine Father and Divine Son**. This relationship is historically set out in the New Testament through the relationship between God and the Word incarnate (John 1:1ff.; 1 John 1:1). We refer to this relationship as the Father/Son dyad. In this supreme model, the Church is presented with the prototype of how all the sons of God should intimately relate

to God as their Father (1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; Romans 15:6; Ephesians 3:14, 4:6; Hebrews 2:11).

- 6.2.2. The Church must maintain a deep love for the Word of God in order to enjoy this oneness with the Father as the sons of God. To love God one must love and keep His commandments (John 14:15-23, 15:10; 1 John 2:3-6).

6.3. ORGANIC STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

- 6.3.1. The Church is divinely designed to function as the Holy Nation in and amongst the nations of the world and as the City of God within the cities of this world (Exodus 19:6; Deuteronomy 7:6; Ephesians 2:19-20; Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 12:22-24; 1 Peter 2:5; Revelation 21, 22)
- 6.3.1.1. The Old Testament foreshadows a complex arrangement of the composition of the nation of Israel. Israel is divided into twelve tribes, each headed by a patriarch. Each tribe is comprised of multiple clans, which can be traced down to individual family units (Numbers 1:16-18; Joshua 7:14ff). A careful study of the twelve tribes reveal peculiar features which define their position, function and purpose within the prophetic destiny of the nation of Israel (Genesis 49; Deuteronomy 33). Each tribe was divinely profiled, classified

and configured to function in accordance with the economy of God for the efficacious functionality of the nation of Israel. Therefore, each of the twelve tribes had an emblem and a standard that it had to strictly adhere to. Consequently, the families categorised by clans within each tribe were given responsibilities which contributed to the fulfillment of the corporate mandate of their tribe (Read the arrangement of the tribes in Numbers 1 and 2). In this way, every family in the nation of Israel was directly and indirectly connected to the corporate mandate of the nation.

- 6.3.1.2. The Church, as the Holy Nation, can therefore be compared and aligned to the compositional arrangement of the nation of Israel in the Old Testament (Numbers 1 and 2). Accordingly, the ecclesial structure of the Church is comprised of tribes, subdivided into clans which are made up of family units (Exodus 19:6; Numbers 1:16-18; Deuteronomy 7:6; 1 Peter 2:9-10). In this way it could be said that the twelve tribes are scattered amongst the nations (Acts 26:6-7; James 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1-2). No one tribe can lay claim to being the Holy Nation without seeking or pursuing congenial relationships with all of the other tribes. Further, every congregation/household should accordingly align itself to a 'tribe'. In this way, all the households in the Body of Christ can find their individual mandate within the

corporate destiny of the Holy Nation. Such an administration is the work of the Holy Spirit and not determined by human election (See imagery in Ezekiel 37 and 1 Corinthians 12:18).

- 6.3.1.3. We refer to each local and individual congregation as a Spiritual Household (or ‘family’, ‘household of faith, ‘house[s]’, ‘the house of’, ‘the church in the house of’) (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Timothy 3:15; Galatians 6:10; Hebrews 3:1-6). Each spiritual household is comprised of individuals and biological families (Psalm 68:5-6; Mark 14:14; Acts 2:46, 16:40; Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 1:11, 16:15,19; Colossians 4:15; 2 Timothy 1:16; Philemon 1:2; Hebrews 11:7). These spiritual households are not defined by race, language, culture, ethnicity or gender (Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:15; Revelation 5:9). The Church has no walls of demarcation in Christ. Therefore, we believe that the church is neither multi-racial, non-racial nor multi-cultural, but one new man in Christ (heavenly man), made up of every race, nation, tribe and language (Galatians 3:28-29; Ephesians 2:15; 2 Corinthians 5:16; Revelation 5:9).
- 6.3.1.4. Since the Church cannot be defined from historical, contemporary, humanistic or sociological perspectives, we therefore advocate that the grace of Christ defines the position and function of every member assembled into the Body of Christ

(John 1:14; Galatians 4; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Corinthians 11:29, 15:10).

- 6.3.1.5. Each household is encouraged to preserve the Oneness of the Spirit in the Church of Jesus Christ by pursuing peace with other households in their location and beyond. For the Church to function as One it is imperative that Elders over households, clans and tribes, within the Church of Jesus Christ, engage each other in seamless, covenantal, symbiotic and synergistic relationships (Ephesians 4:1-6,13; 1 Corinthians 3:1ff). When Elders of households meet with Elders of other households within their geographical locations (village, city, state, region, nation) we refer to this as the gathering of the Church ‘at’, ‘of’ or ‘in’ that particular location (e.g. the Church at Ephesus; the churches in Galatia; the Church in Asia; see Scriptures: Acts 8:1, 13:1, 16:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; 1 Peter 5:13).
- 6.3.1.6. We are in agreement with the statements of the early Church fathers who declared that the Church is One, Holy, Catholic⁶ (universal)⁷ and Apostolic⁸. The word ‘Catholic’ was a term used

⁶ Not a reference to the established Roman Catholic Church

⁷ Used as a noun i.e. ubiquitous; not a reference to the ‘Universal Church’ organisation

⁸ See The Nicene Constantinople Creed (CE 381) – Refer to Addendum 1

to describe the church collectively and must be differentiated from the Roman Catholic Church.

6.4. PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- 6.4.1. The primary purpose of the Church is to function as a corporate firstborn Son of God in becoming the exact representation (Hebrews 1:3) of the invisible Deity in creation (John 17; Ephesians 3:10-11; Colossians 1:16). The Church was created as the workmanship of God *for/to the praise of God* (Psalm 102:18; Ephesians 1:5-14). By this we mean that the Church was created not only to praise and worship God but for His praise and worship (1 Peter 2:9-10).
- 6.4.2. The Church as a corporeity, through the gifts and offices of grace, is instructed to raise, nurture and equip the sons of God to a place of spiritual maturity. As stewards, mature sons must administrate the Kingdom of God and establish the sovereign rule of God over creation (Genesis 1:26-28; Ephesians 4:11ff).
- 6.4.3. Through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God will be made known to the rulers and authorities in heavenly realms (Ephesians 3:10).
- 6.4.4. The Church is called, under the leadership of Apostles, to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations in the world (Matthew 24:14, 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8).

- 6.4.5. The Church must rule on the earth until all the enemies of Christ are made His footstool (Psalm 2:6-8; Acts 2:35, 7:49; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Hebrews 1:13, 10:13).
- 6.4.6. The Church as God's Corporate Son is the gate, portal, regency through which divine exchange takes place between the Heavens and the Earth (Genesis 28; John 1:51). Therefore we maintain the Church is the 'corporate man' who stands in the gap between the Heavens and the Earth (Isaiah 59:16; Ezekiel 22:30). In this respect we see the Church functioning in the high priestly and kingly order of Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-24; Psalm 110; Hebrews 5:6 -7:10).

6.5. LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

6.5.1. JESUS CHRIST, THE SUPREME HEAD OF THE CHURCH

- 6.5.1.1. Jesus Christ is the Supreme Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23, 3:21, 5:23). His position as the Head of the Church is pre-existent, pre-eminent, ineffable and absolute. As the Head of the Church, He is also the Chief Shepherd, Elder, Chief Apostle and High Priest (Hebrews 3:1; 1 Peter 2:25, 5:4). Other references to His headship are captured by the following:

The King of kings, The Lord of lords; The First of the firstborns; The Author and Perfector of our Faith; The Captain of our Salvation; The Beginning and the End; Alpha and Omega (Hebrews 2:10; Revelation 1:5ff, 5:13, 17:14).

- 6.5.1.2. The headship and leadership of the Church emanates from Jesus Christ (Romans 5:2, 11:36; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 2:10). *“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence”* (Colossians 1:18). Every sphere of leadership in the Church should emulate the cardinal and ordinal example of Christ, who is the absolute leader of His Church. We therefore view leadership in the Church as vicarious (substitutionary), ideally and ultimately functioning as exact representatives of Christ in and to His Church and creation (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28-29; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

6.5.2. LEADERSHIP OF HOUSEHOLDS

6.5.2.1. ELDERS OF HOUSEHOLDS

- (i) We believe that an Elder, male or female, is appointed by Christ to represent the Heavenly Father in having oversight and leadership over each individual Household of God (1 Peter 5:1-4) that

constitutes the Church⁹. In this respect we refer to the appointed individual as the Senior Elder. While we hold that there is only one FATHER over all the families in Heaven and on Earth (Ephesians 3:14), we maintain that the Senior Elder functions as a ‘representative father’ (of the Heavenly Father) (Psalm 68:6; Matthew 10:20; 1 Corinthians 4:15-16, 8:6; Ephesians 3:14-15, 4:6, 6:1; Hebrews 2:11). Further, we maintain that the Senior Elder should lovingly, selflessly and unambitiously lead God’s flock (Acts 20:28-35; 1 Peter 5:1-4). In this respect the Senior Elder plays the role of ‘spiritual father’ over the household(s) of God.

- (ii) In a healthy, growing household, there will emerge from within its members, individuals who will manifest the qualifications of an Elder. Based on the criteria as set out in the Scriptures we advise that the Senior Elder prayerfully selects and appoints such individuals into the office of Elder(s). All appointed to the office of an Elder should submit and be accountable to the Senior Elder of the household (See the example of the appointment of Elders - Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-5).
- (iii) All Elders are entrusted with the spiritual responsibilities of having oversight, exercising care and

⁹ Refer to Article 6 – The Church

ensuring that those under their oversight are trained and developed into the image of Christ, the pattern Son. Elders are instructed to watch, feed and shepherd the souls of the congregations until they reach maturity in their sonship in Christ (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:2-3). The responsibilities of Elders include to: jealously guard the flock; prohibit false teachers (wolves) from entering households and seducing them with apostate teaching (Acts 20:28-29); diligently labour in the Word, in prayers and in sound doctrine (1 Timothy 5:17, 4:3,6-16, 1:10, 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:16; Titus 1:9, 2:1).

