

IBC's Statement of Faith¹

I. The Holy Scriptures

- A. We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and that the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Cor. 2:7-14; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21).
- B. We believe that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Thess. 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Tim. 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original autographs, infallible, and God-breathed. We teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture, meaning that we understand Scripture in the way that the author originally intended it.
- C. We believe that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matt. 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12, 13; 17:17; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21), and thus even when it conflicts with your culture, you must adhere to the Scripture regardless of the consequences.
- D. We believe that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit superintended the human authors in such a way that through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Pet. 1:20, 21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matt. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:16).
- E. We believe that, whereas there may be many applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

II. God

A. God the Father

- 1. We believe that God the Father is the first person of the Trinity, who orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Ps. 145:8, 9; 1 Cor. 8:6). He is the Creator of all things (Gen. 1:1-31; Eph. 3:9). As the only absolute

¹ This is an adaptation of Grace Community Church's Doctrinal Statement.

and omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Ps. 103:19; Rom. 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Eph. 4:6), but He is Spiritual Father only to believers (Rom. 8:14; 2 Cor. 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Eph. 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chr. 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin (Hab. 1:13), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Pet. 1:17). He has graciously chosen before the foundation of the world those whom He would have as His own (Eph. 1:4-6); He saves from sin all those who humbly come to Him, and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Heb. 12:5-9).

B. God the Son

1. We believe that Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity, and possesses all the divine excellencies, and thus He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9). We believe that God the Father created “the heavens and the earth and all that is in them” according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operations (John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:2).
2. We believe that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the independent use of His divine prerogatives but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In other words, Jesus Christ laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, assumed the place of a Son, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes (Phil. 2:5-8). In His incarnation, the eternally existing second person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-man (Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2:9), and forever exists as the God-Man.
3. We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born (Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35); that He was God incarnate (John 1:1, 14); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's kingdom (Ps. 2:7-9; Is. 9:6; John 1:29; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 7:25, 26; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19).
4. We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Rom. 3:24, 25; 5:8; 1 Pet. 2:24).
5. We believe that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Rom. 3:25; 5:8, 9; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18).

6. We believe that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He mediates as our Advocate and High-Priest (Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:38, 39; Acts 2:30, 31; Rom. 4:25; 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).
7. We believe that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future bodily resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Rom. 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Cor. 15:20, 23).
8. We believe that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His body, unto Himself at the Rapture and, returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20).
9. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22, 23):
 - a) Believers at the Bema-Seat Judgment for the purpose of rewards (1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10).
 - b) The Unbelieving Dead at the Great White Throne Judgment for each of their sins (Rev. 20:11-15).

C. God the Holy Spirit

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, a divine person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including intellect (1 Cor. 2:10-13), emotions (Eph. 4:30), will (1 Cor. 12:11), eternality (Heb. 9:14), omnipresence (Ps. 139:7-10), omniscience (Is. 40:13, 14), omnipotence (Rom. 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3, 4; 28:25, 26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; and Jer. 31:31-34 with Heb. 10:15-17).
2. We believe that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Gen. 1:2), the incarnation (Matt. 1:18), the written revelation (2 Pet. 1:20, 21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).
3. We believe that a unique work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16, 17; 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ. His activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the

Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 2:22).

4. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing *all* believers into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). The Holy Spirit likewise indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers for service, and seals *all* believers unto the day of redemption (Rom. 8:9-11; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13). We reject any notion of “subsequence,” “second blessing,” or “second work of grace,” in the life of the believer in order to attain a fully developed spiritual life and ministry.
5. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God’s revelation, the Bible (2 Pet. 1:19-21). Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (Rom. 8:9-11; Eph. 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27; Gal. 5:25).
6. We believe that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13, 14; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 2 Cor. 3:18).
7. We believe that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today, but that the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-12; Heb. 2:1-4). We also believe that the gift of tongues was the ability to speak in foreign languages previously unstudied, and that this gift has also ceased to operate within the Church.

