

We Believe ...

Cornerstone Church Statement of Faith

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Preface

In his introduction to the greatest letter ever written Paul penned these words as his thesis; *“The righteous will live by faith.” Romans 1:17*

The Christian life is to be one of faith – belief that is based upon God’s Truth as revealed in God’s Word and centered in God’s Son.

We Believe ...

These two powerful words are the heart of this document. The truths that follow do not encompass all that we believe. We know that Jesus said *“Man shall ... live by ... every word that comes from the mouth of God” Matthew 4:4*. What is included on these pages is simply a summary of our beliefs concerning several key doctrines found within God’s Word.

We believe in God’s Truth. We love God’s Truth. We long to be followers of Jesus Christ who know His Truth deeply, live His Truth faithfully, and proclaim His Truth powerfully. As elders we feel deeply our high calling and profound responsibility as shepherds over Christ’s Body called Cornerstone. We strive to be prayerful, humble, and diligent in our commitment to nourish Christ’s Body with Truth, protect Christ’s Body with Truth, guide Christ’s Body with Truth, correct Christ’s Body with Truth, equip Christ’s Body with Truth, empower Christ’s Body with Truth, and send Christ’s Body with Truth.

Toward that end we offer this Statement of Faith. Each of the eleven doctrinal sections included offer a summary statement of what we believe about that doctrine, which is immediately followed by a compilation of Scriptures upon which that doctrine is built. At the end of the document you will find a glossary containing a few key theological terms concisely defined that are used frequently on these pages.

It is our prayer that this faith statement would be used by the Holy Spirit to lead you into a deeper and fuller knowledge of the God of the Word.

“Lord, grant to the elders and the Cornerstone body the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in a growing knowledge of You so that we are captivated by Your glory, increasingly awed by Your grace, further conformed to Your Son, daily motivated by Your love, and continually empowered by Your Spirit.”

Brad Sutter – On behalf of the Elders of Cornerstone Church.

1. The Scriptures - God's Written Word

We believe the Scriptures, in the entirety of the Old and New Testaments, are the living and active,¹ true and authoritative,² only written Word of God. These Scriptures were written without error³ as their authors were inspired by the Holy Spirit to communicate God's revelation of Himself and His truth to mankind.⁴ Being the very words of God equally in the whole and in every part⁵ they provide humanity with the fully sufficient,⁶ infallible,⁷ indestructible,⁸ victorious⁹ and authoritative rule for all faith and practice.¹⁰ Therefore, they must never be added to, superseded, or changed.¹¹

We believe the help of the Holy Spirit is essential in correctly interpreting the Scriptures that He inspired.¹² Each book of the Bible must be interpreted in light of its context and the author's purpose for writing, and each doctrine drawn from the Bible must be formulated and tested by the full council of God in all the Scriptures. Although passages of Scripture can have many applications, they have but one interpretation.¹³

We believe these Scriptures contain the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe.¹⁴ The Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, convicts mankind of sin and their need for a Savior,¹⁵ reveals Jesus Christ as the God man who saves,¹⁶ and births faith in the person and work of Christ unto salvation.¹⁷

We believe in God's written Word believers behold the glory of the Living Word, Jesus Christ,¹⁸ and are transformed in increasing measure into His likeness as the Spirit reveals and guides them into all the Truth.¹⁹ Believers, therefore, should consistently prioritize the study and application of God's Word praying for the Spirit's revealing and transforming work.²⁰

Scriptures

¹ **Hebrews 4:12** *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

Psalms 19:7-11 *The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*

Isaiah 55:11 *... so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*

² **John 17:17** *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*

Psalms 18:30 *This God—his way is perfect; the word of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.*

Psalms 119:142 *Your righteousness is righteous forever, and your law is true.*

³ **Proverbs 30:5-6** *Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.*

Psalms 12:6 *The words of the LORD are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.*

Matthew 5:18 *For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

4 1 Corinthians 2:13 *And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.*

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

1 Corinthians 2:9–10 *But, as it is written, 'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him'— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.*

5 2 Timothy 3:16 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ...*

Romans 3:2 *Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.*

2 Peter 3:16 *... as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

6 2 Peter 1:3–4 *His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*

Matthew 4:4 *But he answered, 'It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'*

7 Proverbs 30:5 *Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.*

Matthew 24:35 *'Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'*

Matthew 5:17 *'Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.'*

8 Luke 16:17 *But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void.*

Isaiah 40:8 *The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.*

1 Peter 1:25 *... 'but the word of the Lord remains forever.' And this word is the good news that was preached to you.*

9 Isaiah 55:11 *... so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*

Isaiah 46:10 *... declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose, ...'*

Ezekiel 12:25 *'For I am the LORD; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it, declares the Lord GOD.'*

10 2 Timothy 3:16–17 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

Acts 20:32 *And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

Romans 15:4 *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

¹¹ Deuteronomy 12:32 *Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.*
Proverbs 30:6 *Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.*

Revelation 22:18–19 *I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

¹² John 16:12–15 *'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.'*

1 Corinthians 2:7–16 *But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, 'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him'— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. 'For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?' But we have the mind of Christ.*

¹³ 2 Peter 3:16 *... as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

Matthew 4:6–7 *... and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you," and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."' Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."'*

¹⁴ Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

2 Thessalonians 2:13 *But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.*

1 Corinthians 1:23–24 *... but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*
truth.

¹⁵ Isaiah 1:18 *'Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.'*

Romans 3:23 *... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

Romans 3:10-12 *... as it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.'*

¹⁶ John 1:12 *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God ...*

1 John 5:9-12 *If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does*

not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

1 Peter 3:18 *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ...*

17 Romans 10:17 *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

John 20:31 *... but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

2 Timothy 3:15 *... and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

18 2 Corinthians 4:4–6 *In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

John 1:1–4, 14 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

1 John 5:20 *And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*

19 2 Corinthians 3:18 *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

John 16:13–15 *'When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.'*

2 Corinthians 1:20 *For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.*

20 Psalm 119:12, 18 *Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me your statutes! ... Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.*

Colossians 1:9 *And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ...*

Philippians 1:9 *And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment ...*

2. The Trinity - One God as Three Persons

We believe there is only One True God:¹ the living,² eternal,³ infinite,⁴ unchanging,⁵ sovereign God⁶ of all glory⁷ who has and will always exist as three co-equal and co-eternal,⁸ perfectly united yet distinct persons,⁹ the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.¹⁰

We believe these three Divine persons eternally enjoy and express absolute fullness of joy in fellowship with each other while eternally existing in oneness of essence as the Triune God. All three members of the Trinity, each fully God, deserve worship and obedience.

Scriptures

¹ **Deuteronomy 6:4** *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

¹ **Corinthians 8:5-6** *For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many 'gods' and many 'lords'—yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.*

¹ **Timothy 1:17**... *to the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

² **Jeremiah 10:10** *But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation.*

Exodus 3:14 *God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel, "'I AM has sent me to you.'"*

Revelation 22:13 *'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.'*

³ **Psalm 90:2** *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.*

Isaiah 40:28 *Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.*

Job 36:26 *Behold, God is great, and we know him not; the number of his years is unsearchable.*

⁴ **1 Kings 8:27** *'But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!'*

Psalm 139:7-12 *Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,' even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.*

Jeremiah 23:23 *Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God far away?*

⁵ **Malachi 3:6** *'For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.'*

Hebrews 13:8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

James 1:17 *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

⁶ **Psalm 115:3** *Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.*

Isaiah 46:10 ... declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose, ...'