(iv) The qualifications for Elders as set in the Scriptures (See 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9):

- blameless
- the husband of one wife (*if married*); (*if female - 'the wife of one husband'*)
- temperate, not quick-tempered
- sober-minded
- of good behavior
- hospitable
- able to teach
- not given to wine
- not violent
- not greedy for money
- gentle
- not quarrelsome

- not covetous
 - one who rules his own house well,
 - having his children in submission with all reverence; having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination
 - not a novice
 - have a good testimony among those who are outside
 - not self-willed
 - a lover of what is good
 - just
 - holy
 - self-controlled
 - holding fast the faithful word as he/she has been taught, that he/she may be able, by sound doctrine to exhort and convict those who contradict.
- (v) The Scriptures instruct members of households to obey, submit, follow and be mindful of those who lead them (Romans 13; Hebrews 13:7,17). Further, we encourage members of households to honour and financially take care of those Elder(s) who labour in the Word and doctrine (Romans 13:7; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Hebrews 6:10; 1 Peter 5:5ff).
- (vi) We encourage Senior Elders (and their households) to establish relationships, fellowship and partnerships with other Senior Elders (and their households) of kindred spirit in the representation of Christ to their regions (1 Peter 5:1). In this

way, multiple households can be knit together to represent One Church to their communities.

- (vii) We encourage the Senior Elders (and their households) to connect to a principal Apostolic grace, which is representative of the five-fold ministry. In this manner grace is made accessible to Senior Elders for the building up of their households into the stature and image of Christ (Romans 1:5; Ephesians 3, 4:11; 1 Corinthians 3, 12:28). Such relationships should be mutually established on the principles of covenant, accountability and autonomy.
- (viii) When a company of households led by their Senior Elder submit to the leadership of an individual, we refer to this individual as an overseeing Elder or father over them. The Old Testament refers to them as heads of father's households (Numbers 1:16-18, 7:2; 1 Chronicles 5:24, 7:9, 9:13).

6.5.2.2. DEACONS

- (i) The ministry of the Deacon is more of an administrative and practical function. The word 'deacon' means to 'labour in the dust'. Whilst they are given the responsibility of the practical administration within households, we believe their selection and appointment is an administration of grace (Acts 6:3ff; 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Titus 1:5-9).

- (ii) We maintain the distinction that Elders labour in doctrine and the Word, whereas Deacons labour in the physical and logistical administration of the diverse ministries entrusted upon households. In this respect Deacons can be described as those individuals set apart for the effective functioning of the diverse administrations of the household. We therefore hold that Deacons assist Elders in fulfilling the efficient and orderly management of households (1 Timothy 3:8-13).
- (iii) Deacons may also be involved in other aspects of ministry outside the scope of their practical administrative function (see the ministry of Stephen and Phillip in Acts 6:5, Acts 7 and Acts 8).
- (iv) The qualifications for Deacons are set in the Scripture (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13):
 - *reverent*
 - *full of the Holy Spirit*
 - *full of wisdom*
 - *not double-tongued*
 - *not given to much wine*
 - *not greedy for money*
 - *holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience*
 - *blameless*
 - *of good reputation,*
 - *husband of one wife (if married); (if female - 'the wife of one husband')*

- *wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things (husbands included)*
- *ruling their children and their own houses well*
- *first be tested, then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless*

6.6. EQUIPPING AND BUILDING MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH

6.6.1. PROLOGUE¹⁰:

- 6.6.1.1. The Old and New Testaments supply the primary content, structure, administration, inspiration and direction for the building and establishment of the family of God, the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:1-9, 14:40).
- 6.6.1.2. Further, it is God alone who supplies the vision, design and spiritual resources for the fulfillment of His purpose.
- 6.6.1.3. We maintain that all those who are called to assist in the building process are sovereignly chosen, irrespective of their gender and sex (Galatians 3:28).
- 6.6.1.4. Every member assembled in the Body of Christ is called to ministry. We refer to this as the High Priestly ministry of all believers. The order of this

¹⁰ Refer to Addendum 2 for supporting arguments for our position outlined in this prologue.

ministry is mystically presented to us in the ministry of Melchizedek, a priest of the Most High God (Hebrews 7).

- 6.6.1.5. While all are called to ministry, the Scriptures distinctly set out certain ministries apart from the general ministry of every believer in the Body of Christ. We refer to these ministries as five-fold ministry, namely, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. Five-fold ministers have been set in the church primarily to equip and build the Body. A five-fold minister can also function as an Elder having oversight and leadership in the household of God.
- 6.6.1.6. Each of the five-fold ministry is led and governed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-5).

6.6.2. FIVE-FOLD MINISTRIES

- 6.6.2.1. The five distinct gifts of grace and their purpose given by Christ to His twelve apostles are found in Ephesians 4:7-11.
- 6.6.2.2. We hold that these gifts are not merely generous gifts given to those who believe in Christ, but they are the very essence or embodiment of the fullness of Deity (John 1:14-18; Colossians 1:28-29, 2:5,19).
- 6.6.2.3. At the incarnation of the Word, whom we refer to as Jesus Christ, the fullness of the persons of

Deity was transported and made visible to all creation.

6.6.2.4. At the ascension, this fullness was distributed to the twelve apostles as gifts of grace. Therefore in the *'twelve'* is resident the *'five'* offices or dimensions of Christ (Ephesians 4:7-11).

6.6.2.5. Accordingly through the ages the Church has been the beneficiary and dispensary of the manifold grace of God distributed by the Holy Spirit through those chosen and called to function in these five distinct offices of grace¹¹.

6.6.2.6. The only scriptural reference to the five-fold ministry is in Ephesians 4:11.

Nonetheless, there are repeated and distinct references to the existence and function of each of these offices in the New Testament (Matthew 23:34; Luke 11:49; Acts 13:1-2; 1 Corinthians 12:28). The Scriptures provide little information regarding the manner in which these five ministries collectively work in the equipping and building of the Body of Christ. For example, we see Apostles operating alone; and on other occasions with Prophets; and on other occasions with prophets and teachers; and on other occasions in teams; where we presume the different five-fold offices are present (Colossians 4:7-15).

¹¹ See Addendum 2 for substantiation of these views

- 6.6.2.7. The offices of the five-fold ministry will continue to exist until the Church of Jesus Christ comes to oneness of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect (mature) man and to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Further, we maintain that the five-fold offices will only cease to exist when the Church no longer functions in the immature position of an ‘infant’ (Gk. - nepios), “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ” (Ephesians 4:14-15).
- 6.6.2.8. Each of the five-fold ministries is tailored to meet specific aspects of the building of the Church. The five-fold ministries are co-equal, individually significant, functionally diverse but absolutely necessary.
- 6.6.2.9. In the five-fold ministry, Apostles, as wise master-builders, are placed ‘first’ (1 Corinthians 12:28). Evidently they give leadership to the five fold ministries in the building of the Body of Christ (Matthew 23:34; Luke 11:49-50; 1 Corinthians 12:28, 3:9-14; Ephesians 4:11). We believe that Apostles filled the role of father and mentor to those within the five-fold teams under their jurisdictions (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4-5).

- 6.6.2.10. We believe that while Apostles play a prominent leadership role within the five-fold and in the corporate church, their position and function is servant-like (Greek - 'doulos') and not one of status, hierarchy or manipulation.
- 6.6.2.11. We are of the view that the five distinct graces of Christ displayed in the five offices can be resident and expressed in the life of one who is called to ministry. We see the interplay of these distinct graces in some of the Apostles like Paul, Peter, James and John.
- 6.6.2.12. The five-fold ministry gifts are a resource to the entire Body of Christ.
- 6.6.2.13. The character and function of each five-fold ministry gift is described in the next sub-section below.

6.6.3. CHARACTER AND FUNCTION OF FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY

6.6.3.1. OFFICE OF THE APOSTLE

The office of the Apostle has been set in the Body of Christ as a resource for the equipping and building of the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11ff)

- (i) The office of an Apostle is that of a wise master-builder in the Body of Christ. Apostles play a key role in laying the doctrinal foundation for the building of Christ into the family of God. Upon

- these foundations, the grace of God through the revelation of Christ is dispensed to the Body of Christ (Ephesians 2:20, 3:2-3). Therefore the ministry of the Apostle establishes the framework by setting in place the elementary doctrines and instructions for the building of the Body of Christ.
- (ii) The evangelist, pastor and teacher build upon the bases of these elementary foundational principles (Ephesians 4:1-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 2 Corinthians 10:13-18). Integral to their function was the establishment and confirmation of fledgling congregations / households / churches in the grace of Christ (Acts 14:22-23, 15:41; 1 Corinthians 3:10-11; Ephesians 2:20; Colossians 2:7; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; Hebrews 3:4).
 - (iii) We maintain that the absence of the ministry of Apostle (and Prophet) will produce a desolate church. The offices of Apostles and Prophets are the key to knowledge, which allows the Church access into the revelation of the will God and His purpose (Luke 11:49-52).
 - (iv) The Apostles of Christ (1 Thessalonians 2:6) and the Lamb (Revelation 21:14) are approved and appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (John 15:16). They cannot be ordained or appointed by men. Such Apostles however, are publicly recognised by fellow Apostles (led by the Spirit) as carrying the grace of Christ to play a significant role in His Body.

- (v) Further, we believe that there are more than twelve Apostles of Christ. Of note were the Apostle Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, Silvanus, Andronicus, Junia and many other Apostles (Acts 14:14; Romans 16:7; 1 Corinthians 9:5, 12:28; Galatians 1:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2:6). We therefore do not believe in the cessation of the ministry of the Apostle.
- (vi) We believe that there is a distinction between Apostles of Christ and Apostles of Churches (see vii for definition of Apostles of Churches). The Apostles of Christ are appointed by Christ and their calling is given public recognition by fellow ministers within the body of Christ. The Scriptures give no evidence of the idea that the Apostles appointed successors to their offices. The exception to this norm is the appointment (by the casting of lots) of Matthias, but it is clearly stated that the Apostles prayed for the Lord to show them “which of these two You have chosen” (Acts 1:24-26). We believe that Christ by the Spirit appoints Apostles of Christ throughout the existence of the Church to fulfill this ministry and therefore the office of the Apostle continues to exist.
- (vii) We are however, aware of the Scriptural references to those individuals who are sent by Apostles to represent them to churches for a specific purpose. In this respect, these individuals could be called

- Apostles, but should be distinguished from the Apostles of Christ (2 Corinthians 8:6, 12:18).
- (viii) We believe that no Apostle had jurisdictional privileges over the entire Church but was subject to the dynamic of the relationship between him and the Elders of the City of God of that given geographical region (2 Corinthians 10:12-17). Apostles, however, did play a role of father (Elder) over the church in cities and regions, thereby guiding the leadership of the church in these regions in matters of doctrine, custom and culture, discipline, and by exposing false ministries in the Body of Christ (Acts 15:1ff).
- (ix) We also believe that there are many false apostles who transform themselves as apostles of light (2 Corinthians 11:13). We encourage Churches to exercise discernment by differentiating between true and false apostles (Revelation 2:2). Below is a list of some of the characteristics of an Apostle of Christ extracted from Scripture (Acts 13:1-4, 16:7; 2 Corinthians 1, 2, 6:3-10, 11:22-29, 12:11ff; Galatians 1:11ff; Ephesians 2, 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 2:1ff; 1 John 1:1ff).
- Apostles are called and separated by Christ (Romans 1:1; Galatians 1:15; Ephesians 1:1) and are led and directed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4, 16:7; Ephesians 3:3-5).