III. Man

- A. We believe that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Gen. 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9).
- B. We believe that God’s intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy fellowship with Him, live life in the will of God, and by doing so will accomplish God’s purpose for him in the world (Is. 43:7; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11).
- C. We believe that in Adam’s sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence and subsequently incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death. He also became subject to the wrath of God; and became inherently

corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. Since man possesses no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, he is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Rom. 3:23; 6:23; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 2:13, 14; 1 John 1:8).

- D. We believe that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, with Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men inherit the sin -nature from birth, by choice, and by divine declaration (Ps. 14:1-3; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12).

IV. Salvation

We believe that salvation is wholly of God by grace *alone*, through faith *alone*, in Christ *alone*. It is on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Eph. 1:4-7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

A. Election

1. We believe that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:4-11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Pet. 1:1, 2).
2. We don't believe that sovereign election contradicts or negates the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezek. 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18, 19, 36; 5:40; 2 Thess. 2:10-12; Rev. 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith, and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8). We believe that the unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Eph. 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Pet. 1:2).
3. We believe that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His goodness, omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Rom. 9:11-16). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 11:25-28; 2 Tim. 1:9).

B. Regeneration

1. We believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given to the believer (John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5). It is an instantaneous act, accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24), when the repentant sinner, enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Scripture seems to suggest that the effectual call to salvation and the believer's regeneration and saving faith take place at the same (1 Pet. 1:23, 25; Jam. 1:18).
2. Genuine regeneration will be manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. In other words, genuine faith produces good works (James 2:14-26), ie. the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) which is always its proper evidence and fruit (1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 5:17-21; Phil. 2:12b; Col. 3:12-17; 2 Pet. 1:4-11).

C. Justification

1. We believe that justification before God is an act of God (Rom. 8:30, 33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Is. 55:6, 7; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:10) and confess Him as sovereign Lord (Rom. 10:9, 10; 1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Cor. 4:5; Phil. 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Rom. 3:20; 4:6) and involves the placing of our sins on Christ (Col. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Cor. 5:21) (ie. "The great exchange"). Because of this "foreign righteousness" God is demonstrated to "be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

D. Sanctification

1. **Definitive Sanctification.** We believe that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God at the moment of justification and is therefore declared to be righteous, and is consequently identified as a saint. This sanctification (aka. "definitive sanctification") describes the moral change that takes place within us, when the power of sin is initially broken in our lives (I Cor. 6:11), and should not be confused with progressive sanctification (see below). This is decisive and irreversible break from the ruling power of sin takes place through the ministry of the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion. Definitive sanctification has to do with the believer's status before God as a saint, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Pet. 1:2).
2. **Progressive Sanctification.** We also believe in the ongoing, sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (aka progressive sanctification), by which the life of the believer is brought closer to the likeness of Christ through obedience to the Word of God and the Spirit's empowering. As a result, the believer is able to live a life of

increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, while becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17, 19; Rom. 6:1-22; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Thess. 4:3, 4; 5:23). In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict: the new nature in Christ doing battle against the flesh (ie. sin-nature). But adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. This struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. We therefore reject any notion of sinless perfectionism. However even though total eradication of sin is not possible, the Holy Spirit does provide the means for victory over sin (Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Phil. 3:12; Col. 3:9, 10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

E. Security (aka. Perseverance of the Saints)

1. We believe that anyone who has truly been saved by Christ are kept by God's power and are thus secure in His Son forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 5:9, 10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 7:25; 13:5; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5; Jude 24). The Reformers referred to this as the "perseverance of the saints," which to put it another way, simply means that all true born again believers will persevere in their God-given faith until the end of their lives and thus, cannot and will not, lose their salvation (Col. 1:23; Heb. 3:14).
2. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word (I Jn. 3:36, 5:13; Jn. 5:24, 6:47).

