

Constitution

Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs

Grace Baptist Church of Altamont

Section I – The Holy Scriptures

God's complete written revelation to man consists of the sixty-six books of the Bible and were given to us by the Holy Spirit¹ through verbal, plenary² inspiration³ as objective, propositional truth.⁴ There is now no new revelation from God written or verbal as the canon of Scripture is complete and sufficient. God used human authors to compose and record His exact revelation to man through His administration of their unique personality, background, circumstances, and writing style as they composed the original manuscripts, and that every part of the Bible, in its original documents, is inerrant, infallible, the very Word of God.⁵ The Scriptures were written and preserved in such a way that its teachings are able to be clearly understood by all who have a heart to follow what it says.⁶

Since the purpose of the Scripture is to instruct mankind, and is absolutely necessary for knowing the Gospel and God's will, it is the duty of every Christian to regularly and diligently search the Scriptures to understand their meaning.⁷ This meaning is to be best discovered through use of a literal, grammatical, historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.⁸

Since the Bible comprises the only authoritative and inerrant rule of salvation and a life pleasing to God, it is an entirely accurate and sufficient communication of God to mankind, and is the measure by which all men will be judged on the last day.⁹

Section II – God

A. The Trinity

The Lord our God is the only living and true God.¹⁰ He is infinite in perfection and independent.¹¹ His essence cannot be fully comprehended by anyone but Himself, and yet He has chosen to reveal Himself through His Word.¹² He is unchangeable,¹³ personally present everywhere,¹⁴ eternal,¹⁵ almighty,¹⁶ holy,¹⁷ all knowing¹⁸, and wise.¹⁹ He works all things according to the counsel of His own immutable righteous will.²⁰ He is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving kindness and truth. He forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin, and

¹ John 16:12-13

² meaning equally inspired in all parts (see Matthew 5:18)

³ 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21

⁴ John 17:17

⁵ Psalm 19:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:19-21

⁶ 1 Corinthians 2:14-16

⁷ Acts 17:11; Romans 10:13-17; Colossians 3:16

⁸ 1 Corinthians 2:7-16

⁹ John 12:48; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12-13; 2 Peter 1:3; Revelation 22:18-19

¹⁰ Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7

¹¹ Jeremiah 10:10; Isaiah 48:12

¹² Exodus 3:14; John 12:49-50, 17:7-8 Hebrews 1:1-3

¹³ Malachi 3:6 (immutable in His essence, attributes, knowledge, & plans)

¹⁴ 1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:23

¹⁵ Psalms 90:2

¹⁶ Genesis 17:1

¹⁷ Isaiah 6:3

¹⁸ 1 John 3:20

¹⁹ Job 12:13; Romans 11:33

²⁰ Psalms 115:3; Isaiah 46:9-10; Ephesians 1:11

rewards those that diligently seek Him, but will by no means clear the guilty.²¹ He is just in all His judgments,²² hating all those enemies of God who transgress His law.²³

God is unique in being all-sufficient both in Himself and to Himself.²⁴ Though He is glorious in and of Himself, He has freely chosen to demonstrate His own glory through His creation, and yet His glory is in no way dependent upon His creation.²⁵ He is the Creator, from whom, through whom, and to whom are all things,²⁶ and He has absolute sovereign dominion over all creatures to do to them, for them, or with them as He pleases.²⁷ In His sight all things are open and laid bare.²⁸ His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and not dependent upon any other source, so that nothing for Him is contingent or uncertain.²⁹ He is holy in all His words and in all His works.³⁰ Therefore, all creatures are obligated to Him for whatever He requires of them,³¹ owing Him complete allegiance, worship, service, and obedience.³²

The one God eternally exists in three Persons (Trinity): the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.³³ Each is fully God and is exactly the same in essence and substance, and yet they are distinct individuals and not just different manifestations of the same person. The Son is eternally begotten (not created) Son of the Father,³⁴ and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.³⁵ Each person of the Godhead is distinguished in the Scriptures by the design and exercise of their work.

B. God, the Father

God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity who created all things and causes all things to work together according to His sovereign plan, and yet does so in such a way that He is neither the author nor approver of the sinful actions of men.³⁶ As the Creator and supreme Ruler of the universe, His sovereignty extends over all things including creation and redemption.³⁷ He is an immortal Spirit³⁸ that dwells in unapproachable light.³⁹ His character is most profoundly and uniquely seen in the demonstration of His sovereign grace, in His choosing to redeem individuals from the due punishment of their sin and mercifully providing the means for that redemption through His only Son, Jesus Christ.⁴⁰

C. Jesus Christ, the Son

Jesus is the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the attributes of deity, and is co-equal, co-existent, and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.⁴¹ Although sharing equality with the

²¹ Exodus 34:6-7; Hebrews 11:6

²² Deuteronomy 32:4

²³ Psalms 5:5-6, 11:5-6

²⁴ Acts 17:24-25

²⁵ Job 41:11; Psalm 50:12; John 17:5; Isaiah 43:7

²⁶ Romans 11:34-36

²⁷ Daniel 4:24-25, 34-35

²⁸ Hebrews 4:13

²⁹ Psalm 139:1-6; Isaiah 55:9

³⁰ Psalms 145:17

³¹ 2 Corinthians 5:9-10, Acts 17:30-31

³² Revelation 5:12-14

³³ Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

³⁴ John 1:14,18 ("one and only" is a better translation of Greek word *monogenes*, commonly translated "only begotten")

³⁵ John 15:26; Galatians 4:6

³⁶ James 1:13, 17; Job 1:22; Habakkuk 1:13

³⁷ Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 103:19, 145:8-9; Habakkuk 1:13; Matthew 20:15; Romans 3:19, 8:28, 11:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6;