- Apostles dispense grace for the benefit of the Church and not for their personal benefit (John 6 *{imagery of twelve baskets of bread}*; Romans 1:11; Galatians 1:10; Ephesians 3:2,7,8; 1 Peter 1:2,10)
- Apostles are Christ-centred, thus not seeking to establish their own ministries but the Church of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16, 2:16, 15:16,29; Colossians 1:28-29). There is no record of them having built networks or churches for personal gain. Their whole lives can be summarily described as being prisoners and bond slaves of Christ (Acts 20:20; Romans 1:1; Galatians 1:10; Titus 1:1). While they are fully submitted to Christ, they make themselves and their teachings accountable to fellow Apostles (Galatians 1,2).
- Apostles reveal the Mystery of Christ, preaching the Gospel of Christ and propagating His Kingdom to all nations (Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 11:25, 15:18-19, 16:25; Galatians 1:7-8; Ephesians 3:3-5; Colossians 4:3).
- Apostles receive by revelation of Jesus Christ the mandate to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom (Galatians 1:12, 2:2; Ephesians 3:3).
- Apostles preach the Gospel of Christ, revealing in and through their lives that all men who receive Christ are the *sons of God* (John 1:12; Romans 8:14, 8:28ff; Galatians 1:15-16, 3:15-4:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:9-10; 1 John 2:22, 4:3; 2 John 1:7). By this they meant that God is the Father of all who believe

in Christ and that these believers are adopted into the family of God as the sons of God (Revelations 7:3-4, 9:4, 14:1, 21:7, 22:4). Their objective was to mark the minds of men who saw themselves subjectively as sons of God and God as their Father.

- The passion and objective of Apostles is to labour until Christ is fully formed in the corporate Body of Christ (Galatians 4:19; Ephesians 2, 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28-29).
- Apostles continuously war against and confront principalities, powers, false and demonic doctrines, popular secular ideologies, thoughts that exalt themselves against the knowledge of Christ and every form of lewdness and evil practice found in the Church of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4-6; Ephesians 6:10ff; Galatians 1:4, 2:11; Colossians 2:8; 2 Peter 2:1ff, 3:17; Jude 1:1ff; 2 John 1:7-9).
- Apostles encountered great discomfort, persecution and tribulation in the pursuit of God's mandate to them (Acts 20:22-24). Despite their challenges, they never sought to be a burden to the Church and did not use their authority for their own personal comfort. Further, they did not use the grace of God, nor His Word, to generate finances for themselves. This does not however imply that they had not received wages, offerings and generous gifts from congregations. In all their endeavours, they strove to maintain an impeccable character (Acts 15:28; 1 Corinthians 9:14-19; 2 Corinthians 1:8-9, 2:17,

4:8ff, 6:3, 8:3-5, 12:16; Philippians 2:25, 4:14-18; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).

- Mighty signs and wonders followed their works. The signs were not just miracles, but included great suffering and perseverance (Acts 2:43, 5:12; Romans 15:18-19; 2 Corinthians 12:12).

6.6.3.2. OFFICE OF THE PROPHET

The office of the prophet has been set in the Body of Christ as a resource for the equipping and building of the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11)

- (i) The Prophet is associated with the Apostle in attending to the establishment of foundations, namely, the elementary doctrines and instruction in building the Body of Christ. Together with the Apostles they are referred to as the *key of knowledge*, which allows the Church access into the knowledge of the will and purpose of God (Luke 11:49-52). In this sense, we believe that the office of the Prophet envisions the Church in understanding the eternal purpose of God.
- (ii) We believe the office of the Prophet plays a significant role with that of the Apostle in the building and effective function of the household of God. The Prophet ensures that the divine architecture of the building process is in accordance with

strict adherence to the eternal design, whereas the Apostle is the master-builder that supervises the entire construction process.

- (iii) The office of the Prophet is not clearly described in the New Testament. We do know that the office of the Prophet works closely with the office of the Apostle. Therefore we hold that the office of the Prophet plays a functionally significant, but secondary role in the five-fold ministry (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 12:28).
- (iv) The ministry of the Prophet is set in the Body to instruct and impart to the members of the Body of Christ the ability to connect to the Holy Spirit so that they may hear, see and perceive the eternal plan of God for the corporate Church and for their individual lives (2 Peter 1:19-20).
- (v) The ministry of the Prophet includes edification, exhortation and encouragement. It is the voice that motivates/stirs up the church to remain connected to the throne and to submit to the heavenly design in the church's earthly function (Ezra 5:1-2, 6:14; Acts 15:32; 1 Corinthians 14:3).
- (vi) The office of the Prophet is distinct from the gift of prophecy. We believe that the gift of prophecy has been given to all in the house of God (Numbers 11:24-29; 1 Samuel 10:10; Joel 2:28; 1 Corinthians 14:1-2,15,26,39). This means that every believer who has had a subjective experience with the Holy Spirit should know and speak the will of

God for their lives and for the church. The office of the Prophet is distinct in that it plays a governmental role in directing large sections of the church to understand the times and visitations of God. There is a predictive element to the office of the Prophet in describing future events and also interpreting the Scriptures within the context of the daily activities of the people of God (Acts 11:28-30, 21:10-14).

- (vii) When the ministries of Apostles and Prophets are absent or removed from the Church, the house of the Lord becomes desolate (Matthew 23:38; Luke 13:25).
- (viii) All prophecy must be validated by and not contradict the Word of God, which is the testimony of Jesus (Revelations 19:10).

6.6.3.3. OFFICE OF THE EVANGELIST

- (i) The office of an Evangelist has been set as a resource for the equipping and building of the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11ff.).
- (ii) An Evangelist by definition means 'a preacher, messenger or bearer of good news'. We therefore believe that the office of the Evangelist is endowed with the grace for the enablement of the Church to share the good news of the Gospel of the Kingdom with the whole world. The good news includes salvation, righteousness and peace for all

who would receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour (Acts 21:8; 2 Timothy 4:5).

- (iii) We believe that the ministry of the Evangelist to households within the family of God enhances the ability of all to be credible witnesses in their communities. The function of the Evangelist includes training and enhancing the skills of people to reach the lost.
- (iv) We encourage congregations to connect and establish covenantal relations with the ministry of an Evangelist. The absence of connectivity to the grace of an Evangelist invariably diminishes the ability of the church in a region to be a credible and effective witness of Christ. We believe that it is a significant link in connecting the Body of Christ to all who are outside of Christ.
- (v) The office of the Evangelist is uniquely designed to reach and engage the unsaved. A few examples of the office of the Evangelist are cited in the New Testament. However, we see in the apostolic ministry of Peter and Philip, large numbers of people received the good news and converted to the way of Christ. We, therefore, can concur that the ministry of the Evangelist has an extraordinary ability to lead individuals, households and large crowds of people to the Lord (Acts 2, 8, 10).
- (vi) The ministry of the Evangelist is characterised by extraordinary miracles such as healing the sick, casting out of demons, raising the dead, and many

other supernatural signs and wonders (Luke 4:18; Acts 8:4-8).

6.6.3.4 OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

- (i) The office of the Pastor has been set in the Body of Christ as a resource for the equipping and building of the saints for the work of ministry and to those Elders placed over the households of God (Ephesians 4:11ff).
- (ii) By definition, the word 'Pastor' (Gk. - Poimen) literally means 'shepherd or herdsman'. From this definition we derive the description of the ministry of a Pastor. It is a gift given by Christ to the household of God that offers leadership, protection and provision for the needs of the church (John 21:15-17).
- (iii) The ministry of Pastor is the grace needed in the Body of Christ by all who are appointed to lead the family of God. Through the metaphor of the shepherd, we conclude that God's people, like sheep, need to be shepherded, guided and sheltered.
- (iv) The grace of Pastor is a characteristic feature in the Elder-led household. Such elders are expected to adopt the salient attributes of a Shepherd in ensuring that their people are well-kept by leading them in accordance with the will of God, keeping them connected to present truth, caring

for the weak and infirm and must be prepared to selflessly lay down his/her life for them (Psalm 110:4; Jeremiah 3:15; John 10:15; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:7,17).

- (v) The presiding grace of the Pastor should be evidenced in the entire five-fold ministry (1 Thessalonians 2:6-8).
- (vi) The grace of Pastor should also be imparted to the Body of Christ so that they can love and care for each other and exhibit this love and care to the world. Further, people can learn how to trust, listen to and follow those who have been placed over them like sheep who follow their Shepherd.

6.6.3.5. OFFICE OF THE TEACHER

- (i) The office of the Teacher has been set in the Body of Christ as a resource for the equipping and building of the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11ff.)
- (ii) The word 'Teacher' by definition means 'instructor, doctor, master'. The ministry of Teacher describes the expertise and learnedness of one's proficiency and skill in instructing the Church in the Word of God.
- (iii) The ministry of Teacher has been given to the whole Church for imparting theoretical and practical knowledge in the Word of God so that every believer may know God. This instruction includes

some of the following: commands, statutes, precepts, regulations, and customs related to life in the family of God and in the world. We refer to this as sound doctrine, which when adopted, will ensure that people live wholesome lives in relation to God and their existence in the earth.

- (iv) In the five-fold ministry, the ministry of the Teacher is placed after Apostles and Prophets (1 Corinthians 12:28) and is compared to the Scribe (Matthew 23:34). The characteristics of the Scribes are: learned, proficient in the law, interpreters of the Scriptures and protectors of the Word of God.
- (v) The grace of the Teacher should be expressed by those Elders who have oversight over the household of God by labouring in doctrine and the Word (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:2,24).

