

The Ploughboy's Handbook

BIBLE-BASED POSITIONS ON IMPORTANT ISSUES

by

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COVER IMAGE: "Saint Paul Writing His Epistles" by Valentin de Boulogne

Preface

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

2 Timothy 4:1-5

William Tyndale was an English scholar who lived from 1494 to 1536. He is best known for translating the Bible into the common language of his people. He was strongly opposed by the false religious leaders in the official church of England. They considered an English Bible to be a threat to their power. One of these pretenders argued with Tyndale, saying that it would be better for the people to have the pope’s law than God’s law. To that comment, Tyndale replied,

*“If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy who drives a plough to know more of the scriptures than you do.”**

Tyndale had to live on the run and in disguise, for many years. He was eventually captured, strangled, and burned at the stake as a heretic, but after his death, his work carried on. It has been estimated that more than 75% of the 1611

translation of the King James Bible is the work of William Tyndale. His translation made it into the hands of many ploughboys all around the world. Today, we in the English speaking world can open the Bible and read it for ourselves.

Because of Tyndale, and others like him, we can read and consider for ourselves what the Bible says. We, too, can be lead by the Holy Spirit into all truth. This book is presented, using Tyndale's work, to set forth truths found in the Bible on some issues that some consider controversial. Our purpose is not to stir up arguments, but rather, to clearly and plainly present our positions on these things, based on our understanding of the Bible.

The fundamentals of the Christian faith are not up for debate. There are some things over which the people of God should be unwilling to compromise. There are other issues, however, that are viewed differently by genuine, and well-intentioned, believers. We must not desire to separate ourselves from each other over every little disagreement. God desires unity in His Church.

Our ministry (Children's Television Ministries, Inc.) has an official Statement of Faith that is presented in this book. The things listed in that chapter are truths that our fellowship considers to be the "essentials" of the Christian faith. We also hold positions on other important issues with which some Christians may disagree. Although we believe our views are accurate, we do not think it would be pleasing to God to separate ourselves from our brothers and sisters in Christ over these issues.

We love the people of God, and it is our desire to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. In this book, therefore, we will strive to present the positions taken by our fellowship on certain controversial issues, and we will try to do it with humble clarity. We will endeavor to be both faithful to God's Word and loving and gracious to His people. Even though we may not be able to come to an

agreement on every issue, we hope that we can all agree on this - Jesus is Lord, and the Bible is His Holy Word!

The Apostle Paul said, *“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known,”* (1 Corinthians 13:12). We thank God that as we walk through this world, He has given us His Word and His Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. Praise the Lord!

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

2 Chronicles 7:14

**As quoted in the Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, touching Matters of the Church (Foxe's Book of Martyrs) by John Foxe*

CHAPTER ONE

Our Statement of Faith

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Ephesians 4:4-6

THE BIBLE: We believe in the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures and the authority of both the Old and New Testaments.

*“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
2 Timothy 3:15-17*

GOD: We believe that God eternally exists in three Persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and that these three are one God, having the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and worthy of the same worship, reverence and obedience.

“And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.” Luke 3:22

MAN: We believe man was created in the image of God, but sinned and fell through disobedience, and that the entire human race shares in man's lost and depraved nature.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Romans 5:12-19

JESUS CHRIST: We believe Jesus, the eternal Son of God, took upon Himself the form of a man by means of the virgin birth, lived a sinless life, yet retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man.

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” Matthew 1:23

ATONEMENT FOR SIN: We believe that atonement for sin was made by the sacrificial and substitutionary death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

THE RESURRECTION: We believe in the literal resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into heaven, and His priestly intercession for His Church.

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.” 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

SALVATION: We believe salvation is the gift of God by grace alone and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that this faith is manifested in works pleasing to God.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

THE HOLY SPIRIT: We believe the Holy Spirit is the Promise of the Father, the Comforter who indwells and places every believer in the Body of Christ, bestows spiritual gifts upon the Church and convicts the world of sin and the judgment to come.

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Romans 8:9

INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT: While all believers are in-dwelt by the Spirit of God (Romans 8), we believe the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a definite endowment of power for service.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8

“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” Acts 8:12-17

ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH: We believe that the ordinances of the church, by the command of Christ, are Water Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper, both of which are administered to those who are born again.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” Matthew 28:19

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.”
1 Corinthians 11:23-26

ETERNITY: We believe in the eternal salvation of believers in Heaven, and in the eternal damnation and punishment of nonbelievers in the Lake of Fire. We believe that the consummation of all things includes the visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ - the “Blessed Hope” of the Church. (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21)

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”
2 Peter 3:13

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride

adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured

the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysopterus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.” Revelation 21

CHAPTER TWO

Assurance of Salvation

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” 1 John 5:13

THE BIBLE SAYS...

JOHN 5:24

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

JOHN 10:27-28

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

1 JOHN 5:10-12

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

ROMANS 8:1-3

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:”

THEREFORE...

WE KNOW THAT GOD CANNOT LIE: Assurance of salvation is based on the absolute trustworthiness of Scripture.

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

Numbers 23:19

WE ACCEPT GOD’S PROMISE TO SAVE ALL WHO WILL BELIEVE ON HIS SON: All who have committed their lives to Jesus Christ may have the firm confidence of salvation based upon the infallibility of God’s Word.

“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Acts 2:21

WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS PAID IT ALL: Assurance of Salvation rests on the finished work of Jesus Christ. When Jesus died on the cross, He bore our iniquities, enduring God’s wrath.

“When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”

John 19:30

WE RECOGNIZE THAT HIS WORK OF REDEMPTION WAS COMPLETED AT THE CROSS:

Our entire sin debt was paid in full, no matter how great it was.

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Isaiah 1:18

WE KNOW WE HAVE AN INWARD WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: It is a divinely produced gift, given by the Spirit.

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Romans 8:16

WE ARE ASSURED OF OUR SALVATION BY OUR NEW LIFE IN CHRIST: It is confirmed within us as we see God conforming us into the image of Christ.

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.” 1 John 2:3-5

WE KNOW WE ARE SAVED BECAUSE OF THE FRUIT: His love gives assurance.

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” 1 John 3:14

WE ALSO LOVE GOD: We know we are Christ's because we desire to please Him.

“And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.” 1 John 3:24

CHAPTER THREE

Christian Civic Duties

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.” Romans 13:1

THE BIBLE SAYS...

1 PETER 2:13-17

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.”

ROMANS 13:2-6

“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute

also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing."