Ephesians 1:11, 3:9-11; Revelation 4:11

³⁸ John 4:24

³⁹ 1 Timothy 6:16; Deuteronomy 4:15-16

⁴⁰ John 1:12, Eph 1:4-6

⁴¹ John 5:17-18, 8:58, 10:30, 14:9-10; Colossians 1:19, 2:9

Father, the Son is submissive to Him in the execution of the Father's will. The Father created all things through the Son in six literal, 24-hour days, and the Son is the One by whom all things continue in existence and operation.⁴²

In the incarnation, the Son laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, assumed the place of a Son, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes; He did this according to the will of God by uniting His divine nature with sinless human nature in an indissoluble union, forever becoming the God-man.⁴³ The means of the incarnation was through the Holy Spirit supernaturally overshadowing the virgin Mary, such that Jesus was virgin-born, fully God and fully man.⁴⁴

Jesus lived out His earthly life with sinless perfection⁴⁵ exactly as recorded in the Scriptures.⁴⁶ He was put to death by order of Pontius Pilate, buried for 3 days, physically resurrected from the dead by the power of God,⁴⁷ appeared alive to the disciples over a period of 40 days,⁴⁸ and then ascended into heaven as ruler over all.⁴⁹

The Son is the only Mediator between God and man⁵⁰ (His physical death, burial, and resurrection providing the only means through which God justifies sinners),⁵¹ and He is now seated at the right hand of the Father as advocate for all the redeemed.⁵²

Jesus Christ is the Head of the church⁵³ and the promised Messiah who will reign on the throne of David as the universal King.⁵⁴ He is also the One through whom God will judge all mankind,⁵⁵ issuing reward to those who follow Him according to Scripture, and eternal punishment to those who do not.⁵⁶

D. Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, possesses all the attributes of deity and is co-equal, co-existent, co-eternal with the Father and the Son.⁵⁷ The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, uncreated, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity including intellect,⁵⁸ eternity,⁵⁹ omnipresence,⁶⁰ omniscience,⁶¹ omnipotence,⁶² and truth.⁶³

⁴² John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2-3

⁴³ John 1:1,14; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9; Revelation 5:6-9

⁴⁴ Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:23,25; Luke 1:26-35; Galatians 4:4-5

⁴⁵ Hebrews 4:15

⁴⁶ John 21:24-25

⁴⁷ Luke 24:19-24, 46-48; Acts 4:27-28

⁴⁸ Acts 1:3

⁴⁹ Acts 1:9; Ephesians 1:20-23 (cf. Psalm 2:7-9)

⁵⁰ 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 7:25

⁵¹ Romans 5:9; John 1:29; John 14:6

⁵² Philippians 2:9-11; 1 John 2:1-2

⁵³ Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23

⁵⁴ Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33

⁵⁵ John 5:22-24; Acts 17:30-31

⁵⁶ John 3:36; 2 Cor 5:10

⁵⁷ Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3 - 4; 28:25 - 26; 1 Corinthians 12:4 - 6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jeremiah 31:31 - 34; Hebrews 10:15 - 17.

⁵⁸ 1 Corinthians 2:10 - 14

⁵⁹ Hebrews 9:14

⁶⁰ Psalm 139:7 - 10

⁶¹ Isaiah 40:13 - 14

⁶² Romans 15:19

⁶³ John 16:13

The Holy Spirit's special role in the church age began at Pentecost, when He came from the Father as promised by Christ⁶⁴ to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ, which is His church.⁶⁵

The work of the Holy Spirit is to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. This includes His sovereign activity in creation,⁶⁶ the incarnation of the Son,⁶⁷ the written revelation of God,⁶⁸ and the work of salvation.⁶⁹ In this present age, the Holy Spirit was sent forth from the Father and the Son to initiate and complete the building of the church, to speak of and glorify the Son, and to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.⁷⁰ The Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration who draws men to Jesus Christ and enables every believer to possess faith.⁷¹ Jesus Christ baptizes all believers with the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation, at which time the Holy Spirit indwells them with all fullness.⁷² The Holy Spirit also sanctifies them, instructs them, empowers them for service, seals them unto the day of redemption, and transforms them into the image of Christ.⁷³ The Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher who guided the prophets and apostles to write God's special revelation, the Bible.⁷⁴ He administers spiritual gifts to the church but neither glorifies Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays. Instead, the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ by implementing His work of drawing the elect and building up believers in the most holy faith.⁷⁵

2. The Scriptures teach the calling of all saints to the work of ministry.⁷⁶ The Holy Spirit facilitates this by personally indwelling each believer and by providing differing spiritual gifts. First, He gives equipping gifts to men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for ministry,⁷⁷ and He also gives unique and special spiritual serving gifts to each member of the body of Christ.⁷⁸ These gifts are sovereignly distributed to each individual believer for the common good of the body.⁷⁹ As believers serve the local body, they should begin to recognize, develop, and deploy their unique spiritual giftedness within the context of a local church.⁸⁰

The Scriptures indicate that there were certain gifts given to the early church which are no longer an established standard for today and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of the believers. Gifts of divine revelation and miraculous wonders occurred during periods of the OT (Moses, Elisha, Elijah), and the Apostolic era of the early church. These gifts were given temporarily for the purpose of delivering direct divine revelation and confirming the authenticity of the revelation and those that revealed it. As the New Testament Scriptures were completed as the final revelation of God for the church, revelatory and confirmatory gifts were no longer necessary and were removed by the Spirit from use within the church.⁸¹ Despite the cessation of the ongoing ministry of certain supernatural gifts by individuals in the church, God still sovereignly works in the world by whatever means He may choose. For instance, though the

⁶⁴ John 14:16 – 17; 15:26

⁶⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:13

⁶⁶ Genesis 1:2

⁶⁷ Matthew 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35

⁶⁸ 2 Peter 1:20 & 21

⁶⁹ John 3:5 - 8

⁷⁰ John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7 – 11, 13 – 14; Acts 1:5, 2:4; Ephesians 2:19 – 22.

