



# Midland Bible Church

## Core Beliefs

We believe that the Bible is the grand story of redemption, the history of how God has dealt with men and women as the result of their sin, to redeem them and restore them to a right relationship with Him. The Bible presents this message of God's grace, His redemption of mankind and all of creation in a way that we can understand, see, and believe.

When we talk about biblical doctrines, we are referring to truths that we find in the Bible about this great story of redemption, as we best understand them. The following Core Beliefs are the essence of historic Christianity and summary of the doctrine of Midland Bible Church. The subsequent doctrinal statement is divided into two tiers which do not reflect so much our conviction of the truth of the statements found in each, but rather those truths that are essential as Christianity and those truths that are distinctives of Midland Bible Church's expression of faith and practice. Teaching at Midland Bible Church will be consistent with this doctrinal statement; however, it is not our conviction that everyone who fellowships with us must adhere to every detail of doctrine.

## God

There is one eternally existing God who has three distinct persons: God the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, God the Son, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, and God the Holy Spirit, the "helper" who indwells and empowers believers. God is perfect in love, power, holiness, goodness, knowledge, wisdom, justice, and mercy. He is unchangeable and therefore is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. God is the creator of all that exists, both visible and invisible, and is therefore worthy of all glory and praise.

## Jesus Christ

Jesus of Nazareth is fully God and fully Man. He is the Divine Word. As the Son, He was in the beginning before the world was made. He was sent by God the Father as the divine agent to redeem the world. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. He was born of a virgin in Bethlehem. As a human, He was subject to all bodily afflictions and spiritual

temptations known to man. He lived a sinless life. Jesus was crucified, and His death paid for the sins of the world. Three days later He arose and defeated death. He ascended into Heaven where He now intercedes on behalf of every believer before the throne of God. He is head of the Church and will return one day to rule on earth.

## Creation

In His wisdom, power, and love God created all things visible and invisible. There is nothing that exists that God did not create. He made and declared all things in His creation “very good.” God created mankind in His own image, gracing unto mankind divine attributes such as creativity, reason, freedom, morality, and love. God engendered mankind as male and female, appointing them to have dominion over creation and the responsibility to steward it in partnership with God. The first humans, Adam and Eve, were created without sin. When Adam and Eve chose not to obey God, their sin caused them to fall out of harmony with God and fractured all of creation. All humanity is born with a sin nature.

## The Bible

God has revealed Himself to us, not only through Jesus and creation, but also through His holy Scriptures, which are trustworthy and true. The Bible is the complete and inerrant Word of God. It communicates His character, will, and story of redemption. It is the ultimate authority by which all human wisdom is measured and speaks truth to our current reality.

## Redemption

Jesus Christ came to reconcile us with God because we all have sinned. He lived a life without sin and willingly died on the cross to pay the death penalty for our sins. God raised Jesus from the dead. Now, by grace, God offers the free gift of eternal life and the indwelling of His Holy Spirit to all who believe in His name as their Savior. This free gift of eternal life, once accepted, can never be lost. Redemption is found in Christ alone.

# The Church

The church is the visible Body of Christ. It is made up of all believers who have trusted in Jesus, and Jesus Christ Himself is the Head. The Holy Spirit gifts, calls, and equips each believer to love God, love others, bring others to Christ and make disciples by teaching them to obey Jesus' commands.

# Resurrection

As believers in Christ, our hope is in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Though our earthly bodies will fail and return to dust, the spirit of everyone who believes in Him will never die. At the moment of a believer's bodily death he is reunited and forever in the presence of God. Moreover, every believer will be given a new body and will dwell with God on a newly created earth, where there will be no more pain, death, or sorrow.

# MBC Doctrinal Statement

## Essential Truths

### God

We believe in the one living and true God, eternally existing in perfect unity as three equally and fully divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each member of the Godhead, while executing distinct but complementary roles in redemptive history, has precisely the same nature, attributes, and being, and is equally worthy of the same glory, honor and obedience. The triune God is the creator of all that exists and is therefore worthy of all glory and praise: the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, the Son, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, the Holy Spirit, the “helper” who indwells and empowers Believers.

