

Anchor Baptist Church  
exists to glorify God by  
making disciples,  
developing leaders,  
and planting churches  
globally





Dear Friend,

Thanks for your interest in Anchor Baptist Church! I'm very encouraged to see God building our church family. Please take the time to review the contents of this booklet for prospective members.

We desire that Anchor Baptist Church would truly be what Jesus intends for a church to be. We're committed to faithfully seeking to obey His Word and earnestly seeking to show His love.

I hope this guide will help you see our beliefs and goals as a church family. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have as you read through the booklet.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack Lamb". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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# THE PURPOSE OF MEMBERSHIP

“Why should I join the church?” It’s a valid question. Sometimes it’s said with genuine curiosity–“So explain to me what membership is all about.” Other times it’s said with a tinge of suspicion–“So tell me again, why do you think I should become a member?”–as if joining the church automatically signed you up to tithe by direct deposit.

I think for many people membership sounds stiff, something you have at your bank or the country club, but too formal for the church. Even if it’s agreed that Christianity is not a lone ranger religion, that we need community and fellowship with other Christians, we still bristle at the thought of officially joining a church. Well, believe it or not, membership matters. Here’s five good reasons why Christians should join a church.

**1. In joining a church you make your commitment to Christ and His people public.** Membership is one way to raise the flag of faith. You state before God and others that you are part of this local body of believers.

How many of Paul’s letters were written to individuals? Only a handful, and these were mostly to pastors. The majority of his letters were written to a local body of believers. We see the same thing in Revelation. Jesus spoke to individual congregations in places like Smyrna, Sardis, and Laodicea. The New Testament knows no Christians floating around in “just me and Jesus” land. Believers belong to churches.

**2. Making a Church commitment makes a powerful statement in a low-commitment culture.** Most bowling leagues require more of their members than most churches. The church is often a sad reflection of its culture. Ours is a consumer culture where everything is tailored to meet our needs and satisfy our preferences. When those needs aren’t met, we can always move on to the next product, or job, or spouse.

Joining a church in such an environment makes a counter-cultural statement. It says “I am committed to this group of people and they are committed to me. I am here to give, more than get.”

**3. Church membership keeps us accountable to each other.** When we join a church we are offering ourselves to one another to be encouraged, rebuked, corrected, and served. We are placing

ourselves under leaders and submitting to their authority (Heb. 13:7). We are saying, “I am here to stay. I want to help you grow in godliness. Will you help me to do the same?”

Church membership is an opportunity to grasp hold of each other in responsibility and love. By identifying ourselves with a particular church, we let the pastors and other members of that church know that we intend to be committed in attendance, giving, prayer, and service. We assure the church of our commitment to Christ in serving with them, and we call for their commitment to serve and encourage as well.

**4. Joining the church will help your pastor be a more faithful shepherd.** Hebrews 13:17 says “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves.” That’s your part. Here’s the pastor’s: “for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.” Pastor takes seriously his responsibility before God to watch over your souls.

**5. Joining the church gives you an opportunity to make promises.** When you become a member here, you make promises to pray, give, serve, attend worship, accept the spiritual guidance of the church, obey its teachings, and seek the things that make for unity, purity, and peace. We ought not to make these promises lightly. We must hold each other to them. If you don’t join the church, you may miss an opportunity to publicly make these promises, and in so doing, invite the pastor and the rest of the body to hold you to these promises—which would be missing out on great spiritual benefit, for you and for us.

Think about why membership might matter more than you thought. And if you are looking to make a counter-cultural commitment and invite more accountability and responsibility into your life, why not join a church?

# **THE PROCESS OF MEMBERSHIP**

So, you're ready to join? Here's what you need to do:

## **Review the rest of this Guide**

You'll find our key convictions, member's covenant, and statement of faith at the back of this booklet. It's not necessary that you have a theology degree to join, but you need to be familiar with the teaching of our church. In the next few pages you can become familiar with the basic requirements for membership.