6.6.4. MINISTRY OF APOSTLES AND CITY ELDER(S)

- 6.6.4.1. We believe that Apostles and Elders played an integral governmental role in the City of the Living God.¹²
- 6.6.4.2. In Revelation 21, we are given a symbolic picture of the Church as the City of the Living God, where Apostles are associated with the walls (and

¹² See Article 6 - Ecclesiology

- foundations) and the Elders (angels) with the gates of the City. We therefore maintain that the Elders, as fathers, representing the twelve tribes of the Holy Nation and the Apostles of Christ, gave protection, covering and security to the City of God.
- 6.6.4.3. We further maintain that Apostles and Elders play an integral role in the governmental structure, function and welfare of the City of God and over the families of God in that City.
- 6.6.4.4. In the New Testament governmental structure of the Church, it is evident that Apostles and Elders played a significant role in leading, influencing and regulating matters (sometimes controversial) relating to doctrine, customs and the functionality of the Church. The Apostles of Christ together with those Elders in their regions, mutually collaborated on matters relating to the spiritual well-being of the whole Church (Acts 4:16, 15:1ff).
- 6.6.4.5. We believe (as previously stated) that when the Church is assembled as a corporate entity in a given location, that Church meets as the City of God., The role of Apostles and Elders feature prominently in the City of God.
- 6.6.4.6. Those Elders who have emerged as leaders over the households in the City of God are referred to as ‘City Elders’ or ‘Elders of the City of God’:
- (i) In the New Testament Church, it can be deduced that a group of churches represented by the City

Elder(s) developed a personal relationship with an Apostle (e.g. James in Jerusalem - Acts 21:17; Paul, Apollos and Cephas in Corinth - 1 Corinthians 3:21-22; Paul in Ephesus - Acts 20:17ff; See also John and his relationship to the Elders of the church in Asia - 3 John 1:9ff).

- (ii) It is our view that the Apostle(s) in this context functions as a primary grace carrier to this group of churches (households). Further the primary Apostle(s) functioned as a 'sent one' (messenger/angel) to that group of households (churches) (Romans 16:3-16; Galatians 4:14; Revelation 2:1,8,12,18, 3:1,7,14).
- (iii) We therefore advocate that the spiritual health of the City of God is preserved when City Elders establish a conjugal relationship with a primary Apostle(s) of Christ.
- (iv) The relationship between the primary Apostle and the City Elders and their churches was often endearing and functions within the father-son dyad (Acts 20:36-38; 1 Corinthians 4:14-15; 2 Corinthians 12:14; 1 Thessalonians 2:11).
- (v) Within a specific human settlement, different households could relate to different Apostles of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:1ff.; 3 John 1:9-12). This relationship between the Apostle and city Elders will ensure the prosperity of the City of God.
- (vi) It is our conviction that Elders in the City of God should maintain strong relationships with

Apostles. The well-being of the City of God in any location will benefit the actual human settlements in which they live. When God's City prospers, human cities enjoy benefits. The converse will apply if Apostles are removed from their relationship to Elders, leading to the desolation of the City of the Living God in that given jurisdiction.

7. RECONCILIATION AND DISCIPLINE

- 7.1. God has committed to His sons the word and ministry of reconciliation and as ambassadors for Christ we make our appeal to the rest of creation to be reconciled to God, creation's rightful owner, through Christ Jesus our Lord (2 Corinthians 5: 20-21).
- 7.2. Discipline is an integral constituent in the Family of God, ensuring the preservation of holiness, godliness and lawful spiritual living.
- 7.3. Discipline, correction and chastisement are all part of God's training procedure to mature us into sonship (Proverbs 3:11-12). The Lord Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, was without sin yet for our sakes He was stricken, smitten, afflicted, chastised, oppressed and put to grief by God (Isaiah 53:4-5).
- 7.4. He did not need to be chastised because He was God's perfect Son, innocent and without sin or blemish. However, as the pattern Son He has set the example for us to follow in order to become mature sons of God. He learned obedience by the things He suffered

- and displayed reverence for His Father. He did not resist the will of His Father in spite of the pain He suffered (Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 5:7, 12:2).
- 7.5. Because of the carnal nature in man through the fall, discipline becomes necessary to help us conform to the divine nature of God (Ephesians 4:22-23).
 - 7.6. We are admonished by the Word to submit to and endure correction for discipline, since God is dealing with us as sons (Hebrews 12:5-11).
 - 7.7. It must be so even with a natural father, since every son is trained and corrected and disciplined to produce obedience (Job 5:17-19). Failure of a father to correct a son or refusal of a son to accept correction renders the son illegitimate (Hebrews 12:5-11).
 - 7.8. The process of discipline, though it seems grievous and painful, yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it (Hebrews 12:5-11).
 - 7.9. Administration of Discipline in the Household of Faith:
 - 7.9.1. Discipline must be meted out by the spiritually mature in a spirit of love and meekness. The primary purpose of such discipline is restorative, which in some instances may include punitive measures. (Galatians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 5:2; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8; 1 Timothy 5:20).
 - 7.9.2. Biblical discipline is based on Christ's guidelines as presented in Matthew 18:15-20.

- 7.9.3. The disciplinary process in respect to a brother having sinned against another brother involves the following three steps (stages):
- a. Address the offender on a private one-on-one basis with the aim of resolving the issues at hand and restoring the erring brother.
 - b. Should the first attempt in correcting the offender fail then the offender must be addressed in the presence of witnesses.
 - c. Should the first two steps fail then the matter is presented to the eldership of the Church/household for appropriate action in bringing final and binding resolution to the issue.
- 7.9.4. While conflict may have been successfully resolved between brothers, there might be a need to implement further counsel and action for complete restoration of the erring and offended brothers and/or the reputation of the Church. This will be at the discretion of the Senior Elder and will include matters concerning brothers who hold office or ministry function.
- 7.9.5. Appropriate counsel and action within the process of discipline includes godly sorrow, repentance, reconciliation, restitution and restoration (Luke 19:8; 2 Corinthians 7:10).
- 7.9.6. In the case of a Senior Elder who remains unrepentant after the due process outlined in point 7.9.3.

the intervention is to be made by the principal apostolic grace¹³ or overseeing elder¹⁴ to whom he relates.

7.10. Matters of conflict are to be resolved within the confines of one's household of faith for the purpose of judgment, reconciliation and restoration without recourse for the same to secular institutions (Matthew 8:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, 12:8-10; Ephesians 4:3-6; 1 Peter 2:24). This, however, must not hinder or interfere with the due processes of the law, even though reconciliation between relevant parties has been effected.

8. SACRAMENTS

We believe that the sacraments instituted by Christ are significant celebrations in and for the Church.

8.1. WATER BAPTISM

8.1.1. We believe in the sacrament of Water Baptism by immersion (Gk 'Baptizo') for all (irrespective of age) who have consciously and freely received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

¹³ Refer to point 6.5.2.1; point (vii)

¹⁴ Refer to point 6.5.2.1; point (viii)

- 8.1.2. Water baptism is a public witness and confession of faith and identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 16:16; Acts 8:37-38, 19:1-5, 22:16; Romans 6:3-9; Colossians 2:9-14; 1 Peter 3:18-22). Baptism is symbolic of the circumcision of the fleshly nature (Colossians 2:9-14).

8.2. THE LORD'S TABLE

- 8.2.1. We believe in the sacrament of the Lord's Table. By partaking of the bread and the wine, the Church emblematically declares its participation (fellowship) in the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. Further, the Church in this act recognizes His suffering, death and His second coming (*till He comes*) (John 14:3; 1 Corinthians 10:14-21, 11:23-30; Acts 1:11).
- 8.2.2. The meal is symbolic of Christ's body and blood, and is celebrated as an ordinance through which Christ communicates His grace, contributing to the maturity of His Body (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; Ephesians 4:11-13).
- 8.2.3. Also known as Communion, the Table represents the Communion in the Mystical Body of Christ, thereby declaring its fellowship and 'common union' or oneness with His Body, as the Church (1 Corinthians 11:29).

- 8.2.4. We believe that through the Communion of and in the Body, the grace of Christ is present (1 Corinthians 11:23-26) and freely made available to all the participants who are members of the Body of Christ.

8.3. MARRIAGE

- 8.3.1. We believe in the ordinance of holy matrimony in a monogamous, sacred, covenantal and harmonious union between a man (male by sex and gender) and a woman (female by sex and gender) as set out in the Scriptures (Genesis 2:22-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9; Ephesians 5:22-23).
- 8.3.2. We believe that the ideal and order of marriage and family is biblically defined and determined and therefore supersedes all secular and institutionalized views, even if legalized by the State. Hence we reserve the right of admission.
- 8.3.3. We believe that God determines the design for all marriages; that marriage is defined by mutual love of a man (male by sex and gender) and a woman (female by sex and gender) for each other. The relationship between a husband and a wife is symbolic of the mystical union of Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19).
- 8.3.4. We believe that the purpose of marriage is to glorify God and extend His Kingdom on earth, providing for fidelity, companionship, procreation and

the rearing of children in the fear of God (Genesis 1:28; Malachi 2:14-15; Ephesians 6:1-4; Titus 2:1-5; Hebrews 13:4).

- 8.3.5. We believe that in a marital union, the husband and wife are co-equal, yet are functionally distinct. The Scriptures clearly delineate the role of the husband and the wife in the marriage (Ephesians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:19). Husbands are called to love their own wives and give themselves as Christ gave Himself for the Church. Wives accordingly are called to submit to and honour their own husbands.
- 8.3.6. We further maintain that the biblical design of marriage is the template by which the image and likeness of God is expressed to the whole of creation. In this way, the seed of Christ is preserved in the human race through marriage (Genesis 3:15; John 7:42; Romans 1:3; Galatians 3:16-17; 2 Timothy 2:8).
- 8.3.7. We propagate the view of Paul on marriage as set out in 1 Corinthians 7:1ff.
- 8.3.8. God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other, and has commanded that no intimate sexual activity is engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (1 Corinthians 5). Any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, pornography, masturbation, any attempt to change one's gender, disagreement with one's biological gender, polyamory, swinging, paedophilia,

and the like is contrary and opposed to the spirit and essence of the Holy Scriptures and the created divine order (Genesis 19:1-11; Leviticus 18:6-30; Romans 1, 2:1-3; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:8-10; Jude 7).