Proverbs 16:4 *The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.*

Romans 11:33–36 *Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?' 'Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?' For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*

⁷ **Isaiah 6:3** *And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!'*

Psalms 148:13 *Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven.*

Psalms 138:5 ... and they shall sing of the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD.

⁸ **Matthew 1:23** *'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel' (which means, God with us).*

Revelation 22:13 *'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.'*

Colossians 1:19 *For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ...*

Psalms 139:7-8 *Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!*

1 Corinthians 2:10-11 ... these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

Genesis 1:1–2 *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

⁹ **John 14:11** *'Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.'*

John 17:11 *'And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.'*

Acts 2:33 *Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.*

¹⁰ **2 Corinthians 13:14** *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

John 15:26 *'But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.'*

Matthew 28:19 *'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ...'*

3. God the Sovereign Father

We believe God the Father, Creator of the universe and all that is in it,¹ the eternal and infinitely exalted Lord over all creation, rules His universe in absolute sovereignty,² directing and working all things³ according to the counsel of His own will,⁴ being subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent,⁵ doing as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases⁶ without sin.⁷

We believe on this Sovereignty of God rests the believers greatest comfort knowing that God is ultimately controlling all beings, things, and events⁸ for His glory⁹ and the good of those who love Him¹⁰ displaying for all ages and throughout the cosmos¹¹ the infinite majesty of His mercy for the ever increasing wonder and joy of His elect.¹²

Scriptures

¹ **Genesis 1:1** *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

Romans 11:36 *For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*

Ephesians 3:9 *... and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, ...*

² **Psalm 115:3** *Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.*

Proverbs 19:21 *Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.*

Psalm 33:10-11 *The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations.*

³ **Lamentations 3:37-38** *Who has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord has commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and bad come?*

Proverbs 21:1 *The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.*

Psalm 147:15-18 *He sends out his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. He gives snow like wool; he scatters frost like ashes. He hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs; who can stand before his cold? He sends out his word, and melts them; he makes his wind blow and the waters flow.*

⁴ **Ephesians 1:11** *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ...*

Romans 11:34 *For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?*

Isaiah 40:13 *Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel?*

⁵ **Isaiah 46:9-10** *... remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' ...*

Daniel 4:34b-35 *... for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'*

⁶ **Psalm 135:6** *Whatever the LORD pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.*

Psalm 115:3 *Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.*

Exodus 33:18–19 *Moses said, 'Please show me your glory.' And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name "The LORD." And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.'*

Ephesians 1:11 *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ...*

⁷ Deuteronomy 32:4 *The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.*

I John 1:5 *This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*

James 1:13 *Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.*

⁸ Job 9:7 *... who commands the sun, and it does not rise; who seals up the stars; ...*

Amos 3:6 *Is a trumpet blown in a city, and the people are not afraid? Does disaster come to a city, unless the LORD has done it?*

Proverbs 16:33 *The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.*

⁹ Isaiah 43:7 *... everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.*

Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14 *... to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ... so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ... who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

Colossians 1:16 *For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.*

¹⁰ Romans 8:28-30 *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

Isaiah 40:10-11 *Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*

Matthew 25:23 *His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'*

¹¹ Ephesians 2:7 *... so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 1:7-10 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making know to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*

¹² Romans 9:22-23 *What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory ...*

Romans 11:32-36 *For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?' 'Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?' For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*

Psalm 16:11 *You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

4. Jesus Christ

4a. His Nature

We believe the Son of God,¹ co-equal and co-eternal with the Father,² in the fullness of time,³ was sent by the Father,⁴ conceived sinless by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary,⁵ thereby joining His Divine nature with sinless human nature,⁶ so that He was and is Jesus Christ fully God and fully man. When Christ joined His divine nature with human nature, taking on flesh,⁷ He surrendered only the prerogatives of Deity while retaining the full essence of Deity⁸ freely accepting and operating within the finite limitations of humanity, walking and working always in the power of the Spirit.⁹ His fully Divine fully human nature is forever inseparable.

4b. His Mission

We believe Jesus Christ, being born under the law,¹⁰ lived a life of perfect obedience to God in thought, word and deed. Although tempted in every way, just as we are, He remained sinless¹¹ thereby fitting himself to be the spotless Lamb of God sent to satisfy God's just wrath against sin by the sacrifice of Himself.¹² He is the Living Word of God, Truth in human flesh,¹³ declaring God's will and living God's way.¹⁴ He came to establish the Kingdom of God¹⁵ and live for the glory of God.¹⁶ In Him the power of God was on display as He healed sickness and infirmities,¹⁷ overruled the forces of nature,¹⁸ took authority over demons,¹⁹ and raised the dead to life.²⁰ He came as the God man to reveal God to man and to restore man to God through His redemption purchased on the cross²¹ (a sinless sacrifice for sinful humanity)²² that He voluntarily accomplished²³ in perfect fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.²⁴ On the cross Jesus, the sinless Son, became the God-given all-sufficient Divine substitutionary sacrifice,²⁵ receiving sin's condemnation²⁶ vindicating the justice of God by obediently receiving upon Himself God's Holy wrath against sin, becoming the basis upon which God could be both just and the justifier of those who place their faith in His Son.²⁷

4c. His Exaltation

We believe Jesus conquered death,²⁸ rising to life on the third day according to Old Testament prophecy and His own promise,²⁹ proving by His resurrection that the Father accepted His sacrifice as fully sufficient for sin's payment.³⁰ He then revealed Himself over 40 days to His followers giving convincing evidence of His bodily resurrection from the grave.³¹ Having paid redemptions price He was exalted to the highest place as the everlasting Lord of Glory,³² ascending visibly before His followers into heaven³³ to the Father's right hand, from where He sent the Holy Spirit and gave gifts to men,³⁴ and from where He reigns eternally as the everlasting Lord of Glory³⁵ conducting His mediatorial role of intercession for His own.³⁶ At history's consummation He will return visibly to the earth as judge of both the living and the dead,³⁷ at which time all will confess Him to be Lord³⁸ as He puts all things under His feet,³⁹ being glorified through the eternal judgment of those who rejected Him and the eternal reward of glory lavished upon those the Father has given Him.⁴⁰

Scriptures

¹ Romans 1:4 ... and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ...

Matthew 16:16 Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

John 1:34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.

² Colossians 1:19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ...

John 10:30 I and the Father are one.

John 5:18 This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

³ **Galatians 4:4** *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ...*

⁴ **John 20:21** *Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.'*

John 17:18 *As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.*

John 3:17 *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*

⁵ **Luke 1:34-35** *And Mary said to the angel, 'How will this be, since I am a virgin?' And the angel answered her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.'*

Matthew 1:23 *Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel.*

Isaiah 7:14 *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

⁶ **John 1:14** *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Hebrews 2:17 *Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*

Hebrews 4:15 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

⁷ **1 John 4:2** *By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ...*

1 Timothy 3:16 *Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.*

Romans 9:5 *To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.*

⁸ **Philippians 2:6-8** *... who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

Colossians 1:19 *For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ...*

Colossians 2:9 *For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ...*

⁹ **Acts 10:38** *... how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.*

Luke 4:14, 18-19 *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. ... The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

Matthew 12:28 *But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

¹⁰ **Galatians 4:4** *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ...*

11 Hebrews 4:15 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

1 Peter 2:22 *He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.*

1 John 3:5 *You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.*

12 1 Peter 1:18-19 *... knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*

Hebrews 9:26 *... for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

13 John 14:6 *Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'*

John 1:1-2 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.*

John 1:14 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

14 John 6:38 *For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.*

John 4:34 *Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.'*

John 5:30 *I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.*

Hebrews 10:7 *Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'*

15 Matthew 4:23 *And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.*

Matthew 12:28-29 *But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 'Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.'*