## **Schedule a meeting with Pastor**

Don't worry! There's no quiz over the statement of faith. Pastor Lamb would love to get to know you better and hear how you became a Christian and when you were baptized. If you need to be scripturally baptized, Pastor can help you plan for baptism at an upcoming service. He'll also answer any questions you have about the church. Use a "Connection Card" or call the church office to set up a meeting.

## **Presentation to the Church**

After meeting with pastor, you'll be presented to the church family and voted in by the members of the church at the next member's meeting.

We would be very happy to welcome you to come grow with us at Anchor Baptist Church as part of our family!



# THE PREREQUISITES OF MEMBERSHIP

The requirements for membership are basically a clear testimony of salvation and a valid baptism.

## You must believe the Gospel

Here's a brief overview of the gospel message:

### MAN'S PROBLEM

The Bible explains that God created us and sustains us and, therefore, has the right to absolute authority in our lives. Out of His love, He made us in His image so that we would seek to honor Him as the true Creator (see Acts 17:24-27).

Instead of seeking God, man rebels against God's authority and chooses to live his own way. The Bible says that failure to recognize God's authority is sin. The penalty for our sin is death—not just physical death, for all men die—but eternal separation from God in hell. Man rightly deserves this judgment for failing to honor his Creator.

“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).

### GOD'S SOLUTION

“When we were yet without strength...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 5:6, 8-9).

God's great love and mercy can extend a pardon to sinners. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for sinners and pay sin's penalty. In His death, Jesus endured the punishment that sinners deserve and therefore satisfied the wrath of God, making it possible for sinners to be made right with Him and receive eternal life.

Christ rose from the dead and will one day judge all men: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:9-11)

## OUR RESPONSE

God commands you to repent from your rebellion and to trust in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. You must admit that you are a rebel against God, and rely only on Jesus' death to pay for your sins.

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (John 3:36).

In order to become a member you must have turned to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

### **You must be Baptized**

If you have accepted Christ and have not been baptized in a church of like faith, you will be asked to publicly identify with Christ and Anchor Baptist Church by being baptized into our membership. This is also true if your mode of baptism was other than immersion, or if the doctrine was different in your previous church. Anchor Baptist Church is committed to maintaining a doctrinal unity in this day of confusion and doctrinal compromise. If you believe that God has led you to this church, and if you understand that baptism is simply a testimony of your faith, we invite you to identify with Christ and the Anchor Baptist Church by being baptized as the Lord leads you.

If you have already accepted Christ and have been baptized in a church whose doctrine is in agreement with Anchor Baptist Church, you may present your testimony and be voted into membership by your transfer of membership from another church.

# **THE PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP**

Being a part of our church family comes with certain privileges. While anyone is welcome to attend the meetings of our church, certain activities are only for members of the church.

## **Observing the Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes. We plan to observe the Lord's Supper six times per year at our member's meeting.

## **Pastoral Care**

Pastors have the specific responsibility to watch over members of the church. God holds them accountable for this task (Hebrews 13:17). While we want to minister to everyone, members are the primary recipients of this spiritual care. Your pastor prays for you and wants to help you in any way he can.

## **Serving in Ministries**

It's good to commit yourself to love and serve others. You will grow as a Christian as you commit to encourage, build up, strengthen, serve, rebuke, and pray for other Christians. All teaching and leadership roles in the church can only be filled by members. We do this to ensure that everyone serving in these roles is committed to our beliefs and our church.

## **Voting on Church Business**

Every two months, we have a special member's meeting outside of our normal service schedule (typically on Sunday at 4 pm). This meeting is to observe the Lord's Supper, renew our commitment to Christ and one another, and handle church business. The congregation will vote on the following issues as necessary:

- Receiving and removing members
- Electing officers (pastor, deacons, etc)
- Approving an annual budget and major expenditures
- Sending and supporting missionaries
- Making changes to the church constitution

## APPENDIX A

# KEY CONVICTIONS

### **The Bible is God’s Word**

We want God’s Word to permeate all of life and ministry. The Bible will take priority and prominence in our services since it has the power to change lives. Preaching will be focused on understanding the message of Scripture and applying it to our lives. The Scripture is the source of our authority. You will not find visions, revelations, tongues, and other “messages from God” that are outside of the Bible at Anchor Baptist.