8.3.9. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

- 8.3.9.1. We affirm that God hates divorce (Deuteronomy 22:13-19,29; Malachi 2:16). Every attempt should be made to avoid divorce (1 Corinthians 7:10-11).
- 8.3.9.2. We believe that in the event of marital breakdown, both husband and wife should pursue reconciliation as a primary action with the sole aim of the restoration of the marriage union.
- 8.3.9.3. Divorce is only legitimized in the event of sexual immorality (Matthew 19:9).
- 8.3.9.4. Divorce should not be contemplated without due consideration for the consequences. We affirm that God forgives repentant sinners, even those who have sinned by sundering their marriages. However the consequences resulting from the divorce must be borne by those responsible.
- 8.3.9.5. We affirm that the local church has the responsibility to discipline those who violate the biblical standards for marriage, compassionately restore those who repent, and faithfully minister God's grace to those whose lives have been scarred by divorce.

- 8.3.9.6. Cases of abuse in any form detrimental to the life and wellbeing of either spouse, should be directed to relevant institutions to remedy the situation.

9. KINGDOM ECONOMY

- 9.1. We believe that the Scriptures set out the financial economy for all who are in the Kingdom of God. By obeying God's Word the believer enjoys divine immunity, provision and prosperity in spirit, soul and body (Deuteronomy 15:5-6, 8:18, 28:1-14; 3 John 2).
- 9.2. We believe that since God is the Creator and Owner of the Heavens and the Earth, He is the absolute Source of all who have placed their trust in Him (Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 24:1; Haggai 2:8; Luke 16:1-13).
- 9.3. We believe that the Church of Christ is entrusted with the responsibility of stewarding creation on His behalf. Mature sons of God live in obedience to His will and are subject to the wisdom and counsel of His Word (Romans 8:28-29; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Hebrews 1:1-3).
- 9.4. We believe that the Old Covenant was fulfilled in Christ and we can extract principles from it for effective living in the New Covenant (Matthew 5:17; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:6,11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 7:4-10).
- 9.4.1. Prior to the canon of the New Testament, the early church lived by the official Scriptures of the

thirty-nine books of the Old Testament (Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

- 9.4.2. Eternal principles relating to giving preceded the Law (Genesis 4:4; 14:20). However, the Law provides the framework, teaching the sons of God how to structure their lives in the New Covenant. In this way the Lord orders the steps of the righteous. (Psalm 37:23)
- 9.4.3. Old Covenant principle can be used to establish New Covenant practice (Matthew 23:23; 1 Corinthians 9:8-14).
- 9.4.4. These are eternal principles and are not merely subject to the Law of Moses, or the ceremonial Laws of Temple worship as set out in the Old Covenant (Genesis 14; Exodus 23:19; Leviticus 27:30; Numbers 18:12-13; Deuteronomy 14:22-23, 28, 18:4; 2 Chronicles 31:5-6; Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

9.5. We believe that the economy of the kingdom of God includes the practice of first- fruits, tithes and offerings. (Deuteronomy 26:1-19; 2 Chronicles 31:3-6; Nehemiah 10:39, 12:44)

9.5.1. Tithes

- a) We believe that ten percent of all income received belongs to the Lord and therefore should be tithed. (Leviticus 27:30; Proverbs 3:9-10).

- b) We believe that the primary purpose of the tithe is for the salary/ies of those who have been called and who have dedicated themselves to ministry within the Body of Christ. (Numbers 18:21; 2 Chronicles 31:4-5,10; Nehemiah 13:10).
- c) We advise those who are entrusted with the spiritual and financial administration of congregations to ensure that the ministers/elders are well cared for (2 Chronicles 31:4-5; 1 Timothy 5:17).

9.5.2. First fruits

- a) We believe that of all income received per annum, the first portion belongs to the Lord (Genesis 4:2-4; Exodus 22:29-30, 23:19, 34:26; Numbers 18:12-13; Proverbs 3:9-10; Ezekiel 44:30). We calculate the first portion to be a minimum of one week's income in a 52-week cycle.
- b) We believe that in principle the first fruit offering is directed to the senior elder of the congregation for their personal use and for distribution as per their discretion to the poor or needy. (Leviticus 23:9-10; Numbers 18:20-21, 31:41; Deuteronomy 18:1-5,8, 26:2-4; Nehemiah 10:35-39, 12:44; Ezekiel 44:30; 1 Corinthians 9:7-15).
- c) We advise those who are entrusted with the spiritual and financial administration of congregations to ensure that the senior elder is the recipient of these

funds. The receipt of this offering should be conducted in a legal and transparent way. (2 Corinthians 8:20-21).

- d) We also encourage the recipients of these funds to receive these as holy offerings and therefore use or distribute them in a godly, fearful and accountable manner. (1 Samuel 2:29).

9.5.3. Offerings

- a) We believe that there are general offerings received in accordance with the specific needs of the church. For example they may be for building projects, missions, the poor, community and humanitarian needs, etc. These should be distributed in accordance with their specific purposes. (Exodus 25:1-9, 35:1-22, 36:1-7; 1 Chronicles 29:1-9; Acts 11:27-30; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8 and 9).
- b) Scripture instructs the Church to develop a structured and disciplined lifestyle of selfless giving (Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8 and 9).

9.6. Giving expresses total dependence on God the Father as the Source and Resource of all things (Deuteronomy 8:18).

9.7. In the New Covenant giving is voluntary, celebratory and not obligatory or legalistic (2 Corinthians 9:7).

9.8. Giving expresses dependence upon and honor of God (Deuteronomy 8:18; Proverbs 3:9-10).

- 9.9. The discipline of giving inculcates the culture of obedience to the Word (Deuteronomy 15:5,6, 28:1).
- 9.10. The discipline of giving liberates the believer from attachment to materialism (Matthew 6:24; 1 Timothy 6:10-11).
- 9.11. We believe that all offerings (first fruits, tithes and offerings) are holy and must be administered in a transparent and accountable manner that is free from manipulation and greed (2 Corinthians 8:20-21). Further we recommend that Churches observe meticulous, accurate and acceptable accounting procedures in the administration of income and expenditure of Church funds.

10. SATAN AND DEMONOLOGY

- 10.1. We believe that satan and his demons are created beings, and have a literal existence (Luke 10:17-20; John 8:42-44; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:11,12; 2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 12:4).
- 10.2. They are a deliberate and supernatural manifestation of evil orchestrated against God and His purposes vested in and through His Church to all creation (Matthew 12:24-28; Luke 7:21; Acts 19:12-19; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 3:10, 6:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10; Revelation 12:9-10).
 - 10.2.1. Jesus Christ, through His meritorious death, resurrection, and ascension defeated satan and his

demons. By this act we believe Jesus freed all of humankind from the power of satan, from sin and from death (1 Corinthians 15; Ephesians 1, 2; Colossians 2:10,15; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:11). The privilege of being freed from the powers of satan is only enjoyed when one receives and follows Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

- 10.3. There will be an ultimate and final eradication of evil at the consummation of all things in Christ (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10-15).
- 10.4. The spirit and coming of anti-Christ, according to 'the working of satan', is the mystery of lawlessness or iniquity (2 Thessalonians 2:7-9).

10.4.1. The spirit of anti-Christ denies:

- Jesus Christ 'as coming in the flesh' (1 John 4:3; 2 John 1:7)
- Jesus is the Christ (1 John 2:18-24)
- The Father and the Son (1 John 2:22-23).

- 10.4.2. The spirit of anti-Christ manifests individually and corporately (2 Thessalonians 2:3-9).

11. END TIMES

- The beginning of the last days commenced with the advent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost

(Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17) which also marked the birth of the Church of Jesus Christ in power (Hebrews 1:1-2).

- We believe that the consummation of the last days will be marked by the following¹⁵:

11.1 PERILOUS TIMES

11.1.1. Perilous times within the Church and the world shall abound (2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 Peter 3:3).

The nature of man will be characterised by the following:

- Haters of God; unrighteousness; ungodliness; wickedness; suppressing truth in unrighteousness; futile thoughts; foolish and darkened hearts; lovers of themselves; lovers of money; boasters; proud; blasphemers; disobedient to parents; unthankful; unholy; unloving; unforgiving; slanderers; without self-control; brutal; despisers of good; spiteful; traitors; headstrong; haughty; lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying its power; adultery; fornication; sexual immorality; homosexuality; sodomy; vile passions; evil desire; uncleanness; filthiness; debased

¹⁵ Whilst there have been various occurrences of these things at various phases of the last days, we believe that they will reach a tipping point at the end of the last days.

minds; evil-mindedness; lewdness; idolatry; sorcery; hatred; contentions; jealousies; outbursts of wrath; selfish ambitions; strife; dissensions; heresies; envy; murders; drunkenness; revelries; lying; anger; wrath; theft; blasphemy; revilers; extortion; filthy language; corrupt speech; evil speaking; backbiting; foolish talking; coarse jesting; grumbling; complaining; scoffing; bitterness; clamour; malice; covetousness which is idolatry; hypocrisy; covenant breakers; without natural affection; implacable; unmerciful; contentious; malignity; etc. (Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-12, 10:8-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:19,25-32, 5:3-5; Colossians 3:5-9; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; 2 Timothy 3:2-5; 1 Peter 2:1; 2 Peter 3:3).

11.1.2. Catastrophic events will occur environmentally, climatologically, politically, sociologically, and economically (Daniel 12; Matthew 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11).

11.2. EMERGENCE OF THE TRUE AND FALSE CHURCH

11.2.1. APOSTOLIC CHURCH (TRUE CHURCH)

- (i) The last days will witness the emergence of an intense conflict between the sons of God and the sons of the devil, before their final separation as

described in the parables of the wheat and the tares, the sheep and goats, and the wicked and wise (Daniel 12:9-10; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, 25:32-33).