⁷¹ John 6:44,63; 2 Corinthians 3:6

⁷² Matthew 3:11; John 3:34;14:17; Romans 8:9,11; 1 Corinthians 12:13

⁷³ Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:6,18; Ephesians 1:13; 4:7 – 13,30; 1 John 2:20 - 27

⁷⁴ John 16:13; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:1; 1 Peter 1:10 – 12; 2 Peter 1:19 - 21

⁷⁵ John 16:13 – 14; Acts 1:8; Romans 12:6 – 8; 1 Corinthians 12:4 – 11; 2 Corinthians 3:18

⁷⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12

⁷⁷ Ephesians 4:7 - 12

⁷⁸ Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4 – 31; 1 Peter 4:10-11

⁷⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:7,11; 1 Peter 4:10

⁸⁰ Romans 12:3 – 8; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Timothy 4:14

⁸¹ 1 Corinthians 13:8 – 12, 14:21 – 22; 2 Corinthians 12:12

confirmatory spiritual gift of healing is no longer normative, God has promised to hear the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will and His own glory for the sick, suffering, and afflicted.⁸²

The Holy Spirit played a unique role prior to the church age. He took part in creation,⁸³ He guided and protected Israel,⁸⁴ He spoke through the prophets to produce the OT Scriptures,⁸⁵ and He selectively and conditionally came upon and empowered certain people.⁸⁶ The Spirit's temporary residence upon OT saints was specifically related to enabling a certain task.

Section III – Man

Man was directly, immediately, and uniquely created by God in His image and likeness,⁸⁷ distinct from the beasts,⁸⁸ free of sin,⁸⁹ having a rational nature, intelligence, self-will, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God.⁹⁰

God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God,⁹¹ enjoy God's fellowship⁹², live in dependent obedience to God,⁹³ and thereby accomplish his purpose as the pinnacle of God's creation in the world.⁹⁴

In Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence,⁹⁵ incurred the penalty of physical and spiritual death,⁹⁶ became subject to the wrath of God,⁹⁷ and became inherently corrupt in all of his faculties, and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God.⁹⁸ This total depravity in unregenerate man does not mean that every man is as bad as he could be,⁹⁹ but rather every part of unregenerate man is so corrupted by sin that his heart,¹⁰⁰ mind,¹⁰¹ will,¹⁰² and emotions¹⁰³ will never cause him to seek God in and of himself. Enslaved to sin¹⁰⁴ with no ability to rescue himself, man is hopelessly lost¹⁰⁵ except by divine intervention.¹⁰⁶

All men are sinners by divine declaration,¹⁰⁷ by nature,¹⁰⁸ and by choice,¹⁰⁹ Jesus Christ being the only

⁸² Psalm 115:3; Luke 18:1 – 6; James 5:13 – 16; 1 John 5:14 - 15

⁸³ Genesis 1:2; Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30

⁸⁴ Isaiah 63:10 - 14

⁸⁵ 1 Peter 1:11; 1 Peter 1:20 - 21

⁸⁶ Genesis 41:38; Numbers 27:18; 1 Samuel 10:6 – 10, 16:13, 16:14, Psalm 51:11

⁸⁷ Genesis 1:26; James 3:9

⁸⁸ Genesis 1:28 & 29; Psalm 8:6 – 8; Matthew 6:26

⁸⁹ Romans 5:12; Eccl. 7:29

⁹⁰ Genesis 2:7, 15 – 25

⁹¹ 1 Corinthians 10:31; Isaiah 43:7

⁹² Psalm 73:25 – 28, John 14:1 - 3

⁹³ Deuteronomy 13:4

⁹⁴ Genesis 1:28; 1 Corinthians 6:3; Hebrews 1:14; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11

⁹⁵ Genesis 3:9 - 11

⁹⁶ Genesis 2:16 – 17, Romans 3:23, 6:23, 8:7 & 8

⁹⁷ John 3:36; Ephesians 2:3, 1 Thessalonians 1:10

⁹⁸ Romans 3:23, 8:7 & 8; 1 Corinthians 2:14

⁹⁹ Luke 11:13

¹⁰⁰ Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 1:21

¹⁰¹ Romans 1:28; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Romans 8:5 – 8; Ephesians 4:17 – 18; Titus 1:15; 1 Corinthians 2:14

¹⁰² John 8:44; John 1:12 – 13;

¹⁰³ John 3:19 & 20; 1 John 3:10; Romans 1:30

¹⁰⁴ John 8:34, 44; Romans 6:6, 17, & 18

¹⁰⁵ Romans 5:6; Ephesians 2:1 - 3

¹⁰⁶ 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Matthew 19:25 & 26; John 8:36; John 1:12 & 13; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3;

Ephesians 2:4 & 5

¹⁰⁷ Romans 3:9 – 18; Romans 5:18 - 19

exception.¹¹⁰

Once redeemed, man is a new creation.¹¹¹ He has been born again,¹¹² indwelt by the Holy Spirit,¹¹³ and no longer a helpless slave to sin.¹¹⁴ The “old man” and his associated sin nature is crucified and gone, as the new man walks in newness of life.¹¹⁵ Sin can only gain a foothold in a believer’s life through the flesh (body or members)¹¹⁶ which remains until our mortal body is transformed in glory.¹¹⁷

Section IV – Salvation

Salvation is the work of God whereby a guilty sinner is made fit to be and finally brought into the presence of a holy God solely on the basis of God’s grace through the finished work of Jesus Christ, and not on the basis of any human effort.¹¹⁸ It is judicially accomplished by the merit of Christ’s shed blood¹¹⁹ and righteous life¹²⁰ being applied to the account¹²¹ of the one who comes to the Lord in humble repentance¹²² and sincere faith or belief.¹²³ This work of God will necessarily result in a change of the recipient’s life,¹²⁴ from one of willful rebellion¹²⁵ to one of growing in humble obedience.¹²⁶ Though the sinner receives the benefit, the purpose of salvation is to the praise of the glory of God’s grace.¹²⁷