### **The Gospel Saves from Sin**

We gather together because the Gospel has changed our lives. By grace, we have been delivered from a lifestyle of sin and taught to live in holiness (Titus 2:11-12). Therefore, we are committed to personal and corporate purity through accountability, discipline, and separation from sin and false teaching. We want to be intentional in living and proclaiming the Gospel in our community and around the world.

### **God is the Focus of our Worship**

We intend to lift up Jesus Christ in all that we do. He is our great hope & our King. We want to recognize His authority and humbly seek to follow His will. God made us to magnify His greatness and live for His pleasure. Our worship and music are designed to please the Lord and draw attention to Him not to men.

### **Personal Discipleship is for Every Christian**

To be a disciple means to be a disciple-maker. With the help of God’s Spirit, we lovingly commit ourselves to helping other believers mature in Christlikeness. Through scriptural instruction and personal example, we want to provoke one another to love and good works.

## **Planting Churches Fulfills the Great Commission**

The church is God's plan to reach a lost and dying world; therefore we will invest in reproducing church-planting churches in strategic communities throughout the Los Angeles County. We realize that in order to accomplish this, we need leaders who train leaders (2 Tim. 2:2). For that reason we are praying for God to raise up laborers. We will not hoard people or resources but will gladly give to fulfill the Great Commission. We place a priority on people above programs or facilities; therefore our investment of resources will reflect that.

## **Love and Generosity Characterize Genuine Faith**

Because God has been merciful to us, we will not confine our love to "lovely" people, but will rather strive to show mercy to all types, all colors, all backgrounds, throughout the world. We long to be like the Macedonians who, though afflicted and impoverished, overflowed their generosity to bless others (2 Corinthians 8:1-2). And we believe a lifestyle of radical generosity proclaims to the world that Jesus is the most valuable treasure in the universe.

## APPENDIX B

# MEMBER'S COVENANT

A covenant is what we would use to describe the vows between a husband and his wife, and between God and his people. We ask our members to sign a covenant so that we know that prospective members understand what it means to be a part of the church. The member covenant is not a legal document or some sort of cultic rite. It is an affirmation, an agreement, and a source of accountability for both the church and its individual members.

### **We are Committed to the Gospel**

We believe that Jesus Christ made it possible for all mankind to be saved. We affirm that there is no other way to heaven (John 14:6). We affirm that the gospel of Jesus Christ is God's means of bringing salvation, that sinners are commanded to believe the gospel, and that the church is commissioned to preach and teach the gospel to all nations. We affirm that salvation comes to those who truly believe and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

### **We are Committed to Growth**

We will maintain a close relationship with the Lord Jesus through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship, and practice of spiritual disciplines. Our relationship will be evident through our participation in church meetings, service, and a life that glorifies Jesus (Ps. 105:1-2; Ps. 119:97; Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:23-25; 2 Peter 1:3).

We will steward the resources God has given us, including our time, talents, and treasure (Prov. 3:9-10; Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 5:22-26; Eph. 4:1-16; 5:15-18). This includes regular financial giving, service, and participation that is sacrificial, cheerful, and voluntary (Rom. 12:1-8; 2 Cor. 8-9; 12:7-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

We agree, by God's grace, to walk in holiness as an act of worship to Jesus Christ, who has saved us from our sins that we could live a new life (2 Cor. 5:17); we will practice complete chastity before marriage and complete fidelity in heterosexual and monogamous marriage by abstaining from practices such as cohabitation, homosexuality, pornography, and fornication (Job 31:1; Prov. 5; Rom. 13:12-14; 1 Cor. 6:9-7:16; Heb. 13:4); we will refrain from illegal drug use, drunkenness, and other sinful behavior as the Bible and our consciences dictate (1 Cor. 8:7; Gal. 5:19-21). Should we sin in such a

manner, we agree to confess our sins to Christian brothers or sisters and seek help to put our sin to death (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5; 1 John 1:6–10).