- (ii) The nations of the earth will come to be taught the ways of the Lord (Micah 4:1-3; Isaiah 2:1-3). All things will be restored under the rule of God. The kingdoms of this world will ultimately surrender to the Kingdom of God (Daniel 2:34,35; Revelation 11:15).
- (iii) Towards the end of the last days, an apostolic Church will emerge in the earth with great authority and power, fully matured, triumphant, glorious, pure, without spot or wrinkle (Ephesians 5:27; 4:11-16; Revelations 14).
- (iv) By apostolic, we mean an authentic Church built according to the design as set out in the Holy Scriptures (see Article 6 – ‘The Church’).
- (v) Through this Church, God will establish and finalise His purposes on the earth.
- (vi) Analogous to the blossoming of the fig tree, we believe that the blossoming of this apostolic Church, the Israel of God, is the fig tree that indicates the signs of the final return of the Lord (Matthew 24:32; Luke 21:29-31).
- (vii) The Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a witness to all nations (Matthew 24:13, 14; Mark 13:10).

11.2.2. APOSTATE CHURCH (FALSE CHURCH)

- (i) Signs of the last days include the emergence of an apostate church, the appearance of the son of perdition, lawlessness and a great falling away (2 Timothy 3:1ff). Perversions will proliferate in this apostate church (Romans 1:18-32).
- (ii) There will be an increase of demonic activity in the earth and in the apostate church, which shall become a habitation of demons (Revelation 18:2-3).
- (iii) The last days will be comparative to the days of Noah and Lot (Luke 17:26-30; 2 Peter 2:4-22).
- (iv) All these signs will precede and be an indication of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth (Matthew 24:3ff; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3).

11.3. SECOND COMING AND THE RESURRECTION

- 11.3.1. The return of the Lord (second coming) in and with the clouds, comprising those saints who are with Him in Heaven, is a visible, physical, literal and public second coming at the consummation of the age (Acts 1:11).
- 11.3.2. The scriptures teach that there are two distinct physical and literal comings of the Lord¹⁶:

¹⁶ His physical literal return to the earth will be preceded by Him coming to be glorified in His saints, His consecrated ones. He will appear in the saints, before He appears to them (2 Thessalonians 1:10).

- (i) The first coming as the man Jesus Christ was in the incarnation (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:16,21, 27:17; Luke 1:35, 2:11,25-26)
 - (ii) The second coming will be in and with the cloud of witnesses in His glory (Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
- 11.3.3. We believe in the elementary principle of the 'Resurrection of the Dead' (1 Corinthians 15:12-21,42; 2 Timothy 2:18; Hebrews 6:1-3).
- 11.3.4. We believe that there are two incidents of resurrection:
- (i) The firstfruit resurrection took place on the third day after His crucifixion when His Spirit was reconciled to His physical body that was glorified and that His resurrection was accompanied by the resurrection of many righteous saints (Matthew 27:52; Ephesians 4:8; 1 Peter 3:18-20).
 - In the first resurrection and ascension, He made an open spectacle of the devil and his kingdom; He took away the power and sting of death and the grave, the keys of death and Sheol; and He led captivity captive (Acts 2:31; Romans 6:5; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Ephesians 4:8-10; Colossians 2:15; Revelations 1:18).
 - (ii) We eagerly await the final resurrection together with the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, signifying the triumphant victory over the last enemy, called death (1 Corinthians 15:26).

11.3.5. The advent of the second coming and the final resurrection can be sub-divided into two categories:

- (i) Resurrection of the just, the righteous who are physically dead (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15). The just will be forever with the Lord, never to be separated from Him (1 Thessalonians 4:17).
- (ii) Resurrection of the unjust, the unrighteous who will be forever separated from the Lord (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:13-14).

11.3.6. At the second coming of the Lord, those who are asleep in Christ will first be raised up, and those who remain and are living will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). At the coming of the Lord, those that are alive will experience the change of their bodies from mortality to immortality, from corruption to incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:54). Together we will rule with Christ over all things both in Heaven and on earth (Ephesians 1:9-11; Hebrews 2:7-8).

11.4. ANTI-CHRIST

Refer to section 10 - 'Satan and Demonology'¹⁷

¹⁷ Refer to point (10.4)

11.5. FALSE CHRIST

- 11.5.1. The emergence of false Christs will be one of signs of the end-times (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22).
- 11.5.2. A false Christ is a counterfeit who masquerades as the authentic Christ.
- 11.5.3. Strong deception will be a marked feature of the false Christ, including great but lying signs and wonders intended to deceive even the very elect (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22).

12. DEATH

12.1. DEATH AND PARADISE

- 12.1.1. Spiritual death is the separation of a person's spirit from the Spirit of God. Physical death is a temporary separation of one's spirit from one's physical body. The physical resurrection of the body will take place at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).
- 12.1.2. At the point of physical death, the body will return to the dust but the spirit and soul of a believer goes to be with the Lord in Paradise (Luke 23:43).
 - 12.1.2.1. Paradise is described as the third Heaven, the Heavenly Kingdom, the bosom of the Father, Abraham's bosom or the cloud of witness (Luke 16:22-23; John 1:18; 2 Corinthians 12:2-4).

- 12.1.2.2. Paradise is the abode of the souls and spirits of the redeemed in the intermediate state between death and final resurrection.
- 12.1.2.3. The believer has no fear of death since to be absent from the human body is to be present with the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:55-57; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Philippians 1:22-25; Hebrews 2:14-15).

12.2. DEATH AND HELL

- 12.2.1. The wicked who die will go into an intermediary place called Hades or Sheol to await final judgment (Luke 16:23).
- 12.2.2. Final judgment is when death and hell will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Gehenna) (Revelation 20:13-14). This is the second death. The Lake of Fire is also the final abode of satan and all who have submitted to his leadership (Revelation 20:10).

13. FAMILY

- 13.1. Family is God's design and means through which His image and likeness will be perpetuated in the earth (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 68:6; Acts 17:26).
- 13.2. Family must derive its nature and pattern for living from the Heavenly Father (Ephesians 3:14-15).
- 13.3. In Christ, the Seed of Abraham, all families of the earth are blessed. Family is the means for the generational

- transfer of God's purposes (Genesis 12:3, 18:18; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:8).
- 13.4. A nation is arranged and blessed around the basic constituency of families (Genesis 22:18, 26:4, 28:14; Numbers 1 and 2; Psalm 22:27).
- 13.5. Biblically, the nuclear family, patterned after Adam and Eve and their children, comprises father (male by gender and sex), mother (female by gender and sex), and a child or children (Genesis 4-5:1ff; Numbers 26).
- 13.6. The loving nurture and discipline of children is a God-ordained duty of parent(s). Further, obedience to parent(s) is required of children (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4).
- 13.7. The primary responsibility for the family rest with the parent(s). In extreme cases of abuse and irresponsibility on the part of the parent(s), the relevant authorities shall take appropriate action to protect the vulnerable.¹⁸

14. GENDER AND SEXUALITY

- 14.1. The Scriptures clearly define and distinguish between the genders (and sex) called male and female. Therefore the image and likeness of God vests in and through humanity and is completely expressed collectively

¹⁸ Taken and adapted from The Chicago Statement on Biblical Application drawn up by leading Evangelical scholars

- and individually in both the male and female gender (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1-2).
- 14.2. We affirm that both male and female have been created by God and therefore enjoy equality of gender, dignity, value, even though their functions distinctly differ as determined by the Creator.
- 14.3. The physical condition in which persons are born, including their gender, is established by God (Exodus 4:11; John 9:3). Innate sexual confusion, transvestitism and its related expressions including sex-change operations are aberrations of God's original design (Deuteronomy 22:5; Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 6:13)¹⁹.
- 14.4. In exceptional, extraordinary cases related to Disorders of Sexual Development (DSD), we advise the Elders of churches to exercise discernment, sensitivity and wisdom when addressing such cases (See Addendum 3). Such cases will demand that the rule of expediency administered with love and compassion guides the Elders of Churches in the decisions that must be taken.
- 14.5. We believe that declaring God's Word and warning people of the temporal and eternal consequences of their sins, including sexual distortions, is an act of loving concern. God's Word remains true and no human authority must amend His prohibitions, including those on sexual distortions and immoralities²⁰.

¹⁹ Taken and adapted from The Chicago Statement on Biblical Application drawn up by leading Evangelical scholars

²⁰ See www.sharperiron.org

14.6. Sexual Distortion

- 14.6.1. We believe that God's grace in Christ can deliver men and women from their bondage to abnormal sexual practice; be they heterosexual or homosexual. The church must assume responsibility for restoring such members to a life that honours God.²¹
- 14.6.2. We believe that God loves all people in bondage to sexual and other sin. All such temptations to sin can be resisted in the power of Christ to the glory of His grace.²²
- 14.6.3. Sons of God must exercise compassion, kindness, and forgiveness in the ministry of God's grace to those whose lives have been scarred by sexual distortions.²³

15. HUMANITARIAN ISSUES

15.1. CREATION CARE

- 15.1.1. God is the Creator of our earth and He loves His creation (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 24:1).
- 15.1.2. Creation visibly reveals the divine qualities of the invisible God. Be that as it may, we are commanded

²¹ Taken and adapted from The Chicago Statement on Biblical Application drawn up by leading Evangelical scholars

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

- to worship God and not His creation (Romans 1:20-25).
- 15.1.3. At the point of creation man as God's son, made in His image and likeness, is the exact representation of His Father and the epitome of all creation (Genesis 1:26).
- 15.1.4. Consequently man, being disconnected from His Father at the fall, plunged creation into the bondage of corruption (Romans 8:19-23).
- 15.1.5. The redemption of creation is contingent upon the maturation of the sons of God, for which all creation groans in eager expectation (Romans 8:19-23).
- 15.1.6. As sons of God our Father, we have a delegated responsibility to steward all of creation. Such mandate includes all matters ensuring the wellbeing and sustainability of creation (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 24:1; Romans 8:19-22; 1 Corinthians 10:26; 1 Timothy 4:4).
- 15.1.7. In God's plan of salvation, He will redeem and bring ultimate restoration to creation (Revelation 21:1,5).

15.2. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 15.2.1. We believe in social, economic and political justice for all.
- 15.2.2. We believe that the Church is the prophetic voice of God in the world.

- 15.2.3. We acknowledge our responsibility to the social well-being of all people. This may include, among other things the following: fostering harmonious relationships between and among individuals, people groups and nations; the alleviation and reduction of poverty; relief and care for the aged, the widow, and the orphan; rehabilitation of those in various addictions (Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Psalm 69:3, 146:7-9; Isaiah 1:17; Jeremiah 22:3; Zechariah 7:9-10; Matthew 7:12, 25:31-46; Luke 10:30-37, 11:39-42; Romans 12:15-18).