*(Ephesians 4:6; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 5:3-4; I Peter 1:2-12; John 1:1-4; 10:30; 14:26; 15:26; 17:3, 23-30; , Galatians 4:6, Colosians 1:16, Jeremiah 10:12, Romans 11:33, I John 4:14, James 1:17, Hebrews 13:8)*

### Jesus Christ

We believe that God sent His eternal Son, Jesus Christ, into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of a virgin and was fully human yet without sin.

*(Luke 1:30-35; 2:40; John 1:1-2, 14, 18; 3:16; Hebrews 4:15; 7:25; 10:1-13; Mark 10:45; ; Philippians 2:5-8, Ephesians 1:22-23; I John 2:1, II Timothy 4:1; Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 20:11-15; I Corinthians 3:11-15; II Corinthians 5:10)*

We believe that on the human side He became and remained a perfect, sinless man throughout His life. Yet, He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time fully God and fully man.

*(Luke 2:40; John 1:1-2; Philippians 2:5-8; II Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 3:5)*

We believe that on ascending from the earth, Jesus entered into heaven and sat at the right hand of God. His position is a final assurance to us that His sacrifice of Himself has accomplished our forgiveness.

*(Hebrews 9:24; 10:1-18)*

We believe that He became head over all things in the Church, which is His body, and in this ministry He does not cease to intercede and advocate for each member of that body.

*(Ephesians 1:22-23; Hebrews 7:25; I John 2:1)*

We believe that He will return to earth to receive His own to Himself. Every believer will be resurrected and receive a new body. He will judge the living and the dead. Unbelievers will be condemned to the lake of fire. Believers will have their deeds judged to receive rewards for works done during their life, whether good or bad.

*(II Timothy 4:1; Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 20:11-15; I Corinthians 3:11-15; II Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 9:28)*

## The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, though omnipresent for all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost, according to the divine promise. He dwells in every believer, and by His baptism unites all believers into Christ. The Holy Spirit is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. We believe that He never leaves the church, or the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ. He seeks to enthrall believers with Jesus rather than with themselves or their own experiences. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts for us to employ in the Body, and prays on our behalf, even when we don't know how to pray.

*(John 16:5-15; Acts 2:1-41; Romans 6:3; 8:1-30; I Corinthians 6:11, 19; 12:4-13; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:7-8; 5:23; Genesis 1:2;; ; II Corinthians 5:17; John 15:1-9; Galatians 5:16-25; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 4:14-16)*

# Creation

We believe that God created mankind in His own Image. Every human life (born and unborn) is created in the image of God (Imago Dei), every life is sacred and graced with profound dignity. Humans are called to represent and reflect God in the world.

*(Genesis 1:26-28; 2:17; 3; 6:5; 9:5-6; Psalm 100:3; Psalm 139:13-18; Psalm 8:1-9; Romans 1:18-20; 2:14-15; 3:10-19, 23; 8:6-7, 29; Colossians 3:10; II Corinthians 3:18; Exodus 35:35; Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Joshua 24:15; I Chronicles 22:15-16; Psalm 33:3; Psalm 149:3-4; Isaiah 1:18; Daniel 4:31-34; Matthew 5:46-47; 7:9-11; Acts 17:17; Psalms 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Ephesians 2:1-3; I Timothy 5:6; I John 3:8)*

We believe that God shares some of His divine attributes with every person. Among these divine attributes are creativity, reason, freedom, morality, and love.

*(Exodus 35:35; Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Joshua 24:15; I Chronicles 22:15-16; Psalm 8:1-9; Psalm 33:3; Psalm 149:3-4; Isaiah 1:18; Daniel 4:31-34; Matthew 5:46-47; 7:9-11; Acts 17:17; Romans 1:18-20; 2:14-15)*

We believe that Man broke relationship with God when he sinned at the Fall. As a consequence of sin, death entered the world, and Adam was alienated from God. Thus, man died in his trespasses and sins and became subject to the power of the devil. We believe that this spiritual death has been transmitted to the entire human race. Every person is born into the world with a nature bent towards sin and death. Everyone is essentially and unchangeably dead apart from Christ's grace. God's originally good Creation was distorted when Adam and Eve disobeyed the Creator.