THEREFORE...

WE AGREE THAT FOR A NATION TO FLOURISH, IT MUST FIRST RECOGNIZE GOD: America needs God.

*"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."
Psalms 33:12*

WE KNOW THAT FOR A NATION TO PROSPER, INDIVIDUALS IN THAT NATION MUST REPENT OF SIN AND RECEIVE CHRIST AS PERSONAL SAVIOR: A nation fails when its' citizens fail first.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Proverbs 14:34

WE ACCEPT THAT FOR THIS NATION TO BE BLESSED, OUR CHURCHES MUST BE REVIVED: The whole key to a successful democracy is the church.

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

WE UNDERSTAND THAT INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS MUST STUDY THE ISSUES, KNOW THE CANDIDATES, AND VOTE FOR THE MOST GODLY OPTIONS: We must take this civic duty seriously.

*“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you,
that I have set before you life and death, blessing and
cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed
may live:” Leviticus 18:22*

WE KNOW THAT WE MUST SPEAK UP: We must make our voices known if our nation is to be preserved.

*“Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as
are appointed to destruction.” Proverbs 31:8*

WE BELIEVE IT IS THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TO OFFER THEMSELVES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE OR SERVICE: America needs more Christian police officers, firemen, teachers, lawyers, politicians, and military personnel.

*“Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted
and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the
hand of the wicked.” Psalm 82:3-4*

WE OBEY THE LAW: The exception is when man’s law conflicts with God’s law. In those cases, we obey God!

*“Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are
Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.”
Matthew 22:21b*

WE KNOW THAT WE MUST PRAY FOR AMERICA: Jesus is our only hope. This nation is doomed if we continue to turn our backs on the Lord.

*“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers,
intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;
For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may*

lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” 1 Timothy 2:1-2

CHAPTER FOUR

Conditional Election

“But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:”

2 Thessalonians 2:13

THE BIBLE SAYS...

JOHN 6:35-40

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

JOHN 15:5-6

“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

JOHN 15:16

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”

THEREFORE...

WE REJOICE THAT GOD IS LOVE AND THAT HE DESIRES EVERYONE TO BE SAVED: Hell was not created for mankind.

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOD, IN LOVE, INITIATED A PLAN TO SAVE SINNERS: True Christians are the elect of God. They are a distinct people who have identified themselves with Christ, God’s Elect Son.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD, BY GRACE, HAS CHOSEN TO SAVE ANYONE WHO COMES TO HIM THROUGH FAITH IN HIS SON: At that point the individual becomes a member of the elect people of God.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

WE UNDERSTAND THAT ELECTION IS NOT A MEANS OF SALVATION, BUT THE RESULT OF IT:

It is our position in Him.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

WE ACCEPT THAT GOD’S WORD REVEALS THAT SALVATION AND ELECTION ARE BOTH IN

CHRIST: We must be in Christ to have either.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name:” John 1:12

WE ACCEPT THAT ELECTION IS NOT ABOUT WHICH INDIVIDUALS GOD HAS CHOSEN TO BELIEVE, BUT ABOUT THE PEOPLE GROUP HE

HAS CHOSEN TO SAVE: God’s plan is His Son and those who are in Him. Jesus is God’s elect plan. His people, the Church, are the elect.

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

WE KNOW THAT GOD HAS ALSO CHOSEN NOT TO SAVE THOSE WHO TRY TO COME TO HIM IN

ANY OTHER WAY: Thus, there are only two groups of people in the world, the elect and the non-elect.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

John 3:18

CHAPTER FIVE

Divine Healing

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

1 Peter 2:24

THE BIBLE SAYS...

PSALMS 103:2-3

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;”

MARK 16:17-18

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

ACTS 3:1-7

“Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of

Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT DIVINE HEALING IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE GOSPEL: Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is available to believers.

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”
Isaiah 53:4-5

WE KNOW THAT, DURING HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY, JESUS HAD COMPASSION ON THE SICK AND HEALED THEM: Jesus is the Lord God Almighty. He is omnipotent and has the power to do whatever he desires. He is loving and sympathizes with us in our weakness.

“When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.”
Matthew 8:16-17

WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOD, IN HIS WISDOM AND FOR HIS OWN PURPOSES, SOMETIMES

CHOOSES NOT TO HEAL: The Apostle Paul is an example of this.

“For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:8-9a

WE RECOGNIZE CHRIST’S CURRENT MINISTRY OF HEALING: God has given the gift of healing to His Church today. We praise Him for it.

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

1 Corinthians 12:7-11

WE APPRECIATE THE PROVISION GOD HAS MADE FOR OUR PHYSICAL HEALING: Healing comes by faith to those who ask and believe, subject to God’s will. In obedience to the Bible, we anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord.

“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may

*be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man
availeth much.” James 5:14-16*

CHAPTER SIX

Divorce

“For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.” Malachi 2:16

THE BIBLE SAYS...

DEUTERONOMY 24:1-4

“When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man’s wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.”

MARK 10:2-7

“And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote

you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, MARRIAGE IS A LIFETIME COMMITMENT: God hates divorce.

“Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Matthew 19:6

WE UNDERSTAND THAT SINCE MARRIAGE INVOLVES TWO SINFUL HUMAN BEINGS, SADLY, DIVORCES DO OCCUR: In the Bible, God layed down laws to protect the divorcées, especially women.

“He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.” Matthew 19:8

WE RECOGNIZE THAT ONE POSSIBLE ALLOWANCE FOR DIVORCE IS MARITAL UNFAITHFULNESS DURING THE BETROTHAL PERIOD: In Jewish custom, a man and a woman were considered married even while they were still “betrothed.”

“But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery:” Matthew 5:32a

WE SEE IT IN SCRIPTURE: An example of this is when Joseph considered divorcing Mary during their engagement period.

“Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.” Matthew 1:19

WE ACCEPT THAT A SECOND POSSIBLE ALLOWANCE FOR DIVORCE IS DESERTION BY AN UNBELIEVER: When an unbelieving mate does not desire to stay with his or her believing spouse, divorce is allowed.

“But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.” 1 Corinthians 7:15

WE ENCOURAGE FORGIVENESS: True Christians should be willing to forgive even the most grievous of sins.

“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Matthew 6:14-15

WE STRIVE FOR PEACE: True Christians should always be gentle and soft-hearted.

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:” Hebrews 12:14

WE LOVE: True Christians love others.