Luke 17:20-21 *Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, 'The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There!" for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.'*

16 John 17:4 *I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.*

John 8:50 *Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge.*

Ephesians 1:11-12 *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.*

17 Matthew 4:23 *And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.*

Matthew 11:4-6 *And Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.'*

18 Matthew 14:25 *And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea.*

Mark 4:39-41 *And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, 'Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?' And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'*

¹⁹**Mark 1:27, 39** *And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, 'What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.' And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.*

Matthew 4:10 *Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."'*

Matthew 8:16, 31 *That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ... And the demons begged him, saying, 'If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.'*

²⁰**John 11:43-44** *When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.' The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'*

Mark 5:41-42 *Taking her by the hand he said to her, 'Talitha cumi,' which means, 'Little girl, I say to you, arise.' And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement.*

Luke 7:14-15 *Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you, arise.' And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.*

²¹**1 Peter 3:18** *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ...*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Romans 4:25 *... who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

²²**Isaiah 53:4-6** *Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

2 Corinthians 5:14, 21 *For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ... For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

1 Peter 2:21, 24 *For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ... He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*

²³**John 10:18** *No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.*

Galatians 1:4 *... who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ...*

Matthew 26:53 *Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?*

24 Luke 24:25-26 *And he said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?'*

1 Corinthians 15:3 *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ...*

Genesis 3:15 *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*

25 2 Corinthians 5:21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Isaiah 53:6 *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

Galatians 3:13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'— ...*

26 Galatians 3:13-14 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'—so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.*

Deuteronomy 21:22-23 *And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.*

27 Romans 3:23-26 *... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

Romans 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Romans 8:31-34 *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

28 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 *When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 'O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Revelation 1:18 *... and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.*

Romans 1:4 *... and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ...*

29 Matthew 28:5-6 *But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.'*

1 Corinthians 15:3-5 *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.*

Matthew 12:40 *For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

³⁰ **1 Corinthians 15:14-15, 17, 20** *And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ... And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ... But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.*

Romans 4:25 *... who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

³¹ **Acts 1:3** *He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.*

Luke 24:36-43 *As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, 'Peace to you!' But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. And he said to them, 'Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate before them.*

³² **Philippians 2:8-11** *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Ephesians 1:20-21 *... that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*

Acts 5:30-31 *The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.*

³³ **Acts 1:9-11** *And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'*

Luke 24:50-51 *Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.*

1 Peter 3:21-22 *Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.*

³⁴ **Acts 2:33** *Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.*

Ephesians 4:8 *Therefore it says, 'When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.'*

John 16:7 *Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.*

³⁵ **1 Peter 3:22** *... who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.*

Acts 5:31 *God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.*

Acts 7:56 *And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."*

³⁶ **Romans 8:34** *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

Hebrews 7:25 *Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.*

1 Timothy 2:5 *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ...*

³⁷ **2 Timothy 4:1** *I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ...*

1 Peter 4:5 *... but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.*

Acts 1:11 *... and said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.*

³⁸ **Philippians 2:10-11** *... so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Isaiah 45:23 *By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'*

Romans 14:11 *... for it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.'*

³⁹ **1 Corinthians 15:25** *For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.*

Psalms 110:1 *The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.'*

Ephesians 1:22 *And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ...*

⁴⁰ **Romans 9:22-24** *What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?*

Proverbs 16:4 *The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.*

2 Thessalonians 1:10 *... when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.*

5. Holy Spirit

5a. His Person

We believe the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Triune God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and Son,¹ being sent by both and operating in joyful submission to both as He carries out the will of the Father and Son on earth.² As God, He is to be worshipped with the Father and Son.

5b. His Work

We believe He was present and active in creation working with the Father and Son in creating the universe out of nothing,³ and giving life to mankind as the breath of God.⁴ He continued His Divine work throughout Old Testament history birthing faith in the Jewish remnant,⁵ bringing victory in battle, accomplishing signs and wonders,⁶ empowering His prophets,⁷ pointing prophetically to the coming Messiah⁸ and inspiring the Word of God to be written.⁹

We believe it was the Holy Spirit who was the active agent in Jesus Christ's conception,¹⁰ in the powerful ministry of John the Baptist,¹¹ in the miracles of Christ and His authority over demons,¹² always confirming the truth of Christ's words and the truth of Christ's person.

5c. His Witness

We believe Jesus, following His resurrection and ascension back to heaven, poured out the Holy Spirit upon the world in an unprecedented way.¹³ The Spirit is now globally active glorifying Jesus Christ, powerfully testifying to Him as God's Son and humanity's only Savior,¹⁴ convicting the world of sin,¹⁵ and bringing many to saving faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit is at work within the elect: coming to them while dead in sin giving them life,¹⁶ illuminating their minds to see the truth of Christ as Savior,¹⁷ birthing within them faith in Christ,¹⁸ imputing to them the righteousness of Christ unto salvation,¹⁹ living within believers testifying to them that they are children of God,²⁰ gifting them to build-up the body of Christ,²¹ growing them in the character of Christ,²² empowering them to be witnesses for Christ to the world,²³ and sealing them secure in Christ until His return and their eternal glorification.²⁴

Scriptures

¹ **Acts 5:3-4** *But Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.'*

Romans 8:27 *And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.*

Psalms 139:7-8 *Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!*

² **Luke 24:49** *'And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.'*

Acts 2:33 *Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.*

John 14:26 *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

³ Genesis 1:1-2 *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

Psalm 104:30 *When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.*

⁴ Genesis 2:7 *... then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.*

Job 33:4 *The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*

Job 27:3 *... as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, ...*

⁵ Romans 11:4-7 *But what is God's reply to him? 'I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.' So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, ...*

Micah 2:12 *I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob; I will gather the remnant of Israel; I will set them together like sheep in a fold, like a flock in its pasture, a noisy multitude of men.*

Isaiah 1:9 *If the Lord of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we should have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah.*

⁶ Judges 14:6 *Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.*

Judges 3:10 *The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.*

⁷ 1 Samuel 16:13 *Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.*

1 Samuel 10:6 *Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.*

Numbers 11:29 *But Moses said to him, 'Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!'*

⁸ John 5:39 *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, ...*

Luke 24:25-27 *And he said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?' And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

1 Peter 1:10-11 *Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.*

⁹ 2 Peter 1:20-21 *... knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

2 Timothy 3:16 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ...*

Jeremiah 30:1-2 *The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you.'*

¹⁰ Luke 1:34-35 *And Mary said to the angel, 'How will this be, since I am a virgin?' And the angel answered her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.'*

Matthew 1:23 *'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel'*

¹¹ Luke 1:13-17 *But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.'*

Matthew 11:10 *This is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'*

¹² Acts 10:37-38 *... you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.*

Luke 4:14, 17-19 *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. ... And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'*

¹³ Acts 1:4 *And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, 'you heard from me; ...'*

Acts 2:1-4 *When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

John 16:13-14 *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

¹⁴ John 15:26 *But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.*

John 14:26 *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 *And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

15 John 16:8-11 *And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

1 Thessalonians 1:5 *... because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.*

Acts 2:37 *Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'*

16 John 6:63 *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.*

John 3:6, 8 *'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ... The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'*