*(Genesis 2:17; 3; 6:5; Psalms 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-19, 23; Ephesians 2:1-3; I John 3:8; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 2:14)*

# The Bible

We believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends to all parts of these writings--historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic--as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the original text is, therefore, without error.

*(II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21; Luke 24:44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; Romans 15:4; I Corinthians 2:13; 10:11; John 17:17, Hebrews 4:12)*

We believe that all the Scriptures center on the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read or understood unless and until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction.

*(Mark 12:26, 36; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Romans 15:4; I Corinthians 2:13; 10:11; Hebrews 1:1-2)*

# Redemption

We believe that the new birth, redemption, of the believer comes only through faith in Christ. Repentance, as a change of mind, may be an important part of believing but is in no way in and of itself a separate and independent condition of salvation. There are no other acts, works, or deeds such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service that are to be added to believing as a condition of justification. We further believe that the complete submission of an individual to the authority of Christ, “Lordship”, is not a condition of receiving the free gift of justification by grace through faith alone. Rather, Lordship is an aspiration for the already saved as he grows in Christ.

*(John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; 8:30-32; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 1:16-17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; 11:6; 12:1-2; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:8-9)*

We believe also that our redemption has been accomplished by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our place. There is no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any

church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles that can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood or to the merit of the finished work accomplished for us by Him. He united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity.

*(Leviticus 17:11; Isaiah 64:6; Matthew 26:28; John 3:7-18; Romans 5:6-9; II Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; Philippians 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:18-19, 23)*

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one belongs to the everlasting family of God unless he or she is born again. No degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help a sinner to take even one step toward heaven. A new nature imparted from above, a new life imparted by the Holy Spirit through the Word is essential to being justified in the sight of God. Only those who are justified in God's sight by grace through faith become children of God.

*(John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; 8:30-32; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 1:16-17; 3:22-23, 26; 4:5; 5:6-9; 6:23; 10:4; 11:6; 12:1-2; Galatians 3:13, 22; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-9, Leviticus 17:11; Isaiah 64:6; Matthew 26:28; John 3:7-18; II Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:18-19, 23; II Peter 1:4)*

We believe that all believers, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the grounds of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the eternal covenants of God, and because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are justified in the sight of God, once saved shall be kept saved forever.

*(John 10:27-30; 14:16-17; Romans 8:29-39; Ephesians 1:3-14; 3:11; Hebrews 8:25; I John 2:2; Titus 3:5;)*

## The Church

We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church, which is the body and bride of Christ. The Church began at Pentecost and is distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such regardless of their membership or non-membership in the organized churches of earth. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age, whether Jews



or Gentiles, are baptized into, and thus become, one body that is Christ's. Having become members one of another, they are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all partisan or sectarian differences, and loving one another fervently with a pure heart.

*Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15; Hebrews 10:24-25; Galatians 3:27-29)*

## Resurrection

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious joy until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon spirit, soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory.

*(Philippians 1:23; II Corinthians 5:8; Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; I Corinthians 15: 20-22, 50-54, I Peter 1:3-5)*

# Distinctive Truths

## God

### The Holy Spirit

We believe that in this age, certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit. It is the duty of every Christian to understand these and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience. These ministries include the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the convicting of the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment; the regenerating of all believers; the indwelling, anointing and sealing of all who are saved, unto the day of redemption; the baptizing into the one body of Christ of all who are saved; and the continued filling for power, teaching and service of those among the saved who are yielding to Him and who are subject to His will.

*(John 3:6; 15:5; 16:7-11; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:30; 5:18; II Thessalonians 2:7; I John 2:20-27;)*

We believe that God, through the Spirit, heals in answer to believing prayer, with or without some means, in accord with His sovereign discretion and will. Healing cannot be claimed on the same unconditional basis of faith as salvation is claimed. The fact that God does not heal is not necessarily an indication of unbelief or of sin in a believer's life. We believe that the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence in the world will cease when Christ comes to receive His saints at the completion of the church age.