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 13:35

CHAPTER SEVEN

Eternal Security

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.” 1 Corinthians 15:1-2

THE BIBLE SAYS...

MATTHEW 24:12-13

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

JOHN 10:28-29

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”

ROMANS 11:22

“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”

EPHESIANS 4:3

“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

1 TIMOTHY 4:1

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;”

JUDE 1:24

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,”

THEREFORE...

WE KNOW THE BIBLE WARNS ABOUT FALLING AWAY FROM THE FAITH: These warnings would not have been given were it not possible to fall away from the faith.

“Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.” 1 Timothy 1:19-20

WE BELIEVE FAITH IS A REQUIREMENT IN SALVATION: We are secure in Christ so long as we persist in faith.

*“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;”
Hebrews 3:14*

WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOD IS WORKING IN US TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WILL: We are called to cooperate with Him.

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:12-13

WE RECOGNIZE THAT WE MUST REMAIN IN CHRIST TO BE FRUITFUL: The result of being unfruitful is to be separated from Him.

“If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” John 15:6

WE KNOW THAT A GLORIOUS FUTURE IN HEAVEN IS WAITING FOR US: What Heaven will actually entail is beyond our limited knowledge, but we eagerly look forward to it.

*“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”
1 Peter 1:5*

WE BELIEVE OUR SALVATION WILL BE FULFILLED IN HEAVEN: It will be completed when we are together with Him in our glorious new home.

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” Romans 13:11

WE KNOW IT IS POSSIBLE TO BE SEVERED FROM CHRIST: This occurs if one exchanges the truth for a lie.

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

Galatians 5:4

WE ARE ETERNALLY SECURE IN OUR SALVATION AS WE PERSIST IN FAITH: Our salvation cannot be lost unless we abandon our faith in Jesus, and turn away from the true Gospel.

“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of

God.” Luke 9:62

CHAPTER EIGHT

Free Will

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 7:21

THE BIBLE SAYS...

DEUTERONOMY 30:19-20

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

JEREMIAH 29:11-13

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

MARK 8:34-35

“And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but

*whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's,
the same shall save it."*

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD, IN HIS SOVEREIGNTY, GAVE MAN THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE: The free will of man is God's gift to mankind that makes possible our receiving of every other gift from Him.

"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:16-17

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HUMAN BEINGS HAVE THE ABILITY TO ACCEPT OR REJECT GOD'S WILL: Many scriptures show that God's will can be defied by man.

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:1

WE BELIEVE SIN IS THE RESULT OF MAN'S OWN SELFISH AND EVIL DESIRES, DEEDS AND CHOICES IN DEFIANCE OF GOD'S WILL: Mankind is justly held morally accountable because it is in the power of man to intend to obey, or to deliberately disobey God.

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

WE KNOW THAT THE ONE TRUE AND HOLY GOD CANNOT FORGIVE SIN WITHOUT THE PENALTY BEING PAID: On the cross, Christ payed the penalty of our sin that is demanded by God’s justice.

*“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;”
1 Corinthians 15:3b*

WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOD CANNOT FORCE A GIFT ON ANYONE: Salvation can neither be earned nor merited – it can only be received as a gift from God.

*“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
Romans 6:23*

WE ACCEPT THAT GOD WILL NOT FORCE ANYONE TO LOVE HIM OR TO ACCEPT HIS LOVE: True love can only come voluntarily from the heart.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

WE REJOICE IN THE FACT THAT WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE GOD: God Himself has determined the conditions of salvation. He has given us freedom of choice.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:” John 1:12

CHAPTER NINE

Gambling

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Hebrews 13:5

THE BIBLE SAYS...

PROVERBS 13:11

“Wealth [gotten] by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.”

PROVERBS 16:33

“The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof [is] of the LORD.”

PROVERBS 28:22

“He that hasteth to be rich [hath] an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.”

ECCLESIASTES 5:10

“He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.”

MATTHEW 6:24

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

MARK 8:36

“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

EPHESIANS 4:28

“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with [his] hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT THE LOVE OF MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL: We seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and [into] many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”
1 Timothy 6:9-10

WE RECOGNIZE THAT GAMBLING CAN BE ADDICTIVE: We want to be free.

“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” 1 Corinthians 6:12

WE LOVE AND SERVE GOD: We use money, but we are not the servants of it.

“No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Luke 16:13

WE UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS BLESSING TO BE A CHEERFUL GIVER: We love to give to others.

“I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Acts 20:35

WE BELIEVE THAT COVETOUSNESS IS A SIN: The accumulation of worldly things does not bring contentment.

*“And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”
Luke 12:15*

WE DO NOT TRUST IN EARTHLY RICHES: True riches come from God.

*“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”
1 Timothy 6:17-19*

WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE AN ETERNAL HOME IN HEAVEN: Our Heavenly treasures are enduring.

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and

*where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where
your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”*

Matthew 6:19-21

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEAVEN: Eternity with
Christ is our blessed hope.

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Luke 12:34

CHAPTER TEN

Giving

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7

THE BIBLE SAYS...

MALACHI 3:10

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

LUKE 6:38

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”

1 CORINTHIANS 16:2

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

MATTHEW 6:3-4

“But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.”

PROVERBS 19:7

*“He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD;
and that which he hath given will he pay him again.”*

THEREFORE...

WE CONSIDER IT A PRIVILEGE TO GIVE: Our giving is God’s way of bringing about many good deeds for His glory.

*“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you;
that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may
abound to every good work.” 2 Corinthians 9:8*

WE GIVE WITH JOY: Giving joyfully to the mission and the ministry of Christ is an antidote to covetousness.

*“And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of
covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the
abundance of the things which he possesseth.”
Luke 12:15*

WE DEMONSTRATE OUR DEPENDANCE ON THE LORD THROUGH OUR GIVING: There is a correlation between faith in the promises of God and peace of mind in giving away what we may think we need, but really don’t.

*“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be
content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will
never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Hebrews 13:5*

WE HONOR GOD WITH OUR TITHES: It is our responsibility to return the first ten percent of our incomes to the Lord. It rightly belongs to Him.

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.”

Malachi 3:8

WE REJOICE THAT WE CAN GIVE TO THE LORD BY GIVING TO OTHERS:

By giving to others, especially those in need, we express our love for Christ in a practical way; not with words alone, but with genuine kindness and mercy.

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Matthew 5:31-40

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Head Coverings

“Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.” 1 Corinthians 11:4-5

THE BIBLE SAYS...

1 CORINTHIANS 11:1-7

“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.”