Ephesians 2:4-5 *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ...*

17 John 16:12-14 *I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

Acts 5:30-32 *The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.*

Acts 16:14 *One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.*

18 John 6:29 *Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.'*

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

Matthew 16:17 *And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.'*

19 Romans 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

1 Corinthians 1:30 *And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ...*

20 Romans 8:16 *The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ...*

1 John 4:13 *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.*

Galatians 4:6 *And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'*

21 1 Corinthians 12:4-10 *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit,*

to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

1 Peter 4:10 *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ...*

22 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

Galatians 5:16-18 *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

John 16:13 *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.*

23 Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

Acts 4:31 *And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.*

Acts 13:2 *While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'*

24 Ephesians 4:30 *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

2 Corinthians 1:22 *... and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*

Ephesians 1:13 *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ...*

6. Mankind - Creation and Condemnation

We believe God created mankind, male and female, equally in His image¹ and for His glory.² Adam, created from dust,³ then Eve, created from Adam's side,⁴ became the first parents from which all humanity has come.⁵ Adam and Eve were created without sin⁶ enjoying an unhindered relationship with God⁷ that was contingent upon their obedience to His command.⁸ God joined them in the covenant of marriage⁹ and placed them as co-regents over His creation¹⁰ giving them distinct yet complimentary roles as man and woman.¹¹

We believe Adam and Eve, tempted by Satan in the Garden of Eden,¹² freely chose to disobey God's command. Instead of treasuring God above all else they rebelled against Him, asserted their own will, rejected the truth, and sought to promote themselves and satisfy their sinful desire.¹³ The result was a corruption of their entire being,¹⁴ the loss of a personal relationship with their Creator,¹⁵ and His just judgment for sin.¹⁶

We believe Adam's guilt and condemnation, as humanity's representative head, became the guilt and condemnation of the entire human race.¹⁷ In this guilty and condemned state mankind lives as children of wrath,¹⁸ spiritually dead,¹⁹ with a heart bent on rebellion toward God,²⁰ enslaved to sin's desire,²¹ blind to the truth of the Gospel,²² and absolutely unable to please God.²³

We believe it is the sovereign God before whom mankind is responsible, and when in sin, justly condemned.²⁴

Scriptures

¹ **Genesis 1:27** *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

James 3:9 *With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.*

Genesis 9:6 *Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.*

² **Isaiah 43:7** *... 'everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.'*

1 Corinthians 10:31 *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

Matthew 5:16 *In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

Isaiah 43:20–21 *The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.*

³ **Genesis 2:7** *... then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.*

⁴ **Genesis 2:21-22** *So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.*

⁵ **Acts 17:26** *And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place ...*

⁶ Genesis 1:27, 31 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ... And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*

Ecclesiastes 7:29 *See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.*

⁷ Genesis 2:25 *And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*

⁸ Genesis 2:16-17 *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'*

⁹ Genesis 2:22-24 *And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

¹⁰ Genesis 1:28 *And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'*

¹¹ Ephesians 5:25-27 *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*

Ephesians 5:22-23 *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.*

Ephesians 5:33 *However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.*

¹² Genesis 3:1-5 *Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, "You shall not eat of any tree in the garden"?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die."' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'*

¹³ Genesis 3:6 *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

1 John 2:16 *For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.*

¹⁴ Romans 3:10-18 *... as it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.' 'Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.' 'The venom of asps is under their lips.'*

'Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.' 'Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known.' 'There is no fear of God before their eyes.'

Psalm 14:1-3 *The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.*

Jeremiah 17:9 *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*

15 Genesis 3:23-24 *... therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*

Genesis 4:26 *To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.*

1 John 1:6 *If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.*

16 Genesis 3:17-19 *And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it," cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'*

Genesis 3:23-24 *... therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*

17 Romans 5:12, 15-19 *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— ... But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*

Psalm 58:3 *The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies.*

18 Ephesians 2:3 *... among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.*

Colossians 1:21 *And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ...*

James 4:4 *You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

19 Ephesians 2:1-2 *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience ...*

Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Colossians 2:13 *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ...*

20 Jeremiah 17:9 *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*

Genesis 6:5 *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

Romans 8:7 *For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.*

21 John 8:34 *Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.'*

1 John 5:19 *We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*

Titus 3:3 *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*

2 Timothy 2:25-26 *... correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.*

22 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

1 Corinthians 2:14 *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

Ephesians 4:18 *They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.*

23 Romans 8:8 *Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Hebrew 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

24 Matthew 13:41-42 *The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Matthew 13:49-50 *So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Matthew 7:23 *And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*

7. Salvation - The Work of God's Sovereignty

7a. A Sovereign Salvation

We believe that Salvation is exclusively a Sovereign act of God:¹ the Father of love choosing the elect and decreeing their salvation,^{7b} the Son of God offering Himself as the fully sufficient sacrifice for their redemption,^{7d} the Holy Spirit calling them to faith in Christ unto salvation^{7c} and securing them for His return and their eternal glory.^{7e}

7b. Election

We believe in God's eternal decree of election He chose,² according to the counsel of His will,³ those He would call to Himself,⁴ bring to repentance and saving faith,⁵ free from sin's condemnation,⁶ conform to the image of His Son⁷ and eternally glorify in His presence.⁸ His election is unconditional⁹ and unconstrained,¹⁰ being a free act of His grace and mercy,¹¹ based upon the person and work of Christ,¹² for the praise of His glory.¹³

We believe God's election is not inconsistent with, but is complementary to, all of His attributes,¹⁴ nor does it negate the responsibility of the elect to repent and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.¹⁵ Yet, as a Sovereign act, election includes the authority and power of always accomplishing the eternal salvation of the elect.¹⁶

7c. Regeneration

We believe all humanity prior to salvation are spiritually dead in sin,¹⁷ with a heart of stone toward God,¹⁸ blind to the truth of Christ,¹⁹ incapable of understanding spiritual reality,²⁰ living in bondage to sin²¹ as enemies of God,²² unable to submit to God's law²³ making it impossible for them to please God.²⁴ Salvation, therefore, cannot be personally experienced without the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit²⁵ in which the elect sinner,²⁶ based upon the person and work of Jesus Christ,²⁷ is, through the Gospel,²⁸ supernaturally and immediately made alive,²⁹ recreated with a heart of love toward God,³⁰ a will disposed to God's truth,³¹ now seeing Jesus Christ as God and Savior.³² Being captivated by the excellence and beauty of Jesus shown them by the Spirit in the Gospel³³ they are granted repentance³⁴ and are irresistibly drawn to saving faith in Him, which their new God-loving spirits and truth-written hearts now long for and willingly choose.³⁵

7d. Justification

We believe justification is a free act of God's grace³⁶ in which He pardons sin³⁷ declaring guilty sinners to be in a right relationship with Himself based solely upon the law-keeping life and sin-canceling death of Jesus.³⁸ Justification recognizes that the requirements of God's law were fully met in the sinless life of Jesus Christ,³⁹ and that His substitutionary death fully satisfied God's wrath against sin.⁴⁰ All those, and only those, who place their faith in Christ are declared righteous by God,⁴¹ having Divine righteousness imputed to them.⁴² From that moment forward they can never again come under the judgment of God's law.⁴³

We believe, therefore, that justification is permanent for it is an act of God,⁴⁴ is wholly free and undeserved for it is given to guilty sinners,⁴⁵ comes through faith alone in Christ alone for He alone atoned for sin,⁴⁶ is perfect and complete for it imputes Christ's righteousness to the believing sinner,⁴⁷ leads to the process of sanctification for the Spirit continues His work in all those He regenerates,⁴⁸ and ultimately culminates in eternal glory for God has decreed it so.⁴⁹