Salvation can be broken down into many elements since they are separately spoken of in Scripture. Some of them can be placed in a definite order because Scripture is clear on the matter.¹²⁸ Other elements, however, are not as clearly delineated by God’s Word as to their sequence. Some indeed, probably occur almost simultaneously as one comes to Christ in saving faith. The various elements of salvation are placed in the order that can most easily be supported by Scripture and fits best with a God centered process of salvation in which He and not man is glorified.¹²⁹

Election

Before the foundation of the world God sovereignly and graciously chose in Christ those whom He would save.¹³⁰ God’s election was not caused by any human initiative or will,¹³¹ or in response to His anticipation of what man would do as He looked into the future (this is a distorted definition of

¹⁰⁸ Ephesians 2:3

¹⁰⁹ Psalm 14:1 – 3; James 1:14 & 15; Ephesians 2:3

¹¹⁰ Romans 5:12 & 19; 2 Corinthians 5:21; John 8:46

¹¹¹ 2 Corinthians 5:17

¹¹² John 3:3; 1 John 2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:1,4,18

¹¹³ 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; Romans 8:9

¹¹⁴ Romans 6:6 & 7, &14

¹¹⁵ Romans 6:3 - 11

¹¹⁶ Romans 6:12, 7:18, 23, & 24

¹¹⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:50 - 57

¹¹⁸ Ephesians 2:8 & 9; Titus 3:5; 2 Timothy 1:9; Isaiah 64:6

¹¹⁹ 1 Peter 1:18 & 19; Acts 20:28;

¹²⁰ Romans 5:18 & 19

¹²¹ Romans 8:3 & 4, 5:19; 2 Corinthians 5:21

¹²² Luke 24:47 & 48; Acts 2:38, 3:19, 17:30, 20:21, 26:20

¹²³ John 3:16, 3:18, Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2: 8 & 9

¹²⁴ Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10; Hebrews 12:14; James 2:14 - 26

¹²⁵ John 3:19 & 20; Ephesians 2:1 – 3; Colossians 1:21

¹²⁶ Luke 9:23; 1 Peter 1:2

¹²⁷ Ephesians 1:6, 12, & 14; Philippians 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:11 & 12

¹²⁸ Romans 8:29 - 30

¹²⁹ Ephesians 1:6,12, & 14

¹³⁰ 1 Peter 1:1 & 2; Romans 8:28 – 30; Ephesians 1:4 – 11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9

¹³¹ John 1:12 & 13; Romans 3:10 – 12, 9:16

foreknowledge). Indeed, foreknowledge means that God chose to have an intimate relationship¹³² with certain individuals before time began.¹³³ God's election is rather based solely on His sovereign grace and mercy.¹³⁴ God's election is in perfect harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, and wisdom.¹³⁵ Sovereign election does not contradict nor negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord,¹³⁶ nor does it negate the Christian's responsibility to boldly proclaim the gospel to all men.¹³⁷

Atonement

The atonement is the necessary¹³⁸ work that Christ accomplished in His life¹³⁹ (in that He showed Himself qualified to be the perfect sacrifice) and death¹⁴⁰ to earn the salvation of His elect. The atonement showed Christ's love¹⁴¹ and justice¹⁴² as He took our sins upon Himself.¹⁴³ Christ's death was an actual atonement for the elect and not a potential atonement for everyone.¹⁴⁴ Four terms are seen commonly in Scripture that show how the atonement met the needs that we have as sinners. First, because we deserve to die as a just penalty for our sin,¹⁴⁵ Christ died as a *substitutionary sacrifice* for us.¹⁴⁶ Second, because we deserve to bear Christ's wrath against us¹⁴⁷, Christ died as a *propitiation* (the sacrifice that appeased or satisfied the wrath of God) for our sins.¹⁴⁸ Third, because we are separated from God by our sins,¹⁴⁹ Christ's death *reconciled* us to God.¹⁵⁰ Fourth, because we are in bondage to sin and the kingdom of Satan,¹⁵¹ Christ died to *redeem* us out of that bondage,¹⁵² and make us slaves to righteousness.¹⁵³

Gospel Call

Scripture speaks of two types of "gospel calls".¹⁵⁴ The "external/general call" to salvation and the "internal/effectual" call to salvation can be clearly discerned from God's Word. Both calls are required for salvation to occur. They can be defined as follows:

External/general call

¹³²Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 1:25, 7:23; John 10:27, 13:18; Romans 11:2, 8:29; 1 Peter 1:2

¹³³Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9

¹³⁴Titus 3:4 - 7; Romans 9:15; Ephesians 1:4 - 7

¹³⁵Romans 9:11 - 14

¹³⁶Ezekiel 18:23 & 32, 33:11; John 3:16, 18, & 36, 5:40; Acts 17:30 & 31 Romans 10:9 - 11; 2 Thessalonians 2:10 - 12; Revelation 22:17

¹³⁷Romans 10:13 - 17; Matthew 28:19 & 20

¹³⁸Luke 24:25 & 26; Hebrews 2:17, 9:23, 25 & 26

¹³⁹Romans 5:19; Hebrews 4:15, 7:26 & 28

¹⁴⁰John 3:16; Romans 3:24 & 25, 5:8

¹⁴¹John 3:16; Romans 5:8

¹⁴²Romans 3:25 & 26

¹⁴³Isaiah 53:6; John 1:29; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:24

¹⁴⁴Isaiah 53:4 - 6, 8b, 10 - 11, 12b; Matthew 1:21, 20:28; John 6:37, 39, 44, 10:11, 15, 25 - 30, 11:51 & 52, 17:6, 9, 20; Acts 20:28, Ephesians 5:25; Hebrews 10:28;

¹⁴⁵Genesis 2:17; Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 1:32, 5:12, 6:21 & 23, 8:13; Ephesians 2:1,4, & 5

¹⁴⁶Isaiah 53:4 - 6, 12; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:10 - 13; Hebrews 9:26 - 28; 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18

¹⁴⁷Psalms 7:11; John 3:36; Romans 1:18, 9:22; Ephesians 2:3, 5:6; Colossians 3:5 & 6; 1 Thessalonians 1:10