1 CORINTHIANS 11:13-16

“Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be

contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”

The fact that Paul only commands covering for certain times indicates to us that he has a removable head covering in mind.

THEREFORE...

WE ACCEPT THAT THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES ABOUT HEAD COVERINGS: The Bible instructs women to wear a covering in church, and men to refrain from wearing one.

“Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head:” 1 Corinthians 11:4-5a

WE RECOGNIZE THAT CREATION ORDER IS THE FIRST BIBLICAL REASON FOR HEAD COVERINGS: Biblical head coverings are not based on culture. They are based on God’s creation.

“For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.” 1 Corinthians 11:8-9

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE SECOND BIBLICAL REASON FOR HEAD COVERINGS ARE THE ANGELS: Evidently the angels in Heaven are watching us as we worship the Lord in our assemblies. By submitting ourselves to God in the issue of head coverings, we rightly symbolize the created order to all who are watching us, both visible and invisible, whether in Heaven or on earth.

“For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.” 1 Corinthians 11:10

WE SEE THAT NATURE ITSELF IS THE THIRD REASON FOR THIS COMMAND: Nature teaches us that there are distinct differences between men and women, and that when gender distinctions are disregarded, it brings dishonor.

“Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.” 1 Corinthians 11:14-15

WE ACCEPT THAT THE FOURTH REASON FOR HEAD COVERINGS IS THAT THE APOSTLES TAUGHT IT. This teaching remained the standard practice of most churches throughout the majority of Church history.

*“But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”
1 Corinthians 11:16*

WE ENCOURAGE WOMEN TO WEAR HEAD COVERINGS, AND MEN TO REMOVE THEM WHILE IN CHURCH. A woman’s natural covering is her long hair, however, when in church she is also to wear an artificial covering, as a symbol that she’s under authority. Men are to remove their head coverings in church for the very same reason.

*“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”
1 Corinthians 11:1*

CHAPTER TWELVE

Human Sexuality

“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;” 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

THE BIBLE SAYS...

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

EPHESIANS 5:1-7

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these

things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.”

THEREFORE...

WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOD CREATED MEN AND WOMEN TO REFLECT HIS IMAGE ON EARTH: Humanity was uniquely created by God to show forth His glory in the world.

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

WE RECOGNIZE THAT SEX IS PRINCIPALLY ABOUT REPRODUCTION: God’s plan is to bless people with children through the sexual union.

“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” Psalm 127:3

WE BELIEVE THAT PRE-MARITAL SEX IS SIN: God’s word strongly condemns it.

“Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.” 1 Corinthians 6:18

WE KNOW THAT THE BIBLE IS NOT SILENT ON HOMOSEXUALITY: There is not one syllable in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation that condones homosexual practice. On the contrary, it is universally and unambiguously condemned.

“For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;” 1 Timothy 1:10

WE BELIEVE THAT HOMOSEXUALITY IS A SIN:

The scriptures are very clear about this.

“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.” Leviticus 18:22

WE ACCEPT THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE RIGHTEOUS OPTION FOR HUMAN SEXUALITY:

Both Jesus and all of scripture approve of no other sexual union than that between a husband and his wife.

“Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Matthew 19:6

WE BELIEVE THAT EXTRA-MARITAL SEXUAL RELATIONS ARE SIN: Adultery damages nearly every relationship around it, including the extended family.

“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” Hebrews 13:4

WE UNDERSTAND THAT ALL PEOPLE ARE SINNERS WHO ARE LOVED BY GOD: To be saved, we must repent, seek God’s forgiveness, and submit to Him for cleansing and transformation.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being

*now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath
through him.” Romans 5:8-9*

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Marriage

*“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” Hebrews
13:4*

THE BIBLE SAYS...

GENESIS 2:15-25

“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And

they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE MARRIAGE IS A COVENANT BETWEEN ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN FOR LIFE: This marriage covenant, like any other formal agreement, is a single contract mutually forged by two people who have come to a common understanding.

“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” Genesis 2:18

WE UNDERSTAND THAT IN MARRIAGE THE TWO LEAVE BEHIND ALL PREVIOUS FAMILY DEPENDENCIES AND BECOME ONE: Marriages only happen when two people agree to make a bond for life.

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” Genesis 2:24

WE AFFIRM THAT BECOMING MARRIED IS A ONE-TIME ACT: Marriage happens at a specific moment in time; when both the man and the woman say, “Yes, I agree to be bound by this marriage covenant starting now.” Most often this occurs during a wedding ceremony. Even if the couple changes their minds as they walk down the steps to leave the church building, that doesn’t matter in God’s eyes. To Him they are married for life.

“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Genesis 2:23

WE KNOW THAT SEX DOES NOT CREATE A MARRIAGE: Only the marriage agreement accomplishes this at the moment it is formally made.

“Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.” Matthew 1:24-25

WE ACCEPT THAT MARRIAGE FORMED OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH IS VALID: Marriages are considered valid by God whether the two believe in Him or not.

“If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.” Numbers 30:2

WE BELIEVE THAT HOMOSEXUAL AND BLOOD RELATION UNIONS ARE NOT MARRIAGES: God defines marriage as being between one man and one woman for life. Additionally, some specific blood relation unions are not valid marriages in God’s sight.

“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.” Leviticus 18:22

*“None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD.”
Leviticus 18:6*

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Miracles

“Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.”

Psalms 77:14

THE BIBLE SAYS...

PSALMS 135:5-6

“For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”

JEREMIAH 32:27

“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?”

MATTHEW 19:26

“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”

MATTHEW 21:21-22

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

MARK 16:17-18

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new

tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD CAN AND DOES PERFORM MIRACLES TODAY: God is omnipotent and never changes. He is the God of all ages and, therefore, can perform miracles whenever He desires.

*“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”
Hebrews 13:8*

WE UNDERSTAND THAT MIRACLES CAN HAPPEN WHEN GOD’S PEOPLE TURN TO HIM IN PRAYER: Wonderful things can happen when the Lord’s people humble themselves, pray, seek His face, and repent.

*“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”
Matthew 7:7-8*

WE RECOGNIZE THAT MIRACLES FOLLOW “THEM THAT BELIEVE”: The miracle working power of God emboldens believers to go forth and proclaim the Word of God.

“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken

where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.” Acts 4:29-31

WE OBSERVE THAT UNBELIEF HINDERS THE MIRACULOUS WORK OF GOD: Faith is a key component to answered prayer.