7e. Perseverance of the Saints

We believe all followers of Christ, through their union with Him, stand before the Father with Christ's Divine righteousness imputed to them,⁵⁰ forever free from sin's condemnation,⁵¹ Christ's life in them and they in Him.⁵² All

conditions for their eternal glory are met in Christ,⁵³ being born again with the imperishable seed.⁵⁴ They will never be put to shame,⁵⁵ nor separated from the love of Christ,⁵⁶ nor snatched from the Father or Son's hand.⁵⁷ Undefeatable hope of eternal glory is their inheritance as joint heirs of Jesus.⁵⁸

We believe the Holy Spirit living in each believer⁵⁹ is the seal and down payment⁶⁰ guaranteeing that God, Who finishes what He begins,⁶¹ will bring to full completion the eternal salvation He has decreed for all His elect.⁶²

Scriptures

¹ **James 1:18** *Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*

Romans 9:15-16 *For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.*

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

² **Ephesians 1:3-4** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.*

Romans 11:5-8 *So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, 'God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.'*

2 Thessalonians 2:13 *But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.*

³ **James 1:16-18** *Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*

John 1:12-13 *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Ephesians 1:5 *... he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ...*

⁴ **2 Thessalonians 2:14** *To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Romans 8:28 *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

John 6:44 *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.*

⁵ **Acts 13:48** *And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.*

Philippians 1:29 *For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ...*

Acts 11:18 *When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.'*

⁶ **1 Thessalonians 5:9** *For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ...*

Romans 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Romans 8:34 *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

⁷ **Romans 8:29** *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

Colossians 1:28 *Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.*

Ephesians 4:12-13 *... to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ...*

⁸ **1 Corinthians 15:49** *Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.*

Philippians 3:21 *... who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

Romans 8:30 *And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

⁹ **Romans 9:16** *So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.*

Romans 9:11 *...though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls*

1 Corinthians 1:27-29 *But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.*

¹⁰ **Romans 9:15, 18** *For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' ... So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.*

James 1:18 *Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*

Titus 3:4–6 *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ...*

¹¹ **Romans 11:5-6** *So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.*

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

Titus 3:5 *... he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ...*

¹² **Ephesians 1:3-4** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.*

Ephesians 1:11 *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ...*

Revelation 13:8 ... and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

¹³ Ephesians 1:5-6 ... he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Romans 9:22-23 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory ...

¹⁴ Exodus 33:18-19 Moses said, 'Please show me your glory.' And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name "The LORD." And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.'

Psalms 36:5-6 Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast you save, O LORD.

Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

¹⁵ Ezekiel 18:23, 32 'Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live? ... For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live.'

Romans 10:9-10 ... because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

¹⁶ Jude 1:24-25 Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:29-30 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

¹⁷ Ephesians 2:1-3 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Psalms 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies.

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

¹⁸ Ephesians 4:18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Genesis 6:5 *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

19 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

20 1 Corinthians 2:11, 14 *For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ... The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

1 Corinthians 1:18 *For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

John 3:27 *John answered, 'A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.'*

21 John 8:34 *Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.'*

1 John 5:19 *We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*

Titus 3:3 *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*

22 Romans 5:10 *For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.*

Ephesians 2:2-3 *... in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.*

23 Romans 8:7-8 *For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

24 Romans 8:8 *Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Hebrews 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

25 John 3:3 *Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'*

John 3:5 *Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'*

John 6:44 *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.*

26 Romans 8:28-29 *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

Ephesians 1:4-5 *... even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ...*

1 Thessalonians 1:4 *For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ...*

27 1 Peter 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*

1 Peter 3:18 *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit...*

Romans 3:24-25 *... and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*

28 Ephesians 1:13 *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ...*

Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

2 Timothy 1:9-10 *... who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ...*

29 Ephesians 2:4-5 *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ...*

John 6:63 *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.*

Acts 10:44 *While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.*

30 Ezekiel 36:26 *And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*

Deuteronomy 30:6 *And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.*

31 Ezekiel 36:27 *And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.*

Ezekiel 11:19-20 *And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.*

Hebrews 8:10 *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

32 1 John 5:20 *And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*

Acts 5:30-32 *The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.*

Acts 26:16-18 *'But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from*

darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

33 2 Corinthians 4:6 *For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

34 Acts 11:18 *When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.'*

2 Timothy 2:24-25 *And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, ...*

35 John 6:29 *Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.'*

John 6:37, 44-45, 65 *All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. ... No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me— ... And he said, 'This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.'*

Matthew 16:17 *And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.'*

36 Romans 4:5-6 *And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: ...*

Galatians 2:21 *I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.*

Titus 3:4-5 *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ...*

37 Romans 4:6-8 *... just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: 'Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.'*

Acts 13:38-39 *Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.*

Romans 4:25 *... who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

38 Isaiah 53:11 *Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.*

1 Corinthians 1:30 *And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,*

1 Corinthians 6:11 *And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

³⁹ Romans 8:3–4 *For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

Romans 5:18–19 *Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*

Jeremiah 23:5–6 *Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'*

⁴⁰ Colossians 2:14 *... by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.*

1 Peter 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*

1 Timothy 2:6 *... who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.*

⁴¹ Genesis 15:6 *And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.*

Romans 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Romans 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*

⁴² Romans 3:21–22 *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it - the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ...*

1 Peter 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

⁴³ Romans 5:9 *Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.*

Romans 6:14 *For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*

Romans 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

⁴⁴ Isaiah 50:9 *Behold, the Lord GOD helps me; who will declare me guilty? Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.*

Isaiah 54:17 *... 'no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.'*

Romans 5:17 *For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.*

⁴⁵ **Colossians 2:13** *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ...*

Romans 5:6–8 *For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Colossians 1:21–22 *And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ...*

⁴⁶ **Acts 4:12** *'And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.'*

1 Timothy 2:5 *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ...*

Galatians 3:13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'- ...*

⁴⁷ **Acts 13:38–39** *Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.*

Romans 3:22 *... the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:*
...

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

⁴⁸ **James 2:26** *For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.*

1 John 5:1 *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.*

Romans 6:17–18 *But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.*

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

⁴⁹ **Romans 8:30** *And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

Titus 3:7 *... so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Romans 5:21 *... so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

⁵⁰ **Romans 5:18-19** *Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*

Philippians 3:9 *... and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith ...*

Romans 4:6-8 *... just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: 'Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.'*

51 Romans 8:1, 3 *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ... For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ...*

Galatians 3:13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree' ...*

Colossians 2:13-14 *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.*

52 Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Romans 6:3-5 *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.*

Colossians 3:3-4 *For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

53 Hebrews 10:14 *For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*

Romans 5:19 *For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*

Romans 8:3-4 *For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

54 1 Peter 1:23 *... since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ...*

John 1:13 *... who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

55 1 Peter 2:6 *For it stands in Scripture: 'Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'*

Romans 9:33 *... as it is written, 'Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'*

Romans 10:11 *For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.'*

56 Romans 8:35, 37-39 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

57 John 10:28-29 *I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.*

John 17:12 *While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*

Isaiah 51:16 *And I have put my words in your mouth and covered you in the shadow of my hand, establishing the heavens and laying the foundations of the earth, and saying to Zion, 'You are my people.'*

58 Hebrews 6:17-20 *So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.*

John 6:37, 39-40, 44, 47, 51, 54, 58 *'All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. ... And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ... No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. ... Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. ... I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. ... Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ... This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.'*

59 1 Corinthians 3:16 *Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?*

1 Corinthians 6:19 *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ...*

James 4:5 *Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, 'He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us'?*

60 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 *And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*

Ephesians 1:13-14 *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

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

1 Samuel 15:29 *'And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or have regret, for he is not a man, that he should have regret.'*

62 Philippians 1:6 *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 1:8 *... who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 John 2:25 *And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.*