¹⁴⁸Romans 3:24 & 25; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2, 4:10

¹⁴⁹Isaiah 59:2; Ephesians 4:18; Colossians 1:21

¹⁵⁰Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18 & 19; Colossians 1:19 - 21

¹⁵¹John 8:34 & 44; Romans 6:6, 17 & 18; Ephesians 2:2; 1 John 3:8, 5:19

¹⁵²Acts 20:28; Romans 3:24; Galatians 3:13, 4:4 & 4; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1 Timothy 2:5 & 6; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 9:11 - 15; 1 Peter 1:18 & 19

¹⁵³Romans 6:17 - 22; Titus 2:14

¹⁵⁴Matthew 22:14

The external/general call is when anyone hears the proclamation of the gospel message. All believers are commanded by God to evangelize everyone.¹⁵⁵ This general call was modeled by Christ,¹⁵⁶ the apostles,¹⁵⁷ and others,¹⁵⁸ and should be done at all costs¹⁵⁹ by believers as they are God's instruments of spreading the gospel.¹⁶⁰ Many do not respond and in fact reject this gospel call.¹⁶¹

Internal/effectual call

The internal/effectual call is a supernatural act of God in which He uses the biblical proclamation of the gospel¹⁶² to summon His elect¹⁶³ to Himself in such a way that they will respond in saving repentant faith¹⁶⁴ as He builds His church.¹⁶⁵ This call is invincible in that all whom the Father calls will come in repentant faith,¹⁶⁶ and all who come in repentant faith the Father will receive.¹⁶⁷

Regeneration

Regeneration is a supernatural work of God, primarily of the Holy Spirit, by which a new spiritual nature and life are given.¹⁶⁸ It is instantaneous and accomplished solely by the power of God, and not the human will,¹⁶⁹ through the instrumentality of the Word of God,¹⁷⁰ so that the believer is spiritually born again to be a new creation.¹⁷¹ This work of the Holy Spirit combined with the effectual calling of the Father¹⁷² secures voluntary obedience to the gospel.¹⁷³ Regeneration is evidenced by man exercising faith and repentance (conversion), and a pattern of righteous living.¹⁷⁴

Conversion (Faith/Repentance)

Conversion occurs when an individual, after being regenerated¹⁷⁵ and having received the internal effectual call of God, willingly responds to that gospel call.¹⁷⁶ It involves one's repentance from

¹⁵⁵Matthew 28:19 & 20; Luke 24:46 – 48; 2 Corinthians 9:19 – 23

¹⁵⁶Matthew 7:13 – 28; 11:28; Mark 1:14 & 15

¹⁵⁷Acts 2:14 – 41; 3:12 – 26;

¹⁵⁸Acts 7, 8:4

¹⁵⁹2 Timothy 2:9 & 10

¹⁶⁰Romans 11:14 & 15; 2 Corinthians 5:18 – 21; 2 Thessalonians 2:14

¹⁶¹Matthew 7:13 & 14, 22:14; John 3:18 – 20;

¹⁶²Romans 1:16, 10:17; 2 Thessalonians 2:14

¹⁶³2 Thessalonians 2:13 & 14; 2 Timothy 1:9; Hebrews 9:15

¹⁶⁴John 6:37; Acts 2:39; 13:48

¹⁶⁵"Church" is literally "called out ones" – 1 Corinthians 1:2; Romans 1:5 & 6, Romans 8:28 ("the called" definite article); 1 Peter 2:9

¹⁶⁶John 6:37, 44; John 17:12; Romans 8:29 – 30

¹⁶⁷John 1:12, 6:37

¹⁶⁸John 3:3 – 8; 1 Peter 1:3 & 23; Ephesians 2:5; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:5; Ezekiel 36:26 & 27

¹⁶⁹John 1:12 & 13;

¹⁷⁰James 1:18; John 5:24; 1 Peter 1:23

¹⁷¹2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷²John 6:37, 44, & 65; 2 Thessalonians 2:14

¹⁷³Acts 16:14

¹⁷⁴1 John 2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:1 – 4

¹⁷⁵Acts 16:14; 1 John 5:1 (John's reasoning throughout 1 John describes the actions of those that *have been* "born again". This includes a decreased pattern of sin (3:9); love for the brethren (4:7); the ability to overcome temptation (5:3 – 4); protection from Satan (4:4 & 5:18); and belief (5:1).)

¹⁷⁶Matthew 11:28

sins¹⁷⁷ and placing one's faith or belief¹⁷⁸ in Jesus Christ alone¹⁷⁹ as Savior¹⁸⁰ and Lord¹⁸¹ for salvation. Salvation, including the aspects of repentance and faith, is a gift from God.¹⁸² Repentance is an acknowledgement of one's own sin against God¹⁸³, a heartfelt sorrow for that sin¹⁸⁴, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to God to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ.¹⁸⁵ True faith or belief is more than knowing the facts of the gospel or believing them to be true.¹⁸⁶ It is a complete trust in, reliance upon, or commitment to those facts of the gospel, embracing Jesus Christ and His work on the cross in all of their fullness as they are presented in God's Word.¹⁸⁷ Christ is presented in God's Word as Prophet (the one whose words are true & tell us the way of salvation),¹⁸⁸ as Priest (the one who offers the sacrifice for sins and through whom the believer draws near or comes to God),¹⁸⁹ and King (the one to whom allegiance is owed as Savior and Lord).¹⁹⁰

Justification

Justification is a legal act of God in which He declares His people to have a righteous standing before Him.¹⁹¹ This verdict from God pardons the individual from the guilt and penalty of sin¹⁹², imputes the individual's sin to Christ, and imputes Christ's righteousness to the individual's account.¹⁹³ Justification comes to the elect entirely as a gift by grace through repentant faith, completely apart from any works of righteousness, or merit on the individual's part.¹⁹⁴