F. Separation

1. We believe that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase (2 Cor. 6:14 -7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5).
2. We believe that out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the elect should live in such a way as to demonstrate our adoring love to God, and should strive not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. We also believe that separation from any association with religious apostasy (e.g. Roman Catholicism), and worldly and sinful practices (eg. LGBTQ practices, abortion, drug and alcohol abuse) are commanded of us by God (Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 2 Cor. 6:14 - 7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).
3. We believe that Christians should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:11, 12; Heb. 12:1, 2) and affirm that the Christian life is characterized by a life of obedience, demonstrated by a kingdom ethic (Matt. 5:2-12) and a continual pursuit of holiness (Rom. 12:1, 2; 2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10).

V. The Church

- A. We believe that all those who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church (1 Cor. 12:12, 13), the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:7, 8), of which Christ is the head (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; Col. 1:18). This is a doctrine known as “Spirit-baptism.”
- B. We also believe that the formation of the church, the body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the Rapture (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).
- C. We believe that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Eph. 2:11 - 3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Cor. 10:32), and never is the Church identified as “the New Israel.” We therefore reject any notion of supercessionism, the idea that the New Testament Church replaces Israel. We believe that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Gal. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Cor. 11:18-20; Heb. 10:25).
- D. We believe that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18) and that leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship in the church are all appointed through His sovereignty, as delineated in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (males, who are also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers; Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11) and deacons (men and women), both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-5). We believe that the Scripture is absolutely clear when it limits the office of pastor/elder to men, a command based upon the creation order and not culture or any other presumed contextual factor (1 Tim. 2:12-14).
- E. We believe that biblically qualified elders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Tim. 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Heb. 13:7, 17). We also believe in the importance of discipleship (Matt. 28:19, 20; 2 Tim. 2:2), the mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matt. 18:15-17), as well as the need to discipline sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matt. 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 1:19, 20; Titus 1:10-16).
- F. We believe in the autonomy of the local church, free from any external governing authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). We believe that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Local churches, however, through their elder board and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole

judges of the measure and method of their cooperation (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Cor. 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

- G. We believe that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Eph. 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Eph. 4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2 Tim. 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42) and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8).
- H. We believe that it is the calling of all saints to the work of service, and not just the pastors (1 Cor. 15:58; Eph. 4:11-12; Rev. 22:12).
- I. We believe that the need of the church is to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He uniquely gifts certain men (elders/pastors) for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:7-12), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ (Rom. 12:5-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11).
- J. We believe that there were two kinds of gifts given to the early church:
 - 1. Miraculous gifts of divine revelation (ie. Prophecy), miracles and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message (2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3, 4). We don't believe that anyone possesses the gift of miracles or healing today but that doesn't mean that God doesn't do miraculous things today, nor does it mean that He cannot divinely heal someone according to His will. God does hear and answer the prayer of faith but will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1-8; John 5:7-9; 2 Cor. 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14, 15; Is. 38).
 - 2. Ministering gifts, given to equip believers for the edification of one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message (1 Cor. 13:8-12). We believe that these are the only gifts in operation today, non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification (Rom. 12:6-8).
- K. We believe that two ordinances have been committed to the local church:
 - 1. **Baptism.** We believe in what is commonly referred to as "believer's baptism," or "credo baptism." Simply put, this means we believe that a Christian is to be baptized subsequent to his repentance and faith in Christ as his first act of obedience (Acts 2:38). We believe that Christian baptism was always by immersion in the NT (Acts 8:36-39), and is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and

his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Rom. 6: 1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ (Acts 2:41, 42). We reject infant baptism (aka "paedo-baptism") as an unbiblical practice as there are no commands for parents to baptize their infants, nor are there any examples of infants being baptized.

2. **The Lord's Supper** (Acts 2:38-42). We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of Christ's death until He comes, and should always be preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Cor. 11:23-32). We also teach that whereas the elements of communion are only *representative* of the flesh and blood of Christ (in contradistinction to the Roman Catholic Mass), the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual Communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshiping with His people (1 Cor. 10:16).