8. Sanctification

We believe the elect are called to saving faith in Christ in order to become holy and blameless before Him.¹ To accomplish this purpose the will and work of God are actively engaged in transforming believers into the likeness of Jesus Christ.² This transformation, called sanctification, that begins at salvation, is an ongoing work in this life,³ culminating at the resurrection upon seeing the glorified Christ when He returns.⁴

We believe that justifying faith, which trusts in Christ's all-sufficient work of atonement, always leads to sanctifying faith, which trusts Christ to apply all God's promises and perfect for all time those being sanctified.⁵ This guarantee of future eternal perfection for every believer is anchored in the faithfulness of God who accomplishes all of His covenant promises to the elect.⁶ By His sovereign will and work God established and maintains an unbreakable bond between justification and sanctification. Therefore, progressive sanctification in a believer provides visible and powerful evidence of the Spirit's work of regeneration in their life.⁷

We believe God's Spirit is the decisive agent advancing and accomplishing the work of sanctification in every believer.⁸ In this holy work the Spirit reveals to the believer the glory and supremacy of Jesus, leading the believer to trust Christ more deeply and treasure Christ more completely.⁹ This increasingly exalted view of Christ produces a growing faith¹⁰ that works through love¹¹ as the Spirit carries forward this work of sanctification. It is to the degree that the believer sees the supremacy of Christ that they will treasure Him above all,¹² experience increasing victory over sin,¹³ and grow in the fruit of the Spirit.¹⁴

We believe the new life God gives His elect in regeneration secures freedom from sin's dominion in this life¹⁵ but not freedom from sin's presence.¹⁶ With a heart that now loves God and a flesh still drawn toward sin the believer becomes engaged in an ongoing spiritual war in which daily battles against evil are fought.¹⁷ This killing of sin within¹⁸ can only be accomplished through the Spirit¹⁹ who pours confidence into the believer that ultimate victory is guaranteed.²⁰ The certainty of ultimate victory enables the follower of Christ to fight from a position of confident trust in God instead of paralyzing fear of failure.²¹ Therefore, in sanctification, the believer is active yet dependent on the Spirit,²² while the Spirit is active and powerful in accomplishing His work.²³

We believe this war is fought by faith²⁴ in Christian community²⁵ with the primary weapons of God's Word,²⁶ prayer,²⁷ and meditation.²⁸ The believer's task is to remain spiritually alert prayerfully reading,²⁹ understanding,³⁰ memorizing,³¹ and meditating on God's truth, while speaking that truth in love,³² as they build-up and stir-up one another to love and good deeds.³³ The Holy Spirit uses these means of grace to carry forward and accomplish His life transforming work of shaping believers into Christ's likeness.

We believe, therefore, that an increasing revelation and treasuring of Christ's glory is imperative and promised to believers as they remain humble in heart, dependent upon the Spirit, constant in prayer and the Word, living in loving community, while obeying and speaking the truth of Jesus to one another.

Scriptures

¹ Ephesians 1:4 ... even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

¹ Peter 1:15–16 ... but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'

Hebrews 12:10 *For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.*

² Romans 8:29 *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

Ephesians 4:13 *... until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...*

Colossians 3:10 *... and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.*

³ Philippians 1:6 *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 3:18 *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

Romans 12:2 *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

⁴ 1 John 3:2 *Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*

1 Corinthians 15:49 *Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.*

Philippians 3:21 *... who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

⁵ Hebrews 10:14 *For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*

Philippians 1:6 *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

Romans 6:22 *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.*

⁶ 1 Corinthians 1:8–9 *... who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Jeremiah 32:40 *I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.*

2 Thessalonians 3:3 *But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.*

⁷ James 2:18 *But someone will say, 'You have faith and I have works.' Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.'*

Matthew 7:16–18, 20 *'You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ... Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.'*

1 John 2:29 *If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.*

⁸ Romans 15:13 *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*

1 Corinthians 6:11 *And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

1 Peter 1:2 *... according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.*

9 2 Corinthians 4:6 *For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

John 16:13–14 *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

Colossians 2:3 *... in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

10 2 Corinthians 3:18 *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

2 Peter 3:18 *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

Hebrews 13:20–21 *Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

11 Galatians 5:6 *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.*

2 Thessalonians 1:2–3 *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.*

1 John 4:7 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.*

12 Philippians 3:8–15 *Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.*

Hebrews 11:24–26 *By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*

13 2 Thessalonians 3:3 *But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.*

Romans 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

Ephesians 4:21–24 ... assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

¹⁴ **Ephesians 5:8–10** ... for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

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

¹⁵ **Romans 6:14** For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Romans 7:6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Galatians 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁶ **1 John 1:8–10** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

James 3:2 For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.

1 John 1:7–8 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

¹⁷ **1 Peter 2:11** Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Galatians 5:17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

¹⁸ **Romans 8:13** For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Romans 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Ephesians 4:22 ... to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires ...

¹⁹ **Romans 15:13** May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

John 14:25–26 These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Galatians 3:5 Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith ...

20 Philippians 1:6 *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 *Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.*

2 Timothy 1:12 *... which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.*

21 Luke 1:69–75 *... and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.*

1 John 4:18 *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.*

Hebrews 9:14 *... how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*

22 Philippians 2:12 *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ...*

Colossians 3:12 *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ...*

2 Peter 1:5 *For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ...*

23 Hebrews 13:20–21 *Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

2 Thessalonians 2:13 *But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.*

1 Corinthians 6:11 *And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

24 1 John 5:4 *For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.*

Galatians 5:6 *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.*

Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

25 1 Thessalonians 3:12–13 *... and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.*

Ephesians 4:15–16 *Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

26 Ephesians 6:17 ... and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God...

Psalms 1:1–3 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Psalms 119:11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

27 Ephesians 6:12, 18 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ... praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, ...

Psalms 86:11 Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.

Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

28 Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Psalms 1:2–3 ... but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Psalms 119:15 I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.

29 Psalms 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.

Psalms 86:11 Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.

Psalms 119:36 Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!

30 2 Timothy 2:7 Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

Ephesians 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

31 Psalms 119:11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Job 22:22 Receive instruction from his mouth, and lay up his words in your heart.

Deuteronomy 6:6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

32 Ephesians 4:15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ...

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

33 Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 *And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.*

9. The Church

9a. The Church Called

We believe there is one universal Church,¹ referred to in the New Testament as the 'called out ones'. This one Church is comprised of all those the Father has given to the Son² and the Holy Spirit has called to saving faith in Jesus Christ³ through the gospel.⁴ The Church exists to magnify the glory of God⁵ as they worship Him in Spirit and truth⁶ and serve His purpose in the world.⁷

We believe the Good, Great, and Chief Shepherd of the Church is Jesus Christ,⁸ the power of the Church is the Holy Spirit,⁹ the authoritative book of the Church is the Scriptures,¹⁰ and the ultimate mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ from every people group as it takes the Gospel of Jesus to all mankind.¹¹

We believe this one universal Church is to be visibly expressed in local assemblies¹² that are subject to Christ in all things¹³ as they are led by the Holy Spirit¹⁴ and governed by God-appointed men who meet the biblical qualifications for elders.¹⁵ As the body of Christ,¹⁶ the Church is the tangible representative of Christ in the world,¹⁷ proclaiming and living out the Gospel¹⁸ and performing good deeds of mercy and compassion, particularly to the helpless and poor.¹⁹

9b. The Church Gathered

We believe community is the venue Christ modeled and commanded for discipleship.²⁰ Therefore, believers should commit to a local body of Christ followers who consistently gather²¹ to worship God,²² hear and apply the preaching and teaching of God's Word,²³ observe the Lord's Supper and Baptism,²⁴ and live in community together as each one uses their spiritual gifts to build each other up in the faith²⁵ serving one another in love.²⁶