15.3. GOVERNMENT

- 15.3.1. Government is divinely ordained by God and under His control (Romans 13:1-7).
- 15.3.2. The principle and practice of righteous governance is based on absolute Biblical values and morals rooted in God's character (Ecclesiastes 12:13).
- 15.3.3. The institution of government is obligated to ensure the wellbeing and safety of its citizens, thus protecting them against threats foreign and domestic that seek to disrupt Biblical principles of liberty, justice and peace (1 Peter 2:13-17).
- 15.3.4. We affirm that each person is a free moral agent and that both human responsibility and accountability are fundamental to human co-existence (Romans 14:12; 1 Corinthians 6:1-20; Galatians 6:1-5).

15.4. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

- 15.4.1. The persecution, discrimination and imprisonment of any person or group based on nationality, race, religion, language, caste, colour, gender or creed is unacceptable and a violation of biblical standards (Exodus 20:13; Proverbs 6:16-17; Matthew 5:21; Romans 13:8-10).
- 15.4.2. In light of increasing global political and religious persecutions and crises, the Church's obligation and priority is obedience to God and His Word above earthly governments and institutions. Whenever and wherever socio-political decrees, laws, philosophies and ideologies violate or are in contradiction of God and HIS word, then God and HIS word take precedence (Acts 4:19, 5:29).
- 15.4.3. Those oppressed and persecuted for righteousness sake must be joyful for they partake in Christ's sufferings and must be supported in prayer and by other practical means (Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:18-21; Hebrews 13:1-3).

16. MORALITY AND ETHICS

Amidst many moral and ethical issues, the church is called to address gambling, substance abuse and pornography together with the many other vices. These are indicative of the fallen nature of man and his

retrogression in sin. Society has lost its moral fibre and indulges itself in permissiveness, thus accommodating many social ills. To dismiss these issues as a human condition is an inadequate response and shows indifference to problems on a global scale that lead people into a perverse lifestyle. Any form of addiction can be overcome through obedience to God's Word and by the power of His Spirit.

16.1. GAMBLING

- 16.1.1. We believe that any form of gambling or games of chance in lieu of economic gain is a carnal expression of quick and easy attempts to enrich oneself to the exclusion of dependence on God as Provider (Proverbs 13:11, 23:5; Ecclesiastes 5:10).
- 16.1.2. The Bible does not specifically condemn gambling. The Bible does warn us, however, to flee the love of money (1 Timothy 6:10; Hebrews 13:5).

16.2. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- 16.2.1. Substance abuse is the excessive use and dependence on alcohol, narcotics (drugs), and other substances that lead to intoxication. Lack of sobriety and self-control ensues (Proverbs 20:1; Isaiah 5:11; 1 Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:18).
- 16.2.2. Intoxication results in mind-altering states and behaviour-modification, which impairs judgement

morally and otherwise (Genesis 9:21, 19:32-33; Proverbs 31:4-5). Continual substance abuse over a period of time gives rise to addictions beyond human restraint.

- 16.2.3. Substance abuse defiles the body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). It also negatively affects the health of the body.

16.3. PORNOGRAPHY

- 16.3.1. Pornography is the depiction of explicit erotic behavior or nudity in any audio-visual and literary media form intended to cause sexual excitement and lure one into lust (Psalm 101:3; Romans 13:13-14; 2 Peter 2:7-8; 1 John 2:16).
- 16.3.2. The intended spiritual effect of pornography is to vex and torment one's soul (2 Peter 2:7-8).
- 16.3.3. Pornography violates the sanctity and purity of sexual intimacy designed by God to be enjoyed within the covenant of marriage. We believe it is a direct attempt to subvert and undermine the moral fibre in reference to sexuality.
- 16.3.4. Pornography opens the door granting legal grounds for demonic oppression and/or possession, which often manifest in sexual promiscuity and sexual crimes (Job 31:1; Ecclesiastes 10:8; Romans 13:13-14; Ephesians 4:27; James 1:14-15; 1 John 5:18).
- 16.3.5. We are commanded by God to abstain from all forms of evil and to flee all forms of lust and sexual

fantasy (Matthew 5:28; 1 Corinthians 10:5-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:22; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 John 2:16)

16.4. EUTHANASIA

- 16.4.1. Euthanasia is the termination of human life as an act of mercy with the intention of ending pain or suffering.
- 16.4.2. There is Active and Passive Euthanasia. Whilst we disagree with Active Euthanasia, Passive Euthanasia (e.g. switching off life support) is considered upon advisement of elders – each case being considered on its own merits.
- 16.4.3. Active Euthanasia violates the sanctity of life and undermines God's sovereignty and His power to heal (Deuteronomy 30:20; Job 33:4).
- 16.4.4. God is the Creator and Giver of life, and as His sons we have the responsibility to preserve life (Genesis 1:26-27; Job 1:21, 10:8-13; Psalm 139:16; Jeremiah 1:4-5; Ephesians 1:4).

16.5. HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- 16.5.1. Human trafficking is the recruitment, transfer and receipt of vulnerable persons by threat, force, abduction, manipulation or deception with intent to exploit for economic gain.

- 16.5.2. Human trafficking undermines the intrinsic value of human life in the image of God, by reducing it to a commodity for trade.
- 16.5.3. Human trafficking violates God's Word and human dignity and the perpetrators and facilitators of it will be judged (Exodus 21:16; Deuteronomy 21:14, 24:7; Job 29:12).
- 16.5.4. It is incumbent on the Church to condemn and expose the evil of human trafficking (Proverbs 31:8).

16.6. ABORTION

- 16.6.1 Abortion is the termination of the life of an unborn child.
- 16.6.2. We believe that physical life begins at conception, and thus any attempt to abort is an affront to God's sovereign authority as Creator and violates the sanctity of human life (Job 33:4; John 9:1-3).

16.7. HUMAN CLONING

- 16.7.1. Human cloning is the creation of a genetically identical copy of a human.
- 16.7.2. We believe that human cloning is a contradiction of the procreative prerogative and process given by God (Job 10:8-13; Psalm 100:3, 104:24, 139:13-16)

- 16.7.3. Cloning tampers with the hereditary traits and compromises the natural process of paternity, thereby disrupting familial order.

16.8. XENOPHOBIA

- 16.8.1. Xenophobia is the dislike or prejudice against people of another country, motivated by fear and insecurity.
- 16.8.2. We believe that all men are made in the image and likeness of God and that any physical attack on another human being irrespective of nation, race, culture, creed or colour is unacceptable (Genesis 1:26; Acts 10:28).
- 16.8.3. The Church is to be hospitable to, co-exist harmoniously alongside, and share the Gospel with foreigners living within its locality. The Church should pursue justice for the cause of victims of xenophobia (Deuteronomy 10:17-20; Ezekiel 22:29-31; Jeremiah 7:5-7; Matthew 25:35; Luke 10:25-37; Acts 10:34; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9-11).

ADDENDUM 1: NICENE CREED AND THE APOSTLES' CREED

Creeds and Confessions: As a Church, we subscribe to the historic creeds and confessions as contained in the seven historic Ecumenical Councils, particularly **The Nicene Creed** and **The Apostles Creed**, as well as the five **'Reformation Sola's'**.

The Nicene Creed

- I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
- And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.
- Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into Heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to

judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

- And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.
- And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

- I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth:
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord:
- Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary:
- Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell:
- The third day He rose again from the dead:
- He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty:
- From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:
- I believe in the Holy Ghost:

- I believe in the holy catholic Church: the communion of saints:
- The forgiveness of sins:
- The resurrection of the body:
- And the life everlasting. Amen.

Reformation Sola's

- Sola Fide - By faith alone.
- Sola Scriptura - By Scripture alone.
- Solus Christus - Through Christ alone.
- Sola Gratia - By grace alone.
- Soli Deo Gloria - Glory to God alone

**ADDENDUM 2:
SUPPORTING NOTES FOR PREAMBLE
OF FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY²⁴**

Our views expressed in the ‘prologue’ on Five-fold Ministry²⁵ are undergirded by the following:

- We believe that these gifts of Christ were symbolically enacted on the night that Christ was betrayed when He took the bread and broke and said, “This is my body which was broken for you.” (John 6; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 11:23ff).
- Further, symbolic enactments of the distribution of the Body of Christ are found in the actual feeding of the five thousand. Christ, the Bread from Heaven who could not be fully partaken of by the five thousand (existing generation), was placed in twelve baskets. In this account Christ explicitly states that He is the Bread from Heaven. He also stated that He had not lost anything that His Father had given him and that on the last day these would be raised up again (John 6:35-58). In Acts chapter 1, this statement ‘nothing will be lost’ was fulfilled when the vacant position of Judas was filled by the appointment of Matthias to the apostolate. Only thereafter the promise of the Holy Spirit was given

²⁴ Refer to point (6.6.1.)

²⁵ Refer to point (6.6.1.)

on the Day of Pentecost for the birth of the New Testament Church.

- Whenever members of the church gather together, they are instructed to ‘remember’ the Lord by partaking of the Body of Christ. We refer to this as the communion of the Body. We therefore maintain that by partaking of the Body (and Blood), we partake of Christ, the gift of grace (and of His life). In this way we are partakers of the divine nature of Christ (2 Peter 1:4).
- We are instructed to access the grace of God by asking for Bread (manna) from Heaven on a daily basis (Exodus 16; Matthew 6:9; John 6). In the temptation of Jesus we are informed that the Word of God is the food from Heaven (Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 13:9-10), brought to us by those who have been divinely called, appointed and sent to preach the Gospel. (Romans 10:8-15; Ephesians 4:11). These individuals we refer to as five fold ministers.
- Grace is communicated primarily through preaching (Psalm 45:2; Proverbs 1:8-9; John 1:1,14-17; Luke 4:17-22; Acts 4:13, 20:32; Romans 10).

ADDENDUM 3: HERMAPHRODITISM²⁶

Individuals with a congenital discrepancy between external genitalia and gonadal and chromosomal sex are classified as having disorders of sexual development (DSD). Terminology such as hermaphroditism is pejorative.

Some DSDs present with a genital appearance that does not permit gender declaration at birth and their physical appearance is termed ambiguous genitalia.

This is usually detected during infancy and investigations are undertaken to determine the cause, which in some instances may be due to genetic abnormalities, as well as other causes.

These children then need to be assessed by a geneticist, paediatric endocrinologist, psychologists and urologists as well as surgeons.