Adoption

Adoption is an act of God, that occurs in conjunction with conversion (faith and repentance)¹⁹⁵, whereby He makes the lost sinner His child.¹⁹⁶ The resultant relationship from being adopted into God's family has many implications including: 1) The privilege of relating to God as a good and loving Father.¹⁹⁷ 2) The privilege of being heirs with Christ.¹⁹⁸ 3) The privilege of being led by the Holy Spirit.¹⁹⁹ 4) The privilege of being disciplined by a loving Father.²⁰⁰ 5) The privilege of relating

¹⁷⁷Isaiah 55:6 & 7; Matthew 4:17, 9:14; Mark 1:4 & 5; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:37 & 38, 3:19, 8:22, 14:15, 17:30, 20:21; Revelation 9:20 & 21, 16:8 - 11

¹⁷⁸John 1:12, 3:16, 3:18; Romans 10:9; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8 & 9

¹⁷⁹Matthew 7:13 & 14, Luke 13:24; John 10:1 - 9, 14:6; Acts 4:12

¹⁸⁰Luke 2:11; John 4:42; Acts 5:31; Ephesians 5:23; Philippians 3:20; 2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 3:4 & 6; 1 John 4:14

¹⁸¹Romans 10:9 & 10; Jude 4 (Lord here is gr. Despotes - master, Lord, one with supreme authority - same in 2 Peter 2:1 - both passages are describing *false teachers* that deny the Lordship of Christ - master, Lord, one with supreme authority)

¹⁸²Daniel 9:13; John 4:10; Acts 5:30 & 31, 11:18; Romans 2:4, 5:15 & 16, 6:23; Ephesians 2:8 & 9; Philippians 1:29; 2 Timothy 2:25; Hebrews 6:4

¹⁸³Psalms 51:1 - 4; Acts 3:26, 26:18

¹⁸⁴Matthew 11:20 & 21; 2 Corinthians 7:10

¹⁸⁵Isaiah 55:6 & 7; Matthew 3:8; Acts 14:15, 26:20; 1 Thessalonians 1:9

¹⁸⁶James 2:19

¹⁸⁷1 Corinthians 15:1 - 4;

¹⁸⁸John 1:14, 6:35, 14:6; Acts 3:22 & 23

¹⁸⁹Hebrews 3:1, 4:14 - 16, 10:11 - 14

¹⁹⁰Mark 8:34 - 37; Luke 14:24 - 33; Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9; 2 Peter 2:1; Jude 4; Revelation 19:16

¹⁹¹There is a sense of "declared righteous" vs "made righteous" in Deuteronomy 25:1; Proverbs 17:15; Isaiah 5:23; Luke 7:29; Romans 3:20, 26, & 28, 4:5, 5:1, 8:30, 33 - 34, Galatians 2:16, 3:6, 3:24

¹⁹²Psalms 32:2; Romans 4:5 - 8, 5:1, 8:1, 33 - 34; 2 Corinthians 5:19

¹⁹³Romans 4, 5:16 & 17

¹⁹⁴Isaiah 64:6; Galatians 2:16; Romans 3:25 - 28, 4, 5:1; Ephesians 2:8 & 9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5

¹⁹⁵John 1:12; Galatians 3:26

¹⁹⁶John 1:12; Romans 8:14 - 17; Galatians 4:4 - 7; 1 John 3:1 - 2

¹⁹⁷Psalms 103:13 & 14; Matthew 6:9, 32, 7:11; Romans 8:15 & 16; Galatians 4:7

¹⁹⁸Romans 8:17; Galatians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:4

¹⁹⁹Romans 8:13 & 14

²⁰⁰Hebrews 12:5 & 6

to fellow believers as brothers and sisters in Christ.²⁰¹ 6) The privilege of imitating our heavenly Father in His holiness,²⁰² and of honoring the heavenly Father to bring glory to Him.²⁰³ 7) The believer is no longer a child of wrath.²⁰⁴

Sanctification

At the moment of salvation, every believer is *positionally sanctified* (set apart from sin to be a dedicated possession to God)²⁰⁵ by the work of Jesus Christ, and is therefore identified as a saint (“holy one”).²⁰⁶

There is also, by the believer’s submitting to the work of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the word of God, a progressive sanctification by which the believer’s life is continually brought into increasing conformity with the reality of his position in Christ – in essence becoming transformed into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.²⁰⁷

Every saved person is involved in a daily conflict – the new creation in Christ doing battle with the flesh. The struggle stays with the believer and is never completely ended all through this earthly life. While the total eradication of sin (sinless perfection) is not possible in this life, we are no longer slaves to sin and adequate provision is made for victory in every temptation through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.²⁰⁸

Eternal Security

It is the privilege of God’s children to be completely sure of their eternal security in Christ. It is important to understand the following four terms – eternal security, preservation, perseverance, and assurance.

Eternal security means that all who were chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and granted faith and repentance by the Holy Spirit, cannot fall from grace and are eternally saved.²⁰⁹

Preservation is what God does through His almighty power as He “preserves” the faith that He has given us and causes us to persevere in the faith until the end.²¹⁰

Perseverance of the saints is what believers do and means that all those who are truly born again will remain true to the faith – not only in *word*, but also in *deed* until the end of their lives or the rapture of the saints.²¹¹ It also means that *only* those who persevere to the end were ever truly born

²⁰¹Matthew 12:50; Romans 1:13, 8:12, 16:1; 1 Corinthians 1:10, 6:8, 7:15; 1 Timothy 5:1 & 2; James 1:2, 2:15

²⁰²Ephesians 5:1; 1 Peter 1:14 – 16;

²⁰³Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14 & 15; 1 Peter 3:7

²⁰⁴Ephesians 2:3

²⁰⁵Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9

²⁰⁶John 1:12; Acts 10:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11; Hebrews 10:10, 13:12

²⁰⁷John 17:17 & 19; Romans 6:1 – 22; Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 3:8 – 10; 1 Thessalonians 4:3 – 8, 5:23

²⁰⁸Romans 6, 7:14 – 25; Galatians 5:16 – 25; Ephesians 4:22 – 24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9; 1 Peter 1:14 – 16; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 John 1:8 - 10