“...ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” James 4:2b-3

WE SEE NO EXPIRATION DATE ON THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: What God has done for others in the past, He can do for us today.

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”
1 Corinthians 12:7-11

WE HAVE BEEN WARNED TO GUARD AGAINST SPIRITUAL WOLVES: False teachers often perform fake miracles.

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matthew 24:24

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Praise and Worship

“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:23-24

THE BIBLE SAYS...

PSALMS 91:1-6

“O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.”

PSALMS 96:9-11

“O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.”

PSALMS 150:1-6

“Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel

and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.”

THEREFORE...

WE SING JOYFULLY TO THE LORD: He loves to hear His children singing to Him!

“Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations. For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised:”
1 Chronicles 16:23-25a

WE THANK HIM FOR HIS GOODNESS: We lift our voices for the Lord is worthy!

“Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.” Psalm 100

WE PRAISE HIM FOR HIS MERCY AND TRUTH:
He is our Lord and Master.

“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth’s sake.”
Psalm 115:1

WE LIFT OUR HANDS TO HIM: We are instructed in God's Word to assume this posture in worship. It suggests surrender, trust, and a desire to receive from Him.

"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." 1 Timothy 2:8

WE REVERENTLY ADORE HIM AND PROCLAIM HIS GLORY: The Lord is great and greatly to be praised.

*"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."
Psalms 29:2*

WE PRAISE HIM WITH MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AND CLAPPING: We love the Lord with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength.

"Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings." Psalms 33:2

"O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph." Psalms 47:1

WE SING NEW SONGS: God loves to hear His people sing of His righteousness and judgement.

"Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise. For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth." Psalms 33:3-4

WE REJOICE IN THE LORD: Our joy is overflowing, and we delight in Him. Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and we are his people!

“Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp. For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.” Psalms 149:2-4

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Predestined to Glory

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” Jeremiah 29:11

THE BIBLE SAYS...

ROMANS 8:29-30

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

EPHESIANS 1:3-6

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

EPHESIANS 1:11-13

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In

*whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye
believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,”*

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT THE FIRST STEP OF SALVATION IS SOLELY THE GRACE OF GOD: It is God's will to save everyone by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

*“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”
John 6:44*

WE ACCEPT THAT CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS IMPUTED TO BELIEVERS: When individuals repent and believe in Christ, they are cleansed of sin, regenerated, and brought into union with Christ through faith alone.

*“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
2 Corinthians 5:20-21*

WE UNDERSTAND THAT PREDESTINATION IS NOT THE PREDETERMINATION OF WHO WILL BELIEVE: Rather, it is the predetermination of the believer's future inheritance.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ

from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter

1:3-5

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD PREDESTINES ALL TRUE BELIEVERS TO A GLORIOUS FUTURE:

Believers in Christ are predestined to sonship through adoption, glorification, and eternal life.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

WE KNOW THAT THE SUFFERINGS OF TRUE CHRISTIANS ARE OFTEN SEVERE: This suffering will end when the Lord Jesus returns to introduce a glorious new state of things.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Revelation 21:4

WE REJOICE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT GOD PREDESTINES BELIEVERS TO LIVE WITH HIM FOREVER IN HEAVEN: Believers will see God, be with God, and be like God. They will be freed from sin, filled with holiness, delivered from fears, and enjoy the pleasures of Heaven forever.

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

1 Corinthians 2:9

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Remarriage After Divorce

“For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.”

Romans 7:2

THE BIBLE SAYS...

MARK 10:2-12

“And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”

MATTHEW 5:31-32

“It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and

whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE ALL REMARRIAGE AFTER DIVORCE IS SIN WHILE BOTH SPOUSES ARE ALIVE: Jesus does not recognize divorce as terminating a marriage in God’s sight. The reason a second marriage is called adultery is because the first one is considered to still be valid.

“Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.”
Luke 16:18

WE UNDERSTAND THAT ALL REMARRIAGE AFTER DIVORCE IS ADULTERY WHETHER IT IS THE HUSBAND OR WIFE WHO DID THE DIVORCING: There are no exceptions mentioned to this rule.

“And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”
Mark 10:11-12

WE AFFIRM THAT ALL REMARRIAGE AFTER DIVORCE IS ADULTERY, EVEN FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DIVORCED INNOCENTLY: Jesus’ opposition to remarriage seems to be based on the unbreakableness of the marriage bond, in His eyes, by anything but death.

*“and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced
committeth adultery.” Matthew 5:32b*

WE BELIEVE DIVORCE IS WRONG, BUT THAT IF IT IS INEVITABLE, THE PERSON WHO DIVORCES SHOULD NOT REMARRY: In cases of unrepentant adultery, or desertion, or brutality, the person who feels constrained to separate should not seek remarriage but should remain single.

*“And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord,
Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she
depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her
husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.” 1
Corinthians 7:10-11*

WE ACCEPT THAT REMARRIAGE IS LEGITIMATE ONLY AFTER THE DEATH OF A SPOUSE: Remarriage in such cases is not adultery.

*“The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband
liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be
married to whom she will; only in the Lord.”
1 Corinthians 7:39*

WE ENCOURAGE THOSE GUILTY OF THIS SIN TO REPENT: Those who are already remarried should acknowledge it as sin and seek forgiveness. They must now remain faithful to their current vows, resting in God’s unfailing promise to forgive sin.

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us
our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1
John 1:9*

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Sanctity of Life

“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, [and] I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” Jeremiah 1:5

THE BIBLE SAYS...

GENESIS 1:27

“So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

EXODUS 20:13

“Thou shalt not kill.”

GENESIS 9:6

“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.”

PSALMS 139:13-16

“For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”

PSALM 127:3

“Lo, children [are] an heritage of the LORD: [and] the fruit of the womb [is his] reward.”

JOB 31:15

“Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?”

THEREFORE...

WE KNOW THAT THE BIBLE TEACHES THERE IS PERSONHOOD BEFORE BIRTH: God views the unborn child as a person.

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Psalms 51:5

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE UNBORN ARE CALLED “BABIES” IN THE BIBLE: God’s Word describes an unborn child as being capable of exhibiting joy.

“And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.” Luke 1:41-45

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD IS VERY CONCERNED

ABOUT THE UNBORN: He takes the harming of an unborn child very seriously, and pronounces harsh punishment for those guilty of this sin.

“Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.” Luke 17:1-2

WE KNOW THAT ABORTION AND EUTHANASIA ARE MURDER: God condemns murder in all its forms.