The major issue that arises concerns what gender the child should be raised up as and then determining what gender the child should be given with gender reassignment surgery which comes after much psychosocial counseling.

Generally after investigation one may find the child to have complete androgen insensitivity and will not have ambiguous genitalia and should be raised as females. One may also find after chromosomal studies the child has a 46XX genotype and has a condition called congenital adrenal hyperplasia. These children should be raised as females.

²⁶ Source: www.uptodate.com.

46XX children with external male genitalia present a problem as ultimate gender identification varies. Families should be encouraged to rear them as males.

(NB 46XX is a female genotype. 46XY is a male genotype)

Gender reassignment surgery is the next step and should be delayed until the age at which the individual can participate in deciding with counseling which gender is applicable. This depends on the child's individual characteristics, how the child was reared and the child's gender preference.

Thereafter hormone replacement will be given lifelong if needed to maintain that gender; this then will influence sexual preference.

These individuals may have gonads that may be located abdominally, which is abnormal. This may need to be removed due to potential risk of malignancy in later life.

These individuals are infertile. They will also need ongoing psychosexual counseling after surgery and through to adulthood to aid in adequate adjustment.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Apostolic

By virtue of the definition of apostle, the verb of which means to be sent, commissioned and ordered of God, that which is apostolic refers to the original design, pattern and order locked up in God. Further to this is the fact that the grace of Christ called apostle, is foundational and governmental. Hence, that which is apostolic is the authentic governmental order of God for creation resident in the Holy Scriptures.

Catholic

The word “Catholic” is derived from a Greek word, *Katholikos*, meaning universal. In the early days of the Church, many Roman citizens referred to this new upstart religion that followed the “Ways” of Jesus Christ as being Catholic- it was universal throughout the empire, meaning that members of this new religion could be found almost

anywhere throughout the empire. As time went on, this particular word began to be recognized and used in describing this new religion. It was understood to describe the very nature of the Church, in that, firstly it was universally for everyone. There was no exclusion according to nationality, race, economic or social status. It is for all the people of God. Secondly, the church is ubiquitous, in that it is present everywhere.

By the use of the term Catholic, we do not refer to the religious organisations known as the Roman Catholic Church or the Universal Church.

Son

The term 'Son' as used in Scripture refers to those who through believing in Christ come into a covenant relationship with God as Father. In Adam we are spiritually orphaned through separation from our heavenly Father who created us in His image and likeness. In Christ, however, we are reconciled or adopted into the Family of God. Son is without reference to any particular gender since in Christ, there is neither male no female.

Firstborn Son

Naturally, this refers to the status of the son born first or one that opens the womb. Inherent are the rights and privileges that are sometimes referred to as the birthright. For example, Esau was born first but exchanged his birthright with Jacob the younger brother for a pot of soup.

Consequently, all the rights & responsibilities of the first-born were seconded to Jacob.

Birthright included the following:

- A Fatherly or Patriarchal Blessing invoked through a prophetic verbal utterance;
- A Double Portion of his Father's Estate, that is, he received twice as much as any other sons; and
- Headship of the Family in that he inherited judicial authority of his father; and had to also ensure the welfare of the other siblings.

As the most exact representation of the Father, the First-born occupied a place of Honour at the right hand.

Spiritually, it was by divine election. God chose irrespective of biological order. For example, Abel over Cain, Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau and Ephraim over Manessah. Consequently, God chose the last Adam, Christ over the first Adam. Christ by being the exact representation and radiance of the Father's Glory is God's Firstborn. Hence, he has been given a Name above all other names and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Therefore, being in Christ, the sons of God are elevated to the status of the firstborn.

Man

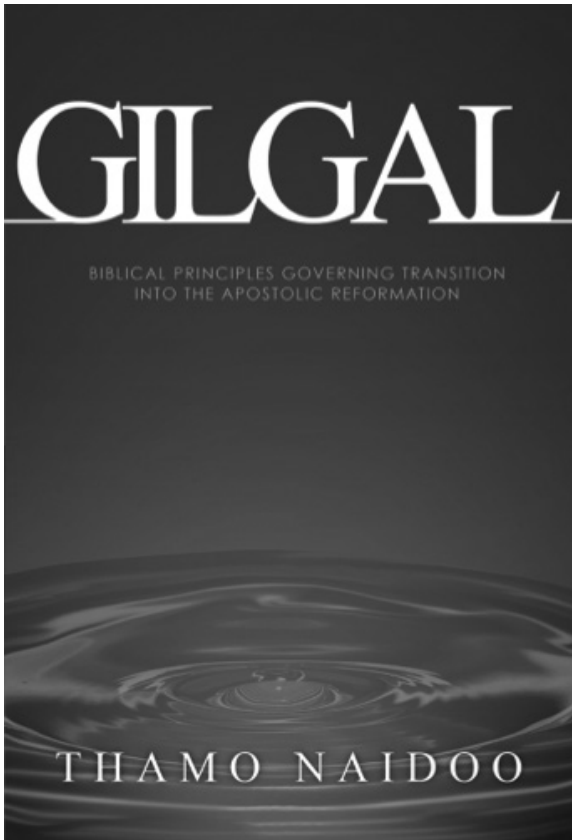
The term 'Man,' as used and applied biblically is a corporate term inclusive of both genders, namely, male and

female. Generally, it makes reference to the human race and it is without inference to any particular gender. Incidentally, the name 'Adam' given to the first human being created by God means 'Man,' from whom the entire human race emerged.

Sacraments

These are rites instituted by Jesus for the Church through which Grace is conferred. These rites are enacted in the natural through symbols or tokens and point to a greater spiritual reality or mystery. For example, the use of bread and wine to represent the spiritual body and blood of Jesus Christ through which a covenant is established between Church and God. Other sacraments include Water Baptism and Marriage.

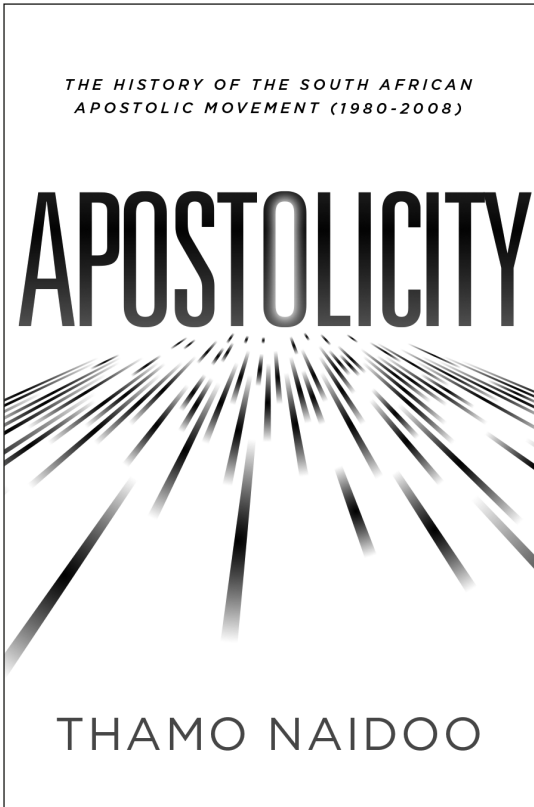
Other resources from Thamo Naidoo



A new season has dawned upon the Church of Jesus Christ, labelled in some circles as the Apostolic Reformation. It comes in the form of a clarion call from the throne of God for a consummate reformation of gigantic proportions to be imposed upon the Church.

Gilgal is the place of constructive preparation or re-formation. It symbolises a sensitive and critical place in the life and experience of a people, ministry or nation in the earth. This is a location in one's spiritual journey where preparation is made for the next phase in the unfolding plan of God. A season has been concluded, a new one is about to be ushered in, placing new demands on His people. It is at Gilgal that the process of reconfiguration must take place

Other resources from Thamo Naidoo



Within South African Pentecostal circles has emerged a movement of variegated streams, named in this study as the Apostolic Movement (AM). Proponents of this movement call for a return to the 'apostolicity of the church.' The AM draws attention to the nature, hierarchical structure and mission of the church, introducing 'new' and contrasting perspectives to those traditionally held by Pentecostal churches.

This study focuses on the history of Apostolicity in the AM streams that have emerged and developed through three periods: the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. While there are several other streams in the AM, this study has a specific focus on the following South African AM groups: New Covenant Ministries International (NCMI), Grace International (GI), Congress World Breakthrough Network (C-WBN), International Strategic Alliance of Apostolic Churches (ISAAC) and Judah Kingdom Alliance (JKA).

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WE BELIEVE

GATE Articles of Faith

Grapevine Apostolic Transformation Entity (GATE) is a global family of autonomous and self-governing Spiritual Households (congregations). Each Spiritual Household is led by a Senior Elder (representative father) and is voluntarily joined by covenant, is mutually accountable, and submitted to the apostolic leadership of GATE. The GATE family of Spiritual Households regards itself as an integral part of the corporate Body of Christ, the Church and is therefore encouraged to foster relations with congregations within the Body of Christ.

The objective of the GATE family is to develop believers into the image and likeness of God, so that they may function as mature sons of God in every sphere of life while representing the nature and character of Christ on the earth.

Thamo Naidoo has been in ministry since 1985. He is a graduate of the Bethesda Bible College Full Gospel Church of God South Africa and has earned a Master of Theology degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

He has planted two pioneering works in South Africa - River of Life Christian Ministries (ROLCM) in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal (1994) and GATE Ministries Sandton in Sandton, Gauteng (2012). Thamo currently provides spiritual oversight to churches both nationally and internationally.

Thamo travels extensively speaking to church leaders. His purpose is centred on the call for the restoration of the church to ancient biblical patterns of building. He accomplishes this through leadership and development interventions hosted over the course of the year under the banner of ApostolicGate.

ApostolicGate provides free downloadable resources and hosts multiple strategic leadership events globally including Apostolic Schools of Ministry (ASOM), Apostolic Leadership Summits (ALS), Perspectives on the Apostolic (POA), Sophoi Messenger Series Business Leaders Breakfast (SMS) and other conferences.

Thamo currently resides in Sandton, Gauteng, South Africa with his wife Mirolyn and their three sons.

Books by Thamo Naidoo: Gilgal: Biblical Principles Governing Transition into the Apostolic Reformation and Apostolicity: The History of the South African Apostolic Movement (1980-2008)