### **We are Committed to the Guidelines of Scripture**

We have read and understood the doctrinal statement and will not be divisive to its teaching. We also understand the importance of submission to church leadership and will be diligent to preserve unity and peace (Eph. 4:1–3; Heb. 13:7, 17). We covenant to submit to the authority of Scripture as the final rule on all issues (Ps. 119; 2 Tim. 3:16–17).

### **We are Committed to the Goal**

Our mission is to glorify God by making disciples, developing leaders, and planting churches globally. We commit to participate in this mission as a diligent, faithful disciple of Jesus.

We understand that this covenant obligates us to the members of Anchor Baptist. We accept the responsibility to notify Anchor Baptist leadership if at any time we can no longer commit to this covenant, or if we have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding Anchor Baptist Church.

(You will need to sign a copy of this covenant prior to being presented to the church for membership).

## APPENDIX C

# STATEMENT OF FAITH

“...to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us...” — Luke 1:1

### Concerning the Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. By *inspiration* we mean that all books of the Bible were written down by holy men of God as they were supernaturally moved by the Holy Ghost, in a definite yet inexplicable way so as to record the very words and sense of God though conveyed within their own literary styles; that such writings are free from all error and from all omission as no other writings have been or ever will be; that the Bible does not merely contain the Word of God, but is the very Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning.

We believe that the Texts which are the closest to the original autographs of the Bible are the Traditional Masoretic Hebrew Text for the Old Testament, and the traditional Greek Text for the New Testament underlying the King James Version (as found in “The Greek Text Underlying The English Authorized Version of 1611”). We believe that the King James Version (or Authorized Version) of the English Bible is a true, faithful, and accurate translation of these two providentially preserved Texts, which in our time has no equal among all of the other English Translations. The King James Version shall be the official English translation used by the church.

*2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21*

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man’s responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose.



Three of these dispensations—the law, the church, and the kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture.

*Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev.20:2-6*

## **Concerning the Godhead**

We believe the Scriptures teach that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the Maker and supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

*Deut. 6:4; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 14:10, 26; 1 John 5:7*

We believe the Scriptures teach that God the Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the events of human history according to the purposes of His grace; that He is unchangeable in holiness, love and truth; that He is Father in truth to those who are the children of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and fatherly in His attitude toward all men, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance and receive His gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

*Genesis 1:1; 17:1; Exodus 3:14; 15:11; 20:2-3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; John 4:24; Psalm 83:18; 90:2; 147:5; Jeremiah 10:10; Revelation 4:11; 1 Timothy 1:17; Romans 11:33; Mark 12:30; Matthew 28:19; 1 John 5:7; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 2:18; 1 John 1:5; 4:8; Hebrews 12:29; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Isaiah 6:3; 1 Peter 1:15.*

## **Concerning the Person and Work of Christ**

We believe the Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with God the Father and God the Holy Ghost, the second Person of the Trinity; that He was born into this world of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of a woman, and that He is both perfect God and perfect man; that He lived a sinless life, honoring the divine Law by His personal obedience, yet identifying Himself

completely with mankind; that He died a substitutionary death on the cross securing redemption through His shed blood for sinners; that He supernaturally rose again the third day with a glorified body, was seen of many, and ascended into the heavens to be exalted and seated at the right hand of the Father where He is the Head over His churches, the Mediator and Advocate with God the Father for all believers; and that He is supernaturally coming again to this world to reign personally and visibly over the earth.

*Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Mark 1:1; John 1:1-3,14; Psalm 2:7; Hebrews 1:8; Galatians 4:4; 1 John 5:20; 1 Corinthians 15:47; Isaiah 9:6,7; John 8:58; 10:30; 17:5; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26; Romans 9:5; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 13:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:24-28; Revelation 1:8; Hebrews 10:12; 1 John 2:1; Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Colossians 1:18.*

## **Concerning the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal, and co-active with God the Father and God the Son, the third Person of the Trinity; that He was active in the creation of the universe; that He moved holy men of God to write the Bible; that He is the present representative of the Godhead on this earth, and in His relationship to the unbelieving world restrains evil, convicting men of sin, of righteousness, and judgment; that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony, and is the Agent of the new birth, regenerating those who by faith believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; that He seals, fills, guides, teaches, sanctifies, and comforts all believers.