²⁰⁹John 3:16, 3:36, 5:24, 6:38 – 40, 10:27 – 30; Romans 8:38 & 39; Ephesians 1:13 & 14; 1 Peter 1:3 - 5

²¹⁰John 17:11 & 15; 1 Corinthians 1:6 – 9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23 & 24; 2 Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 1:3 – 5; Jude 1:24 & 25

²¹¹Matthew 24:13; Mark 13:13; John 8:31 & 32, 15:6; Romans 11:22; Colossians 1:21 - 23; 2 Timothy 2:12; Hebrews 3:14;

again.²¹² When God saves an individual they are truly changed²¹³ and therefore it would be inconsistent with their new nature to use their liberty in Christ as a license for sinful living and carnality.²¹⁴

Assurance means that we are able to know with certainty the reality of our salvation through the objective testimony of Scripture²¹⁵, the supernatural internal testimony of the Holy Spirit²¹⁶, and the increasing fruit of righteousness observed in one's own life.²¹⁷

Death and the Intermediate State of the Believer

Physical death is the means (prior to the rapture) by which the believer is brought into the presence of the Lord, and therefore it is something that should be eagerly anticipated by every believer.²¹⁸ Death for the believer is not an expression of God's wrath or condemnation.²¹⁹ Death does not result in any loss of the immaterial consciousness²²⁰, the believer's soul will pass immediately into the presence of Christ²²¹, and the believer's corruptible body will undergo decay on the earth.²²² As the believer's soul is separated from the body, all of the sinful propensities that are associated within the flesh (body, members) will be forever gone.²²³ Until the believer's complete glorification, the redeemed soul will remain in joyful fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.²²⁴

Glorification

For believers, glorification is complete when the believers' redeemed souls are reunited with their new glorified bodies in the resurrection. These bodies are incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual. The believer will spend the rest of eternity in the glorified state worshipping and serving the Father, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.²²⁵

Section V – The Church

Universal and Local

All who place their faith in Jesus Christ, are immediately baptized by Christ with the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body²²⁶, the bride of Christ²²⁷, the church of which Christ is head.²²⁸

James 2:14 - 17

²¹²1 John 2:19

²¹³Romans 6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:9

²¹⁴Romans 6; 1 Corinthians 6:19 & 20; 2 Corinthians 6:14 – 7:1; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:11 - 14

²¹⁵John 3:16, 3:36, 6:38 – 40, 10:27 – 30; Romans 8:38 & 39; Ephesians 1:13 & 14; 1 Peter 1:3 – 5; 1 John 5:13

²¹⁶Romans 8:16 & 17

²¹⁷Matthew 3:8 – 15, 7:15 – 20, 13:3 – 23; John 14:21, 15:1 – 11; Romans 8:1; 1 John 2:3

²¹⁸2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23

²¹⁹Romans 8:1

²²⁰Revelation 6:9 - 11

²²¹Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23

²²²1 Corinthians 15:35 - 50

²²³Romans 6:11 – 19, 7:13 – 25, 8:23, 12:1 – 2; 1 Corinthians 9:27, 15:50 – 57; Philippians 3:20 – 21; James 4:1;

²²⁴2 Corinthians 5:8

²²⁵John 6:39; Romans 8:10 – 11, 23 – 25; 1 Corinthians 15:35 – 57; 2 Corinthians 4:14; Philippians 3:20 – 21; 1 John 3:1 - 3

²²⁶1 Corinthians 12:12 – 13; Mark 1:8; Acts 1:5

²²⁷2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23 – 32; Revelation 19:7 - 8

²²⁸Ephesians 1:22, 4:25; Colossians 1:18

The formation of the Church, the Body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost²²⁹ and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture.²³⁰

The Church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age.²³¹ The church is distinct from Israel²³², a mystery not revealed until this age.²³³

The New Testament Scriptures clearly teach that the universal Church is established and propagated through the agency of local churches²³⁴ and that the members of this one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies that conform to Scripture.²³⁵

Purpose

The purpose of the church is to glorify God²³⁶ by building itself up in the faith²³⁷, by making disciples through the proclamation of the gospel and the Word²³⁸, by fellowship with one another²³⁹, by doing these things showing the wisdom of God to heavenly beings²⁴⁰, by standing for the truth of God's Word²⁴¹, by maintaining the purity of the church²⁴² to provoke Israel to jealousy²⁴³, and by keeping the ordinances.²⁴⁴

Leadership

The one supreme authority for the Church is Christ²⁴⁵, and His authority is directly mediated via His Spirit and His Word.²⁴⁶ The Biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders²⁴⁷, deacons²⁴⁸, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications.²⁴⁹

These leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ²⁵⁰ and have authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership in all manners of church life.²⁵¹ In general, the elders are to be involved in spiritual shepherding such as ministry of the word and prayer, whereas deacons are involved in the day to day ministry activities of serving the body in practical ways.²⁵²

²²⁹Acts 2:1 – 21, 38 - 47

²³⁰1 Corinthians 15:51 – 52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 18

²³¹Ephesians 2:11 – 3:6

²³²1 Corinthians 10:32

²³³Ephesians 3:1 – 6. 5:32

²³⁴Acts 14:23, 27, 20:17,28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2 Thessalonians 1:1

²³⁵Hebrews 10:23 – 25

²³⁶Ephesians 3:21

²³⁷Ephesians 4:13 - 16

²³⁸Matthew 28:19; 2 Timothy 3:16 – 4:2

²³⁹Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3

²⁴⁰Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 1:12

²⁴¹1 Timothy 3:15

²⁴²Matthew 18:15 – 17; 1 Corinthians 5:1 - 2

²⁴³Romans 11:11 - 12

²⁴⁴Acts 2:38 – 42; 1 Corinthians 11:23 - 26

²⁴⁵1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18

²⁴⁶John 14:26, 15:26; 16:13, 17:14 – 21; 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18; 2 Timothy 4:1 & 2; 2 Peter 1:19