*(John 14:16-17; 16: 7-15; I Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:22; II Thessalonians 2:7)*

## Creation

We believe that the Triune God created all things: material and immaterial; natural and supernatural; living and not living. He created them *ex nihilo* or out of nothing. He formed and ordered all that He had made, giving each thing its own nature. The Creator made all things good, and His creation existed in perfect harmony. The whole of creation is now sustained and held together by God.

*(Genesis 1:1-30; Job 38:4; Psalm 89:11-12; John 1:1-3, 17; Colossians 1:16-17)*

We believe that God created mankind, both as male and female. Men and women are unique by God's design. They are complementary in their natures and equal in value. Self-conception as male or female is defined by God's holy purposes in creation and redemption as revealed in Scripture. A person's gender is the Creator's gift to him or her.

*(Genesis 1:27; 2:18, 21-24; Psalm 100:3)*

We believe that God gave mankind responsibility and dominion over His creation. Human beings are stewards of God's creation. Their dominion is derived from the Creator. People are to respect the nature of each thing the Creator has made. They are called to use their creativity to bring all of creation to its fullest fruition for the glory of God, and the flourishing of humanity. This begins with stewarding the identity that God gave to each of us, and it extends to the stewarding of every aspect of God's creation that He places under our dominion.

*(Genesis 1:28-30; 2:19-20; Psalm 8:1-9; Isaiah 64:8; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:17, 23-24)*

## Fallen & Unfallen Angels

We believe that God created a myriad of sinless, spiritual beings known as angels; that one, "Lucifer, son of the morning" - the highest in rank - sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan; that a great company of the angels followed him in his moral fall, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day."

*(Isaiah 14:12-17; Hebrews 12:22; Ezekiel 28:11-19; I Timothy 3:6; II Peter 2:4; Jude 6)*

We believe that Satan is the originator of sin, and that under the permission of God, he led Adam and Eve into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their descendants to the power of death; that he is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called god; and that he who in the beginning said, "I will be like the most High," in his warfare appears as an angel of light, even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and

systems of doctrine, which systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ and of salvation by grace through faith alone. We also believe that Satan will flee from us if we resist him. The devil has no power over us when we live in humble submission to God, for "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world."

*(Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-14; II Corinthians 4:3-4; 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:10-12; II Thessalonians 2:4; I Timothy 4:1-3; I Peter 5:6-9; I John 4:4; Hebrews 2:14; James 4:7-8)*

We believe that Satan was judged at the cross, though not then executed, and that he, a usurper, now rules as the "god of this world;" that at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years; and after the thousand years, he will be loosed for a little season, and then "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," where he "shall be tormented - day and night for ever and ever."

*(Colossians 2:13-15; Revelation 20:7-10)*

We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God and are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.

*(Luke 15:10; Ephesians 1:21; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:12)*

We believe that man was made lower than the angels and that in His incarnation Christ took for a little time this lower place that He might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels.

*(Hebrews 2:6-10; Psalm 8:4-6)*

## **The Bible**

## **The Dispensations**

We believe that the dispensations are different stewardships or economies by which God administers His purposes on the earth through man. Changes in the dispensational dealings of God with man depend upon changed conditions or situations which are the result of the judgments of God in response to the failures of man. Different administrative responsibilities of this character are manifest in the biblical record spanning the entire history of mankind. Three of these

dispensations, or rules of life, are the subject of extended revelation in the Scriptures: the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of grace, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom. Each of the dispensations is distinct and is not to be intermingled or overlapped, as each is chronologically successive.

*(Galatians 3:15-29)*

We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation nor different methods of administering the so-called Covenant of Grace. They are not in themselves dependent on covenant relationships but are ways of life and responsibility to God which test the submission of man to His revealed will during a particular time. We believe that when man trusts in his own efforts to gain the favor of God or salvation under any dispensational test, because of inherent sin, his failure to satisfy fully the just requirements of God is inevitable and his condemnation sure.