*John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:8-11, 13; Acts 5:3-4, 30-32; 11:16; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11; 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 9:14; Luke 1:35; 3:16; 24:49; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; John 1:33, 3:5, 6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:7, 13; Romans 8:9, 14, 16, 26, 27, 12:12-14; 1 Peter 1:2.*

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry.

*Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12*

We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues

was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit, and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing.

*1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22*

## **Concerning the Devil**

We believe that Satan was once holy, and enjoyed heavenly honor; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and His Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy; the lord of the Antichrist, and the author of all the powers of darkness – destined however to final defeat at the hands of God's own Son, and to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels. He can be resisted and overcome.

*Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:14-17; Rev. 12:9; Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Eph. 2:2; John 14:30; I Thess. 3:5; Matt. 4:1-3; 1 Pet5:5-8; 1 John 3:8; Matt. 13:39; Luke 22:3-4; Rev. 12:10; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Mark 31:21-22; I John 4:3; 2 John 7; 1 John 2:22; Rev. 13:13-14; 2 Thess. 2:8-11; Rev. 19:11, 16, 20; Rev. 12:7-9; Rev. 20:1-3; Rev. 20:10; Matt. 25:41; James 4:7; 1 Jn. 2:13; Rev. 12:11*

## **Concerning Mankind**

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition.

*Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19*

The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image and is mindful of him, and in that Christ died for man; therefore every individual possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Psalm 8:4-9; Colossians 3:9-11*

The human will is free and self-controlled, having power to yield to the influence of the truth and the Spirit and live, or to resist them and perish.

*Revelation 22:17; Romans 10:3; Romans 6:16*

## **Concerning Creation**

We believe the Biblical account of the creation of the physical universe, angels, and man; that this account is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process; that man was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race.

*Genesis 1; 2; Colossians 1:16, 17; John 1:3.*

## **Concerning Marriage**

In light of God's creative design, we believe that the Bible teaches that marriage is the joining of one man and one woman and that sexual intimacy is to be expressed only within the bounds of a Biblically defined marriage. Any other form of marriage or sexual intimacy is immoral and a perversion of God's gracious will. The marriage ceremony is a religious ceremony designed to solemnize a man and a woman's commitment to one another before God and man.

*Genesis 2:18, 24, 25; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:24-29; 7:2; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; 7:1-5; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4.*

## **Concerning Salvation**

Salvation is by the grace of God alone, which means that it is a free gift that is neither merited nor secured in whole or in part by any virtue or work of man or by any religious duty or sacrament. The gift of God's grace was purchased by Jesus Christ alone, by His blood and death on Calvary. The sinner receives God's salvation by repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Though salvation is by God's grace alone through faith, it results in a changed life; salvation

is not by works but it is unto works. The faith for salvation comes by hearing God's Word. Men must hear the gospel in order to be saved.

*John 1:11-13; 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 15:11; 20:21; Romans 10:9-10,13, 17; Ephesians 1:7; 1:12-14; 2:8-10; Titus 3:3-8; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 4:10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4*

We believe the Scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth except his own inherent depravity and voluntary refusal to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

*1 Thessalonians 1:4; Colossians 3:12; 1 Peter 1:2; Titus 1:1; Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 55:1, 6, 7; Revelation 22:17; Romans 10:13; John 6:37; Acts 2:38; John 3:15-16; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Ephesians 2:4-5; John 15:40; John 3:18, 36.*

We believe the Scriptures teach that the Son of God, by appointment with the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin; that by His death on the cross made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by his death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinners' place, the Just dying for the unjust; that having risen from the dead He is now enthroned in Heaven and, uniting in His wonderful Person the most tender sympathies with divine perfections, He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior.

*Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24,25; John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:14; Isaiah 53:4-7; 1 John 4:10; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 20; 2 Corinthians 5:21; John 10:18; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; Isaiah 53:11-12; Hebrews 7:25; 9:12-15; 12:2; 1 John 2:2.*

We believe the Scriptures teach that regeneration, or the "new birth," is that change wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, by which a new nature and a spiritual life, not before possessed, are imparted, and the person becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus; that a holy disposition is given to the mind, the will subdued, the dominion of sin broken, and the affections changed from a love of sin and self, to a love of holiness and God; that the change is instantaneous and not a process, effected not by culture or character, nor by the will of man, but solely through the power of God through the Word of God, in a manner incomprehensible to reason.

*John 3:3, 6; 1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 2:29; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 1:13; 2:13; Romans 6:13; John 1:12-13; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5-7.*

We believe the Scriptures teach that repentance is a personal act, prompted by the Spirit of God; and consists in a godly sorrow over sin, as offensive to God and ruinous to the soul; that it is accompanied with great humiliation in view of one's sin and guilt, together with prayer for pardon; also by sincere hatred of sin, and a persistent turning away from, and abandonment of, all that is evil and unholy.

*Matthew 3:1, 2; 4:17; Mark 1:15; Acts 3:19; 5:31; 17:30; 20:21; Luke 18:13; 24:47; 2 Corinthians 7:2; Romans 2:5; Isaiah 55:7; Psalm 51:1-4, 7.*

We believe the Scriptures teach that faith, inseparably united with repentance, is a solemn obligation and a grace wrought in our soul by the quickening Spirit of God; that it is an assent of the mind and a consent of the heart, consisting mainly of belief and trust, wherein the testimony of God is accepted and believed as true, while Christ is unreservedly received for salvation; that through it the believer is brought into vital relations with God, as seeing Him Who is invisible, freely justified; that it reveals Christ to the soul as a willing and sufficient Savior, and commits the heart and life to Him.

*Acts 16:31; Romans 1:17; 3:22; 5:1; 10:3, 9-13; Hebrews 11:1, 6; James 2:23; Jeremiah 17:7; Psalm 34:22; 125:1; 2 Corinthians 5:7.*

We believe the Scriptures teach that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe on Him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith His perfect righteousness is imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needed for time and eternity.

*John 1:16; Ephesians 3:8; Acts 13:39; Isaiah 3:11-12; Romans 5:1-3, 9, 11; 8:1; Zechariah 13:1; Matthew 9:6; Acts 10:43; Matthew 6:33; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; 1 Timothy 4:8; Isaiah 53:11.*

## **Concerning the Believer's Security**

We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. We believe that eternal life is the present possession of every believer.

*John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1;38-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; 1 Pet. 1:4-5*

We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh.

*Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15*

## **Concerning Sanctification**

We believe that sanctification is presented in three phases in Scripture, past, present, and future: that the believer has been sanctified in Christ; that he is being progressively sanctified through the working of the indwelling Spirit, and that he will be completely sanctified at resurrection; that there is no complete eradication of the old nature in progressive sanctification during this present life.

*John 17:17; Romans 1:17; 6:1-18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; Ephesians 4:15; 5:26-27; Philippians 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; Hebrews 10:10; 1 Pet. 1:15-16*

## **Concerning the Church**

A church is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; and that its officers are pastors or elders and deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures.

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ founded His church prior to Pentecost, and He guaranteed the perpetuity of immersionist assemblies by promising to be with those who carry out the Great Commission, until the end of the age.

The true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission: first, to make individual disciples; second, baptize and build up the

church; third, to teach and instruct as He commanded.

The church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations. The one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; and that on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

*Matt. 16:15-18; 18:15-18; Acts 13:1-4; 14:27; 15:19-31; 20:17, 28-32; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Tim. 3:1-3; 1 Pet. 5:1-4*

## **Concerning Church Government**

Each church is autonomous (self-governing, self-disciplining, self-supporting, self-propagating) and stands on its own feet under its one Head Jesus Christ, which is what we see in Acts and the Epistles. Its officers are pastors (also called elders and bishops) and deacons. Pastors and deacons must be males with holy lives according the standards of the New Testament. Their lifestyles are held to a higher standard in order to be examples to the assembly and the world. We believe that divorce disqualifies a man from the office of pastor or deacon.