²⁴⁷Acts 20:28 - 32; 1 Peter 5:1 – 4

²⁴⁸Philippians 1:1

²⁴⁹1 Timothy 3:1 – 13; Titus 1:5 – 9; 1 Peter 5:1 - 5

²⁵⁰1 Timothy 5:17 - 22

²⁵¹Hebrews 13:7,17

²⁵²Acts 6:1 - 4

Each local church is autonomous in its own government, free from any external human authority or hierarchy of persons or organizations, yet all are subject to Christ.²⁵³ Autonomy is not meant to exclude interdependence among local churches as they cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the gospel.²⁵⁴ The elders should determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well, under the guidance of God's Spirit and in accordance with the commands and principles in God's Word.²⁵⁵

Ordinances

Two ordinances have been perpetually committed to the local church: Baptism²⁵⁶ and the Lord's Supper²⁵⁷.

Christian baptism by immersion in water²⁵⁸ is an expression of the believer's faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior. It is the solemn and beautiful visual testimony of our union with Christ in which we portray death to sin and resurrection to a new life²⁵⁹. It is also a sign of initial fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ²⁶⁰. While not necessary for salvation, water baptism is commanded and an act of obedience for all who come to saving faith.²⁶¹

The Lord's Supper is the ongoing commemoration and proclamation of Christ's death until He comes, by eating bread, signifying His body, and drinking the cup, signifying His blood, shed on our behalf²⁶². The Lord's Supper should always be preceded by solemn self-examination²⁶³. Whereas the elements of communion are only representative of the body and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper nevertheless is an actual communion with the believer and the risen Christ²⁶⁴.

Section VI – The Spiritual Realm

Angels

Angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshipped. As a different order of being than man, they were created to serve and worship God in the spiritual realm and do not experience marriage, reproduction, or redemption²⁶⁵.

Satan and Demons

Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator, by taking numerous angels with him in his fall²⁶⁶, and by introducing sin into the human

²⁵³Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5

²⁵⁴1 Corinthians 16:1 – 4; 2 Corinthians 8:3 - 4

²⁵⁵Acts 15:19 – 31, 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:5 – 7; 1 Peter 5:1 - 4

²⁵⁶Acts 2:38

²⁵⁷1 Corinthians 11:23 - 29

²⁵⁸Acts 8:36 - 39

²⁵⁹Romans 6:1 - 11

²⁶⁰Acts 2:41 – 42, 8:12 – 17, 10:47 - 48

²⁶¹Acts 10:47; 1 Corinthians 1:17

²⁶²Luke 22:19 – 20; John 6:53

²⁶³1 Corinthians 11:28 - 32

²⁶⁴1 Corinthians 10:16 - 17

²⁶⁵Mark 12:25; Luke 2:9 –14; Hebrews 1:6 – 7, 2:6 – 7 & 16; Revelation 5:11 – 14, 19:10, 22:8 - 9

²⁶⁶Ezekiel 28:11 - 19

race by his temptation of Eve²⁶⁷. Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man²⁶⁸, the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ²⁶⁹, and shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire²⁷⁰. Although Satan and his minions are powerful beings, they are completely subservient to the sovereign will of almighty God²⁷¹. Although the Apostles were given power to and did exercise control over demons²⁷², believers have no power in and of themselves and have not been called to direct or order the activity of Satan and his demons, and should recognize that only God Himself is able to do so²⁷³. Rather, believers are called to resist the devil and rely on the Word of God to give them strength to do battle with Satan²⁷⁴. Since believers are called to resist Satan, we can say that believers can be *influenced and tempted* by Satan, however, believers cannot be *possessed* (or enslaved) by Satan to the point of having no ability to resist sin and temptation²⁷⁵.

Section VII – Last things

After death all mankind, who have died, will undergo a bodily resurrection – the saved to eternal life in heaven²⁷⁶, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment²⁷⁷. The souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment in hell until the second resurrection²⁷⁸, when the soul and a resurrection body will be united²⁷⁹. They shall then appear at the Great White Throne for judgment, and shall be cast into the lake of fire, cut off from the life of God forever, as a just retribution and punishment for their sins.²⁸⁰

The return of the Lord Jesus is imminent and will be a sudden, personal, visible bodily return of Christ to remove His church from the world.²⁸¹ We should eagerly long for Christ's return.²⁸² We do not know when Christ will return.²⁸³

The final and ultimate result of Christ's return will be the judgment of unbelievers and the final reward of believers, and the believers will live with Christ in a new heaven and new earth for all eternity. God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit will reign and will be worshipped in a never-ending kingdom with no more sin, sorrow, or suffering.

²⁶⁷ Genesis 3:1 - 15

²⁶⁸ 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9 - 10

²⁶⁹ Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14

²⁷⁰ Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10

²⁷¹ Job 1:6 - 12; Luke 22:31 - 32; Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 12:10 - 11

²⁷² Mark 6:7 & 13; Luke 10:1 & 17

²⁷³ 2 Peter 2:10 - 11; Jude 8 & 9

²⁷⁴ Matthew 4:1 - 11; Romans 6:4, 11, 14; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Ephesians 6:11 - 16; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9;

²⁷⁵ Luke 4:2; 2 Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 6:12; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8.

²⁷⁶ John 6:39; Romans 8:19 - 23; 1 Corinthians 15:35 - 57; 2 Corinthians 4:14

²⁷⁷ Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13 - 15

²⁷⁸ Luke 16:19 - 26; Revelation 20:13 - 15

²⁷⁹ John 5:28 - 29

²⁸⁰ Isaiah 59:18; Daniel 12:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:7 - 9; Revelation 20:11 - 15

²⁸¹ Matthew 24:44; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 9:28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:10; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:7, 22:20.

²⁸² Matthew 25:21; Titus 2:12-13; Revelation 22:20

²⁸³ Matthew 24:24, 25:13; Mark 13:32-33; Luke 12:40