“These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.” Proverbs 6:16-19

WE OBSERVE THAT GOD DEFENDS THE WEAK:

Human life is precious to God and He will avenge the innocent and oppressed – both young and old.

“Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” Exodus 22:22-24

WE BELIEVE GOD LOVES US: He takes no delight in the death of the wicked!

*“Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.”
Matthew 18:14*

WE REJOICE THAT JESUS IS THE SAVIOR: He pardons all who repent!

*“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”
John 3:17*

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Sobriety

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;” Ephesians 5:18

THE BIBLE SAYS...

PROVERBS 20:1

“Wine [is] a mocker, strong drink [is] raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”

PROVERBS 23:29-35

“Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, [when] it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, [shalt thou say, and] I was not sick; they have beaten me, [and] I felt [it] not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.”

1 CORINTHIANS 5:11

“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.”

1 PETER 5:8

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:”

THEREFORE...

WE KNOW THAT THE BIBLE CONDEMNS

DRUNKENNESS: We have turned from a life of sin to walk righteously before God.

“For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:” 1 Peter 4:3

WE OBSERVE THAT DRUNKENNESS LEADS TO

RUIN: Individuals, and families, have been destroyed by the abuse of alcohol and other mind-altering substances.

“Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.” Proverbs 23:20-21

WE TAKE GOD’S WORD SERIOUSLY AND SEEK TO LIVE IN SUCH A WAY THAT WE PLEASE THE

LORD: As ambassadors of Christ, we strive to faithfully represent the Lord and His righteous kingdom.

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love

their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” Titus 2:2

WE KNOW THAT ALCOHOL CAN IMPAIR GOOD JUDGEMENT: We highly value the ability to make wise and good decisions.

“But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.” Isaiah 28:7

WE UNDERSTAND THAT A LIFE OF SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD: Sin, in its many forms, is both unprofitable and destructive.

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:19-21

WE DESIRE TO TURN FROM SIN AND LIVE A NEW AND PROFITABLE LIFE WITH GOD: We believe the Bible, willingly turn our backs on sin, and joyfully follow the Holy Spirit.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have

crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Galatians 5:22-25

CHAPTER TWENTY

Speaking in Tongues

“Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.” 1 Corinthians 14:39

THE BIBLE SAYS...

MARK 16:17

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;”

ACTS 19:1-6

“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

1 CORINTHIANS 14:18 and 19

“I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE GOD CAN AND DOES DO

MIRACLES TODAY: God is omnipotent. He never changes. If He did it in the past, He can do it today, and it is evident to us, that we desperately need the miracle working power of God in our world today.

*“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”
Hebrews 13:8*

WE RECOGNIZE THAT SPEAKING IN TONGUES IS A MIRACULOUS GIFT FROM GOD: We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every true believer, and that He bestows spiritual gifts upon the Church, including speaking in tongues.

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:4

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE GIFT OF TONGUES IS RELEVANT TODAY: God has given certain gifts, including prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, that will bless the people of God until Jesus comes again in majesty to abolish sin, and rule and reign on earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

“Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” 1 Corinthians 13:8-10

WE OBSERVE THAT SPEAKING IN TONGUES IS FREQUENTLY MENTIONED AS EVIDENCE OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is often witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance.

“And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.” Acts 10:45-46a

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE PRIORITY OF LOVE OVER THE GIFT OF TONGUES: The gift of speaking in tongues is useless without genuine love. Love is the greatest gift of all!

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

Tattoos and Body Modifications

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

THE BIBLE SAYS...

LEVITICUS 19:28

“Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the Lord.”

DEUTERONOMY 14:1

“Ye [are] the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.”

ROMANS 1:24-25

“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”

1 CORINTHIANS 3:17

“If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which [temple] ye are.”

1 CORINTHIANS 10:23

“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.”

1 TIMOTHY 2:9

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;”

THEREFORE...

WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE WERE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD: This makes each human being a beautiful and unique individual, created by God for a wonderful purpose.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” Genesis 1:26-27

WE BELIEVE THAT WE WERE CREATED TO BRING GLORY TO GOD IN EVERYTHING: We desire to please our Heavenly Father in what we say and do, including our outward appearance.

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31

WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOD REALLY LOVES THE PEOPLE HE CREATED: He highly values every

person in the world and, though we have all sinned, He loves us still, and desires what is best for us.

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:6-8

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT, AS BELIEVERS, WE BELONG TO JESUS: All that we are. and possess, rightly belongs to Him.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Romans 12:1-2

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE LORD IS PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH WHAT IS IN OUR HEARTS: We love the Lord and long to please Him in our hearts.

“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” 1 Peter 3:3-4

WE KNOW THAT WE DO NOT NEED TO MAR OR MODIFY OUR BODIES TO FIND ACCEPTANCE

WITH HIM: God loves us as we are, and He has a wonderful plan for our lives.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

“He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” Acts 19:2

THE BIBLE SAYS...

JOEL 2:28-29

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.”

ACTS 2:1-4

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

ACTS 2:14-17a

“But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it

is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,”

THEREFORE...

WE DESIRE THE FULLNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR OWN LIVES: The evangelist D L Moody was once asked why he urged Christians to be filled constantly with the Holy Spirit. “Well,” he said, “I need a continual infilling because I leak!”

“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” Acts 1:8

WE KNOW THAT JESUS COMMANDED HIS DISCIPLES TO WAIT FOR THIS PROMISE: This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church.

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.” Acts 1:4

WE BELIEVE THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT IS AVAILABLE TO ALL TRUE BELIEVERS: All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in

Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8

WE ACCEPT THAT THIS EXPERIENCE IS DISTINCT FROM, AND SUBSEQUENT TO, THE NEW BIRTH: The scripture records examples of genuine believers who had yet to experience this promise.

“(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” Acts 8:16-17

WE THANK GOD FOR THIS PROMISE: With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry.

“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” Luke 24:49

WE REJOICE IN THE LORD: With the baptism in the Holy Spirit comes such experiences as: an overflowing fullness of the Spirit, a deepened reverence for God, an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work, and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost.

“And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.” Mark 16:20

CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

The Bible

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:” 2 Timothy 3:16

THE BIBLE SAYS...

JOSHUA 1:8

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”

MATTHEW 24:35

“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”

ROMANS 10:17

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

HEBREWS 4:12

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

REVELATION 22:18-19

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these

things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

THEREFORE...

WE LOVE AND THINK ABOUT THE BIBLE: It inspires us.