Pastors oversee the ministry and resources of the church. Pastors shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. Deacons care for the temporal needs of members, handle matters of benevolence, and encourage and support the ministry of the pastors.

*Matt. 18:15-18; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Peter 5:1-4*

## **Concerning Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

We believe that Christian baptism is the single immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our identification with the crucified, buried and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life; that baptism is to be



performed under the authority of the local church; and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He come by members of the church. We believe that the Biblical order of the ordinances is baptism first and then the Lord's Supper.

*Acts 8:36, 38, 39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41, 42.*

## **Concerning Heresy and False Teachers**

We believe that the Bible requires separation from all forms of heresy and ecclesiastical apostasy. We are commanded to try them, mark them, rebuke them, have no fellowship with them, withdraw ourselves, receive them not, have no company with them, reject them, and separate ourselves from them. The Bible teaches that the course of the church age is characterized by increasing apostasy.

*Rom. 16:17; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 1 Thess. 3:6; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:5; Titus 3:10-11; 2 John 10-11; Rev. 18:4; 2 Tim. 3:1-4:6*

## **Concerning Civil Government**

We believe the Scriptures teach that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good of human society; that all those in authority are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except only in things opposed to the revealed will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the rulers of the earth; that civil rulers have no rights or control over, or interference with, religious matters; that no ecclesiastical group or religious denomination or organization should be preferred above another by the State; that the State should not impose taxes for the support of any form of religion, and that churches and religious organizations should receive no help from the State, except protection and full freedom in the pursuit of spiritual ends; and that the requiring of an implicit faith and absolute blind obedience destroys liberty of conscience and reason.

*Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13, 14, 17; Matthew 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Timothy 2:1-8; Acts 5:29; Matthew 10:28; Daniel 3:15-18; 6:7, 10; Acts 4:18-20; Matthew 23:10;*

*Romans 14:4; Revelation 19:14; Psalm 72:11; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21-22; Acts 23:5; Philippians 2:10-11.*

## **Concerning Future Events**

We believe the Scriptures teach that at death the spirit of the believer passes instantly into the presence of Christ and dwells there in conscious joy until the resurrection of the body when Christ comes for His own (Mk. 9:4; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:6; Rev. 6:9-11). At death, the spirit of the unbeliever descends immediately into Hell to await the resurrection of the wicked into judgment; there the conscious soul is tormented in fire (Mk. 9:43-49; Lk. 16:22-31). The blessed hope of the believer is the personal, pre-tribulational, pre-millennial appearance of Christ to rapture the church age saints away before the Tribulation (1 Cor. 15:51-57; 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 4:13-18; 5:1-9; Titus 2:13). This coming of Christ is imminent (Mat. 24:42-44; 25:13; 1 Thess. 5:2-4). God's righteous judgments will then be poured out on an unbelieving world during the Tribulation (Dan. 12:1; Joel 2:2; Mat. 24:21; Rev. 6-18). This is the seventieth week of Daniel — Dan. 9:24-27). The climax of this fearful era will be the physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth in great glory to establish the Davidic Kingdom (Mat. 16:27; 24:30-31; 26:64; Rev. 1:7; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:11-21; 20:1-4). Israel will be saved and restored completely to their land and kingdom (Isaiah 2:2-5; 60; 66:20-24; Joel 3:1-2; 18-21; Zech. 14; Rom. 11:25-29). Satan will be bound, and the curse will be lifted from the physical creation (Isaiah 11:6-9; Rev. 20:1-4). Following the Millennium, Satan will be loosed from the bottomless pit, will lead one last unsuccessful rebellion, and will be cast into the lake of fire to be tormented forever and ever (Rev. 20:7-10). This will be followed by the Great White Throne judgment of the unsaved dead (Rev. 20:11-15) and the establishment of the New Heavens and the New Earth (Rev. 21-22; 2 Pet. 3:10-13).