VI. Angels

A. Holy Angels

1. We believe that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshipped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Heb. 1:6, 7, 14; 2:6, 7; Rev. 5:11-14).

B. Fallen Angels

1. We believe that Satan is a real being, not fictional, a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by pridefully rebelling against his Creator (Is. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Gen. 3:1-15).
2. We believe that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Is. 14:13, 14; Matt. 4:1-11; Rev. 12:9, 10), the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 16:20) and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Is. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

VII. Last Things (Eschatology)

A. Death

1. We don't believe that physical death involves a loss of our immaterial consciousness (ie. soul sleep)(Rev. 6:9-11), but even though there is a separation of soul and body (James 2:26), the soul of the redeemed person enters immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23), and that separation of the soul from the body will continue until the

Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-17), which initiates the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6). It is at that time that the believer's soul and resurrected body will be reunited, to be glorified forever with our Lord (1 Cor. 15:35-44, 50-54; Phil. 3:21). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven (2 Cor. 5:8).

2. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Rom. 8:10, 11, 19-23; 2 Cor. 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29; Rev. 20:13-15). We reject any notion of conditional immortality, aka. annihilationism.
3. We believe that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Rev. 20:13-15), when their soul and resurrected body will also be reunited (John 5:28, 29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne judgment to be judged for every one of their sins (Rev. 20:11-15), and then they shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41-46), and be cut off from the life of God forever (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

B. The Rapture of the Church

1. Although we don't make the timing of the Rapture a point of doctrinal contention, we do affirm a Pretribulational Rapture. That is, we believe in the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ *before* the seven-year tribulation (1 Thess. 4:16) begins to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:15 - 5:11) to heaven. Between this event (the Rapture) and His glorious return with His saints (the Second Coming), He will reward believers according to their works (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10).

C. The Tribulation

1. We believe that following the Rapture (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18), the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jer.30:7; Dan. 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thess. 2:7-12; Rev. 16) in an unprecedented seven year period of God's wrath (Rev. 6:16-17), and that these judgments will be climaxed by the pre-millennial return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matt. 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thess. 2:7-12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged (Dan. 12:2-3; Rev. 20:4-6). This period is the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27; Matt. 24:15-31; 25:31-46).

D. The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign

1. We also believe in the Pre-millennial reign of Christ. That is, we believe that after the tribulation period Christ will come back to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matt. 25:31; Luke 1:32, 33; Acts 1:10, 11; 2:29, 30) and establish His

Messianic Kingdom for a thousand years on the earth (Rev. 20:1-7). During this time the resurrected saints will rule and reign with Him over all the nations of the earth, and the apostles in a special role over Israel (Ezek. 37:21-28; Dan. 7:17-22; Matt. 19:28; Rev. 2:26, 19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet and by the removal of Satan from the world (Dan. 7:17-27; Rev. 20:1-6).

2. We believe that the Millennial Kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Is. 65:17-25; Ezek. 37:21-28; Zech. 8:1-17) to restore them to the land which they previously forfeited through their disobedience (Deut. 28:15-68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matt. 21:43; Rom. 11: 1-26) but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-32; Rom. 11:25-29).
3. We believe that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Is. 11; 65:17-25; Ezek. 36:33-38) and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Rev. 20:7).

E. The Judgment of the Lost

1. We believe that following the release of Satan after the thousand year reign of Christ (Rev. 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Rev. 20:9). Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10) whereupon Christ, who is the Judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne judgment.
2. We believe that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment (John 5:28, 29), they will be committed to eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:11-15).

F. Eternity

1. We believe that after the closing of the Millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:7-15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 Pet. 3:10) and a renovated new heaven and earth emerges, wherein righteousness alone dwells (Eph. 5:5; Rev. 20:15, 21, 22). It is at this time that the New Jerusalem will come down out of heaven (Rev. 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will forever enjoy fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Rev. 21, 22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom

to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:23-28) that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Cor. 15:28).