*“O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”
Psalms 119:97*

WE READ THE BIBLE: It strengthens us.

“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4

WE MEMORIZE THE BIBLE: It protects us.

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Psalms 119:11

WE DEPEND ON THE BIBLE: It is our trustworthy guide for life.

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not

*wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” Psalms
1:1-3*

WE STUDY THE BIBLE: We are thankful for those who have accurately translated God’s Word into our language, and we strive to fully comprehend its’ truths.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15

WE DO NOT NEGLECT THE BIBLE: It renews our strength, and gives us life.

“I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.” Psalm 119:93

WE SHARE THE BIBLE: It explains to others about God’s glory, and His wonderful plan of salvation.

“Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.” Psalms 96:6

WE READ IT PUBLICLY: Unified public reading of the scriptures strengthens the whole church.

“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.” 1 Timothy 4:13

WE PREACH THE BIBLE: The Spirit-filled preaching of God’s Word produces vibrant, living faith in those who receive it.

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life” 2 Corinthians 3:6

WE ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO BRING THEIR BIBLES TO OUR MEETINGS: The best Bible an individual owns is the one they read regularly!

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:” 1 Peter 2:2

CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

The Local Church

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” Acts 2:42

THE BIBLE SAYS...

MATTHEW 18:20

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

ROMANS 12:4-5

“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

1 CORINTHIANS 12:26-31

“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.”

HEBREWS 13:17

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”

THEREFORE...

WE KNOW THAT THE LOCAL CHURCH IS A FELLOWSHIP OF GENUINE BELIEVERS: These are people who trust Jesus as Savior and Lord, and have been born again.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

John 1:12-13

WE EXPECT THE CHURCH MEMBERS TO BE BAPTIZED: This was the uniform practice in the early church.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” Matthew 28:19

WE MEET REGULARLY AND FREQUENTLY:
Faithfulness is encouraged.

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”
Hebrews 10:25

WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP: The church is destined to live to the praise of God's glory, therefore, we assemble to praise Him.

“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Acts 2:46-47

WE INCLUDE AN EXHORTATION FROM GOD'S WORD: Our life in Christ is preserved, not by bread alone, but by every word from the mouth of God.

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” 1 Peter 1:23

WE CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER: We are commanded to do this in remembrance of Christ.

“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.” Luke 22:19

WE HAVE DULY APPOINTED LEADERS TO OVERSEE THE FELLOWSHIP: These leaders meet the Biblical qualifications for deacons and elders.

“For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;” Titus 1:7

WE ARE ZEALOUS FOR GOOD DEEDS: These are acts, by which, people's needs are met. The goal of our fellowship, therefore, is to live so that people can see that

God is real; that He is present in our midst; and that He loves them dearly.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

The Lord's Day

“And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”

Genesis 2:2-3

THE BIBLE SAYS...

EXODUS 20:8-11

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

ISAIAH 58:13-14

“If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.”

MARK 2:27-28

“And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.”

THEREFORE...

WE ACCEPT GOD’S GIFT OF ONE DAY’S REST

EACH WEEK: We acknowledge that our true advancement in life depends more on God’s labor than on our own.

“I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.” Ezekiel 20:19-20

WE DEVOTE ONE DAY EACH WEEK TO FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON GOD IN A SPECIAL WAY:

One day in seven we rest from our usual labors and do those things that deepen our love for God.

“Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.” Leviticus 23:3

WE BELIEVE THAT THE HONORING OF THE SABBATH IS A WAY OF EXPRESSING THE TRUTH THAT GOD IS OUR CREATOR AND SUSTAINER:

We are dependent on him for all we have in the world, for our deliverance from enemies, and for our holiness. We keep one day in seven to cease from our labors and focus on God as the source of all our blessings.

“Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.” Exodus 31:13

WE BELIEVE THAT THE PARTICULAR DAY OF THE WEEK IS NOT OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE:

The sabbath is one special day in seven when we choose to rest and worship.

“One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” Romans 14:5

WE HONOR THE SABBATH ON SUNDAYS: We do this on the first day of the week as a witness to each other and the world that Jesus Christ is Lord of both our sabbath and our lives.

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Colossians 2:16-17

WE DO NOT NEGLECT ATTENDING CHURCH ON GOD’S SPECIAL DAY: On Sundays we joyfully meet together as a fellowship to worship God and enjoy His presence. On that day we experience the highest and most intense joy that can be experienced, that is, we delight in the Lord and enjoy each other’s company!

“I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.” Ezekiel 20:19-20

CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

The Lord's Supper

“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.”

Luke 22:19

THE BIBLE SAYS...

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-34

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together

unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT THE LORD’S SUPPER IS INTENDED TO FOCUS OUR FAITH ON THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST ON THE CROSS AS THE ONLY GROUND OF OUR SALVATION: This ordinance confirms that our entire salvation rests on Christ’s one-time sacrifice for us on the cross.

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.” Matthew 26:26

WE RECOGNIZE THAT CHRIST HAS COMMANDED ALL BELIEVERS TO EAT THIS BROKEN BREAD AND DRINK THIS CUP IN REMEMBRANCE OF HIM: Partaking of the Lord’s Supper symbolizes that we remember and accept the entire suffering and death of Christ. We acknowledge that it is through faith in His death on the cross for us that we receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

“And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Matthew 26:27-28

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE BREAD AND JUICE ARE ONLY SYMBOLS AND DO NOT BECOME THE REAL BODY OF CHRIST: As the water of baptism is not changed into Christ’s literal blood, neither do the

elements of the Lord's Supper become the actual body and blood of Christ.

“As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” John 6:57

WE BELIEVE THAT THROUGH THIS ORDINANCE CHRIST TEACHES US THAT HIS CRUCIFIED BODY AND POURED-OUT BLOOD ARE FOOD AND DRINK FOR OUR ETERNAL SOULS: By this visible sign we, through the Holy Spirit's work, share in Christ's true body and blood in a spiritual sense, as surely as our mouths receive the physical elements of communion.

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” John 6:51

WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE LORD'S SUPPER IS OPEN TO ALL WHO ARE DISPLEASED WITH THEMSELVES BECAUSE OF THEIR SINS, BUT WHO NEVERTHELESS TRUST THAT THEIR SINS HAVE BEEN PARDONED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH IN THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS: All hypocrites and those who are unrepentant, however, should never partake of the Lord's Supper, for to do so means that they eat and drink judgment upon themselves.