*(Romans 2:12-24; 3:9-20)*

We believe that according to the “eternal purpose” of God, salvation in the divine reckoning is always “by grace through faith” and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation.

*(Romans 3:21-26; 4:1-8; Galatians 3:5-9; Ephesians 3:2-9, 11; I Corinthians 9:17; Colossians 1:25; I Timothy 1:4)*

We believe that “without faith it is impossible to please God”, and that the principle of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints. However, we believe that it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God, and that it is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ. We believe also that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ; therefore, we believe that their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in Hebrews 11:1-40. We believe further that their faith, thus manifested, was counted unto them for righteousness.

*(Hebrews 11:6-7; John 1:29; I Peter 1:10-12; Romans 4:3 w/ Genesis 15:1; Romans 4:5-8)*

# Interpretation

We believe that God Himself establishes the authority of Holy Scripture and that authority is attested to by Jesus Christ, the Lord of the church. We believe that Christ is God and man in one Person; so, Scripture is God's Word in human language. The meaning expressed in each biblical text is single, definite, and fixed. The Bible must be interpreted according to its literal, grammatical and historical sense. This expresses the meaning of the writer, taking account of all figures of speech and literary forms found in the text. We further believe in the unity, harmony, and consistency of Scripture and declare that it is its own best interpreter.

*(Matthew 5:17; 7:12; Luke 24:44; I Peter 1:24-25)*

# Redemption

We believe that the Bible teaches redemption through multiple and progressive salvations with regard to sin. These are:

**Justification:** This is salvation from the eternal penalty of sin; salvation from hell to heaven. Since there is nothing that we can do to earn this, in our terminology, we call this "The Gift".

**Sanctification:** Once Justified, a believer is invited into salvation from the power of sin. In contrast to The Gift, this involves living by faith and abiding in the Spirit which is manifested in good works on our part. There will be consequences for our works, good and bad, both now and when we get to heaven. At Midland Bible Church, we refer to this as "The Prize".

**Glorification:** This is the ultimate freedom from sin. It happens after we are judged and receive our heavenly body.

# *Justification*

## Definition

In this salvation, the sinner is saved from eternal damnation and separation from God simply by believing in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We are justified in the sight of God through “The Gift” of God’s grace, received by faith. There is nothing we can do to earn it.

## Elements of Justification

### *Assurance*

We believe that all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures, may be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior. This assurance is not founded upon any sense of our own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word.

*(Luke 10:20; 22:32; II Corinthians 5:1, 6-8; II Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 10:22; I John 3:24; 5:13; John 3:14-16; Romans 4:1-4; 5:6-8, 12-17; 8:16; Ephesians 2:8-9)*

### *Eternal Security*

We believe that justification is a gift that can never be lost or revoked. Salvation depends only on the merit of Christ, who has born us anew by His power. It is received when a person has believed in Jesus Christ as his/her Savior. God, as a holy and righteous Father, cannot overlook the sin of His children, but will, when they persistently sin, chasten and correct them in infinite love. At the instant of salvation though, each person is sealed and kept until the Son will present him/her, faultless, before the presence of His glory. They will be conformed to the image of Jesus and dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

*(Micah 7:18-19; John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Romans 8:29; I Corinthians 6:19; Hebrews 7:25; 12:5-11; I John 2:1-2; 5:13; Jude 24)*

## *The Extent Of Justification*

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises faith in Christ, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life and from the old creation into the new. When a person believes, he is justified, accepted before the Father as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, and has his place and portion linked to Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is therefore in no way required by God to seek a so-called “second blessing” or a “second work of grace.”

*(John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; I Corinthians 3:21-23; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 2:10; I John 4:17; 5:11-12)*

## *The Rapture of the Church*

We believe that according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both the church, who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also, all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and that this event is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking.

*(John 14:1-3; I Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:20; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14)*



# *Sanctification*

## Definition

In this salvation, the believer is progressively saved from the power of sin by daily crucifying the flesh and moving toward Christ-likeness. Sanctification is works oriented. The rewards for our faithful works on earth are what Paul calls “The Prize” in I Corinthians 9:24.