We believe that followers of Christ are set free and empowered to live for God's glory to the degree in which they know and apply the truth of God's Word; right doctrine enables right living.²⁷ Therefore, the Church is to educate its members theologically²⁸ equipping them to engage in the good works God has prepared in advance for them to do.²⁹

9c. The Church Sent

We believe every follower of Christ has a responsibility in the Christ-given disciple-making mission of the Church, having been sent by Christ to proclaim to all mankind the salvation offered through faith, based upon His perfect life, substitutionary death, and resurrection victory.³⁰

We believe the most effective means of reaching a lost world with the Gospel is the planting of healthy churches, and that the biblical model for church planting is that churches plant churches.³¹ Toward that end we will pray for God to raise up called men out of Cornerstone Church to the ministry of church planting,³² whom we will equip for that call, supply with personnel and resources, and send to build Christ's Church in the Spirit's power.³³

Scriptures

¹ **Ephesians 4:4-6** *There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

Ephesians 3:6 *This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*

Romans 12:5 *... so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

² **John 6:37** *All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.*

John 6:39 *And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.*

John 6:44-45, 65 *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me, ... And he said, 'This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.'*

³ **1 Corinthians 1:9** *God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 *For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.*

Romans 1:7 *To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

⁴ **1 Corinthians 1:22-24** *For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 *For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.*

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 *But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

⁵ **Ephesians 3:10** *... so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.*

Colossians 1:18 *And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.*

1 Peter 4:11 *... whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

⁶ **John 4:24** *God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*

Philippians 3:3 *For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh ...*

Hebrews 12:28 *Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, ...*

⁷ **Psalms 103:21** *Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will!*

Philippians 2:13 *... for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*

Matthew 5:16 *In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

⁸ **John 10:11, 14** *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ... I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ...*

Hebrews 13:20 *Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, ...*

1 Peter 5:4 *And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

⁹ Luke 24:49 *And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.*

Acts 1:5, 8 *... for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. ... But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

1 Thessalonians 1:5 *... because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.*

¹⁰ 1 Timothy 4:13 *Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.*

1 Timothy 3:15 *... if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.*

2 Timothy 3:16 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ...*

¹¹ Matthew 28:18-20 *And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'*

Mark 16:15 *And he said to them, 'Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.'*

Luke 24:45-48 *Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.'*

¹² 1 Corinthians 1:2 *To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: ...*

1 Corinthians 16:19 *The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.*

Colossians 4:15 *Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.*

¹³ Ephesians 1:22 *And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ...*

Colossians 2:9-10 *For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.*

John 15:5 *'I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.'*

¹⁴ Galatians 5:25 *If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.*

Revelation 3:22 *'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'*

John 16:7, 13 *'Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ... When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.'*

¹⁵ Titus 1:5 *This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you ...*

Acts 14:23 *And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.*

1 Timothy 3:1-7 *The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.*

¹⁶ Ephesians 4:15-16 *Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

Colossians 1:18 *And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.*

¹⁷ Philippians 2:5, 12-13 *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus ... Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*

Hebrews 12:14 *Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.*

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 *All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

¹⁸ Mark 16:15 *And he said to them, 'Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.'*

Luke 24:48 *'You are witnesses of these things.'*

Matthew 5:16 *'In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'*

Titus 2:10 *... not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.*

¹⁹ Luke 6:36 *Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*

James 1:27 *Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

Proverbs 19:17 *Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.*

Colossians 3:12 *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ...*

²⁰ Acts 2:44 *And all who believed were together and had all things in common.*

Romans 12:4-5 *For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

Ephesians 4:2-3 *... with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

21 Hebrews 10:25 ... not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Acts 2:46-47 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Hebrews 3:13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

22 Hebrews 13:15 Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

Ephesians 5:18-20 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ...

Colossians 3:15-16 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

23 Acts 2:42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

1 Timothy 4:13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.

2 Timothy 4:1-2 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

24 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Matthew 28:19 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...'

25 1 Peter 4:10-11 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1 Corinthians 12:7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 14:26 What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

26 Ephesians 4:2 ... with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ...

Ephesians 4:15-16 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

1 John 3:18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

27 2 Peter 1:2–4 *May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*

John 15:7–8 *If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*

2 Peter 3:18 *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

28 2 Timothy 3:16 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ...*

2 Timothy 4:2 *... preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*

Titus 2:15 *Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.*

29 Ephesians 2:10 *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

Titus 3:8 *The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.*

Hebrews 10:24 *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ...*

30 Matthew 28:19 *'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ...'*

Acts 1:8 *'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.'*

1 Peter 3:15 *... but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...*

Colossians 4:6 *Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*

31 Matthew 28:19 *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ...*

Acts 13:1–3 *Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.*

32 Matthew 9:37–38 *Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'*

2 Thessalonians 3:1 *Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, ...*

Acts 9:15 *But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.'*

³³ **Acts 13:1–3** *Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.*

10. Ordinances of the Church

10a. Water Baptism

We believe water baptism is a demonstration of the union with Christ a believer is given at salvation;¹ being united with Christ's death (unto cleansing and freedom from sin's condemnation and dominion) and with Christ's resurrection (to walk in newness of life).² Baptism also demonstrates the believers placement into the Family of God, the Church.³ Faith in Christ,⁴ and repentance of sin,⁵ being part of the Spirit's work in regeneration,⁶ must therefore proceed baptism. We practice baptism by immersion in water⁷ (a vivid illustration of Christ's death and resurrection), in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as instructed by the Lord.⁸

10b. Lord's Supper

We believe the Lord's Supper is to be an act in which the sacrifice of Jesus, unto death, is remembered and proclaimed until He returns.⁹ In this ordinance, instituted by Jesus,¹⁰ those who have trusted Christ's atoning death¹¹ consume bread and drink as elements representing Christ's body-broken, and His blood-shed for the remission of their sins.¹² As believers gather in unity¹³ to examine themselves¹⁴ and receive the Lord's Supper the Lord meets with them spiritually, and through the merits won by His broken body and shed blood, grows them in grace.¹⁵

Scriptures

¹ **Galatians 3:26–27** ... *for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

¹ **Peter 3:21** *Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ...*

² **Romans 6:3–11** *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

Colossians 2:12 ... *having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.*

Hebrews 10:22 ... *let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

³ **1 Corinthians 12:13** *For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

Romans 2:28–29 *For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.*

⁴ **Acts 18:8** *Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.*

Galatians 3:26–27 ... for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Colossians 2:12 ... having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

⁵ **Acts 2:38** And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'

Mark 1:4–5 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Matthew 3:6 ... and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁶ **Acts 11:18** When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.'

2 Timothy 2:24–25 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, ...

Acts 5:31 God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

⁷ **Acts 8:36–39** And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?' And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

John 3:23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized ...

⁸ **Matthew 28:19** 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ...'