*“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”
1 Corinthians 11:28-30*

CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

The Rapture

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;” Titus 2:13

THE BIBLE SAYS...

1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

ACT 1:9-11

“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT BEFORE HE ESTABLISHES HIS KINGDOM ON EARTH, JESUS WILL COME FOR HIS CHURCH, AN EVENT COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS “THE RAPTURE.”: At that time the dead in Christ will be raised and living Christians will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and be with Him forever.

“Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Corinthians 15:51-54

WE UNDERSTAND THAT IN THIS RESURRECTION, THOSE WHO HAVE DIED IN CHRIST WILL HAVE THEIR REDEEMED SOULS AND SPIRITS UNITED WITH A BODY SIMILAR TO CHRIST’S GLORIFIED BODY: Christians living at the time of this great event will not die, but will be changed, in the twinkling of an eye, to be like Christ.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” 1 John 3:2

WE RECOGNIZE THAT THIS EXPECTATION IS MOTIVATION FOR HOLY LIVING: It is also a source of great comfort.

“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.” 1 John 2:28

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS GLORIOUS EVENT COULD OCCUR AT ANY TIME: Therefore, we are watchful!

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” Matthew 24:36

WE BELIEVE THAT AFTER THE RAPTURE, CHRISTIANS WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST: He will judge our works, not our salvation.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:10

WE BELIEVE THAT THE RAPTURE WILL INAUGURATE A PERIOD CALLED “THE GREAT TRIBULATION”: This will be a time of unprecedented difficulty for the world.

“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” Matthew 24:21

CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

Venerating Statues

“Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.” Leviticus 26:1

THE BIBLE SAYS...

EXODUS 20:1-6

“And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”

PSALMS 115:4-9

“Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.”

PSALMS 97:7

“Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.”

THEREFORE...

WE KNOW THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD: He made heaven and earth.

“Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.” Isaiah 44:6

WE RECOGNIZE THAT WORSHIPPING IMAGES OFFENDS GOD: Venerating images is an insult to the Creator.

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” Romans 1:20-25

WE BELIEVE THAT BOWING DOWN TO A STATUE OR A PAINTING, AND PRAYING TO IT, IS A VERY EVIL THING: This practice is forbidden by scripture.

*“I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.”
Isaiah 42:8*

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD COMMANDS EVERYONE TO TURN FROM WORSHIPPING IDOLS: A day of judgement is coming for those who refuse to repent from all sin, including idolatry.

“Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” Acts 17:29-31

WE BELIEVE THE WORD OF GOD: We encourage everyone to turn from false religion and to repent in truth toward God.

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” 2 Timothy 4:2-4

WE STRIVE TO WORSHIP GOD IN A WAY THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO HIM: We do not pray to, or venerate images.

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24

CHAPTER TWENTY NINE

Water Baptism

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” Colossians 2:12

THE BIBLE SAYS...

MARK 16:15-16

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

ACTS 2:38

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

ACTS 2:41

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

ACTS 22:16

“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

GALATIANS 3:26-27

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

1 PETER 3:21

“The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT WATER BAPTISM IS A COMMAND: We joyfully obey God in this matter.

“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”
Acts 8:12

WE RECOGNIZE THAT BAPTISM IS NOT AN ACT THAT GETS US INTO HEAVEN: Only faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord offers that assurance.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

WE UNDERSTAND THE THIEF ON THE CROSS WENT TO HEAVEN: He was saved, not by baptism, but by simply believing in Jesus and putting his trust in Him.

“And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:43

WE BELIEVE THAT WATER BAPTISM EXPRESSES UNION WITH CHRIST IN HIS DEATH AND

RESURRECTION: Faith unites us to Christ; baptism symbolizes that union.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:3-4

WE BELIEVE THAT THE PROPER METHOD OF BAPTISM IS BY IMMERSION: The word baptism in Greek means to dip or immerse.

“And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.” Acts 8:38

WE RECOGNIZE THAT JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES TO BAPTIZE IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT: All three Persons of the Trinity are involved in the salvation of the believer and are recognized in baptism.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” Matthew 28:19

WE KNOW THAT MANY BELIEVERS WERE BAPTIZED IN JESUS’ NAME: This is essentially the same thing because Jesus, the Father and the Holy Spirit are one.

“I and my Father are one.” John 10:30

WE DO NOT BAPTIZE INFANTS: We encourage baby dedications, but water baptism is reserved for professing believers.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Romans 10:9-10

CHAPTER THIRTY

Witchcraft, Divination, And Necromancy

“Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I [am] the LORD your God.” Leviticus 19:31

THE BIBLE SAYS...

LEVITICUS 20:6

“And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.”

GALATIANS 5:19-21

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

DEUTERONOMY 18:10-12

“There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar

spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.”

2 CORINTHIANS 11:14

“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”

THEREFORE...

WE BELIEVE THAT ALL FORMS OF WITCHCRAFT ARE AN ABOMINATION TO GOD: We reject the works of darkness.

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” Ephesians 5:11

WE RECOGNIZE THAT THESE PRACTICES ARE NOT OF GOD: Witchcraft is satanic.

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;” 1 Timothy 4:1

WE UNDERSTAND THAT SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE IS TO BE SOUGHT FROM GOD ALONE: Seeking guidance from satanic sources brings death.

“So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, [even] against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking [counsel] of [one that had] a familiar spirit, to enquire [of it]; And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.” 1 Chronicles 10:13-14

WE BELIEVE THAT FALSE PROPHETS AND THEIR PROPHECIES ARE TO BE REJECTED: They are not of God.

“Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.”

Jeremiah 14:14

WE BELIEVE THAT USING A “DIVINING ROD” OR WHAT IS COMMONLY CALLED “WATER-WITCHING” IS NOT OF GOD: We reject this practice, and understand it to be superstitious dabbling in the occult.

“For there shall be no more any vain vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel.” Ezekiel 12:24

WE RECOGNIZE THAT ATTEMPTING TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE DEAD IS FORBIDDEN BY GOD: Necromancy is a foolish and harmful sin.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” 1 John 4:1

WE KNOW THAT ATTEMPTING TO COMMUNICATE WITH MARY OR THE SAINTS IS WRONG: This practice is not true prayer. It is a form of necromancy.

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

1 Timothy 2:5, 6

**WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO
BE MADE RIGHT WITH GOD AND FIT FOR
HEAVEN:** True repentance and faith in Jesus Christ is the
only way!

*“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life:
no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”*

John 14:6