*(John 17:17; II Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 5:25-27; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 12:10; I John 3:2)*

## Elements of Sanctification

### *The Great Commission*

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that after they are saved they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the world with the aim of bringing others to Christ and growth in Him.

*(Matthew 28:19-20; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:20; Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 11:13)*

### *The Christian's Service*

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the early church there were certain gifted men--apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers--who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some individuals are called by God to be evangelists, pastors, and teachers, and that it is to the

fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in the service for God.

*(Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11)*

## *The Christian's Walk*

We believe that we are called with a holy calling to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But, the flesh, with its fallen Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord. We further believe that reckoning on the cross of Christ is central to the breaking of sin's power and a life led by the Spirit of God.

*(Romans 6:1-14; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Galatians 2:20; 5:16-24; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 2:1-10; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 1:4-7; 3:5-9)*

## *Church Government*

We believe that God's ideal church government is found in the mutually submissive operation of a plurality of qualified men (Elders) in an autonomous local church. Moreover, we believe that God works His will and unity in the local church in proportion to the godly submission of individuals to the God-ordained authorities over them and in proportion to the loving service of these qualified men (Elders) as those who will give an account to the living God. Additionally, we believe that the biblical emphasis is not on the separation of "clerics" or "laymen", but rather the emphasis is that all Christians are ministers in Christ though there are some given and gifted especially to lead and equip the saints for ministry.

*(Acts 14:23; 20:28-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; I Timothy 3:1-7; I Thessalonians 5:12-13; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:9; 4:10, 11; 5:2-4)*

## *The Ordinances*

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances of the church given by Jesus, and that they are the scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age.

*(Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 10:47-48; 16:32-33; 18:7-8; I Corinthians 11:26)*

## *Sign Gifts*

We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues in known languages and miraculous healings, were signs to unbelievers used in the initial establishment of the church. The use of these gifts or a special enablement in the ongoing establishment of the Church is subject to God's prerogative. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism, nor of the filling of the Spirit, and that the ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection. We further believe that the supreme manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is the fruit of the Spirit.

*(Acts 4:8; 31; Romans 8:23; I Corinthians 13:8; Galatians 5:22-23)*

## *The Tribulation*

We believe that the rapture of the church, the blessed hope, will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel's seventieth week, as prophesied in Daniel 9, during which the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. This period will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. The latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob's trouble, which our Lord called the great tribulation. We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the age will end with a fearful apostasy.

*(Daniel 9:27; Revelation 6:1-19:21; Jeremiah 30:7; Matthew 24:15-21)*

## *The Second Coming Of Christ*

We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God.

*(Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:15-25:46; Acts 15:16-17; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; I Timothy 4:1-3; II Timothy 3:1-5; Revelation 20:1-3)*

## *Glorification*

### Definition

In this salvation, the believer is refined from the sin that remained through the sanctification process and given a new body that is free from the sin nature. Ultimately, the believer receives "The Prize", the rewards of faithful service. These rewards include reigning with Christ.

## Elements of Glorification

### The Eternal State

#### *The Bema Seat of Christ*

We believe that, wholly apart from the benefits of justification which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment (Bema) seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself.

*(I Corinthians 3:9-15; 9:18-27; II Corinthians 5:10)*

## *The New Heaven and the New Earth*

We believe that for the redeemed every tear will be wiped away. There will be no more sorrow. Death and Hades will be thrown into the lake of fire, where also will dwell the Beast, the False Prophet, Satan and his angels, and those who rejected the free gift of being delivered from the penalty of sin. As for the unbelieving, they remain after death, conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the millennium when they shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. We believe that there will be a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. God will come to earth and dwell among men, thus uniting heaven and earth. His presence will fill the earth, and His glory will fill the earth to the point that there will be no need for the Sun. The glory of the nations will enter the New Jerusalem, and the Saints of God will reign with Christ.

*(Luke 16:19-26; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15, 21-22; II Peter 3:7)*