⁹ **1 Corinthians 11:23–26** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

¹⁰ **Luke 22:19** And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

¹¹ **1 Corinthians 10:16** The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

1 Corinthians 11:29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

¹² **Matthew 26:26–28** Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them,

saying, 'Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'

13 1 Corinthians 11:17–22 *But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.*

1 Corinthians 10:17 *Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.*

14 1 Corinthians 11:28–32 *Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.*

15 1 Corinthians 10:16 *The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?*

John 6:53–57, 63 *So Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. ... It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.'*

11. Christ's Return

We believe prior to Christ's return humanity's rebellion toward God will intensify¹ and many false prophets will surface teaching deceptive doctrines causing a great number of professing believers to turn away from Christ.² In these days of rising rebellion followers of Christ will be hated and widely persecuted on a global scale³ yet the Gospel of Jesus will continue to be proclaimed, its message of hope reaching into all nations.⁴ These final days will usher in unprecedented global turmoil⁵ and the revealing of a "man of lawlessness", who, through satan's power, will perform signs and wonders, proclaiming himself to be God, deceiving those who refused to love the truth of Christ and so be saved.⁶ The believer is to live in watchful readiness looking, praying, and longing for Christ's appearing.⁷

We believe precisely at God's appointed time,⁸ known only to Him,⁹ Christ will unexpectedly,¹⁰ suddenly,¹¹ personally,¹² and visibly¹³ return in power and great glory,¹⁴ causing believers to marvel¹⁵ and unbelievers to mourn¹⁶ at His coming. He will raise from death all those who have died in Christ,¹⁷ and they, along with believers who are still living,¹⁸ will be gathered to Him, rising to meet Him in the air.¹⁹ Jesus, with the breath of His mouth, will kill the "man of lawlessness"²⁰ and defeat all opposition to God's Kingdom.²¹ Satan and his angels will be cast into the eternal lake of fire prepared for them,²² and all humanity who have not loved the truth of Christ²³ will stand before Him as their judge.²⁴ Christ will justly condemn them in their sin and sentence them to eternal Hell.²⁵

We believe there will be a new heaven and a new earth,²⁶ the home of righteousness,²⁷ the old being utterly shaken and destroyed²⁸ as Christ makes all things new.²⁹ Upon seeing Jesus Christ in all His glory believers will be transformed into His likeness,³⁰ clothed with immortality,³¹ rewarded,³² and will begin an eternal reign with Him³³ as they bask in the ever-increasing revelation of God's glory³⁴ that results in ever-increasing worship and fullness of joy.³⁵

Scriptures

¹ **Matthew 24:12** *And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.*

² **Thessalonians 2:3** *Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ...*

² **Timothy 3:1-5** *But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.*

² **Matthew 24:4-5, 10-12, 23-26** *And Jesus answered them, 'See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, "I am the Christ," and they will lead many astray. ... And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. ... Then if anyone says to you, "Look, here is the Christ!" or "There he is!" do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. So, if they say to you, "Look, he is in the wilderness," do not go out. If they say, "Look, he is in the inner rooms," do not believe it.'*

Luke 21:8 *And he said, 'See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, "I am he!" and, "The time is at hand!" Do not go after them.'*

Peter 3:1-3 *This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the*

Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.

³ Matthew 24:9-10, 21-22 *'Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. ... For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.'*

Mark 13:9-13, 19-20 *'But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ... For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be. And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days.'*

⁴ Matthew 24:14 *'And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.'*

Mark 13:10 *And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.'*

Matthew 24:29 *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.'*

⁵ Matthew 24:6-8, 21, 29 *'And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. ... For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be, ... Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.'*

Mark 13:7-8, 19 *'And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.'*

⁶ 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8-10 *Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. ... And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.*

⁷ Matthew 24:42 *'Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.'*

Mark 13:35-37 *'Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.'*

Luke 21:36 *'But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.'*

⁸ Acts 1:7 *He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.'*

1 Timothy 6:14-15 *... to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ...*

Acts 3:20-21 *... that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.*

⁹ Mark 13:32-33 *'But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come.'*

Matthew 24:36, 42, 44 *'But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. ... Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ... Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'*

Matthew 25:13 *'Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.'*

¹⁰ Luke 12:40 *'You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'*

1 Thessalonians 5:2 *For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.*

2 Peter 3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*

¹¹ 1 Thessalonians 5:3 *While people are saying, 'There is peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.*

Matthew 25:6 *'But at midnight there was a cry, "Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him."'*

Mark 13:36 *... 'lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.'*

¹² 1 Thessalonians 4:16 *For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*

Acts 1:11 *... and said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'*

Titus 2:13 *... waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.*

¹³ Revelation 1:7 *Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.*

Luke 21:27 *'And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.'*

Mark 13:26 *'And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.'*

¹⁴ Matthew 24:30 *'Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.'*

Matthew 16:27 *'For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.'*

Matthew 25:31 *'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.'*

15 2 Thessalonians 1:10 ... when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

16 Matthew 24:30 'Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.'

17 1 Corinthians 15:52 ... in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

John 5:28-29 Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

18 1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

19 2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ...

Mark 13:27 'And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.'

Matthew 24:31 'And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'

20 2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

21 1 Corinthians 15:24-26 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Jude 14-15 It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, 'Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.'

22 Revelation 20:10 ... and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Matthew 25:41 'Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."'

23 2 Thessalonians 2:10 ... and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

24 Revelation 20:12-13 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books,

according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

2 Corinthians 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.*

Matthew 25:32 *'Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.'*

25 Matthew 13:38–42 *'The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

Matthew 13:49-50 *'So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

Matthew 25:41, 46 *'Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." ... And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'*

26 Revelation 21:1 *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.*

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

Matthew 19:28 *Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'*

27 2 Peter 3:13 *But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

Revelation 21:27 *But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

28 1 Corinthians 15:24 *Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.*

2 Peter 3:7, 10-12 *But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. ... But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!*

Matthew 24:29 *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.'*

29 Revelation 21:5 *And he who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new' Also he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'*

Romans 8:21 *... that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

30 Philippians 3:20-21 *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

1 John 3:2 *Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*

1 Corinthians 15:49 *Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.*

31 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 *Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'*

32 Matthew 24:45-47 *'Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.'*

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 *For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.*

1 Peter 5:4 *And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

33 Revelation 22:5 *And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.*

2 Timothy 2:11-12 *The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; ...*

Revelation 5:10 *... 'and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.'*

34 Ephesians 2:6-7 *... and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

Psalms 16:11 *You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

1 Corinthians 13:12 *For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.*

35 Psalm 16:11 *You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Jude 24-25 *Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.*

Matthew 25:23 *His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'*

Glossary of Key Terms

Election at its most basic level refers to God's determined plan or purpose that He will sovereignly accomplish. Regarding salvation, election is God choosing, according to His good pleasure, based upon the merits of Christ, those who will inherit eternal life. God's choice to save is not conditioned upon any past, present, or future activity by the individual, but is exclusively an act of His love for them, and His grace toward them.

Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit in which He gives new spiritual life to individuals dead in sin. This new life overcomes the sinner's depravity placing a new Godward disposition in their soul, and gives them the capacity to please God.

Justification is a legal act in which God as Judge pardons a sinner declaring him/her to be in right standing before Him, all requirements of His law being met for them in the person and work of Christ, forever freeing them from condemnation and imputing to them Christ's divine righteousness.

Sanctification means to be "set apart" for God's possession and purposes. Sanctification is the process of growing in increasing measure in the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit and His appointed means of grace. This process begins at salvation and continues throughout life culminating at the second coming of Jesus when the believer sees Him in all His glory.

Redemption refers to the payment Christ made, through the sacrifice of Himself on the cross, to effect the release from sin's slavery all those who place their faith in Him, freeing them to serve God.

Imputed Righteousness refers to God the Father crediting Christ's Divine righteousness to the account of all those who place their faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

Sovereignty of God is His absolute control of the universe (encompassing all things, circumstances, and persons) in which He causes everything to work together in fulfillment of all His purposes to the praise of His glory.

Christ's Substitutionary Sacrifice is His voluntary crucifixion unto death for condemned sinners through which He, the sinless One, paid the penalty for sin satisfying God's righteous judgment for all those who trust in Him, thereby freeing them forever from sin's condemnation and granting them peace with God.