

STATEMENT OF FAITH

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. The Holy Scriptures are inerrant in the original writings, 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, and all issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the pastor in conjunction with the elders. Word-for-word translations based upon the Majority Text or the Received Text i.e., the New King James or King James Versions, will be the preferred translations used by the church. Secondly, word-for-word translations of most recent texts i.e., New American Standard Bible, will be preferred over those using dynamic equivalence i.e., The New International Version. Paraphrased bibles, such as The Living Bible, are not translations and are not to be used as a reference bible. (Ps. 119:89; Matt. 5:18; John 16:12,13; II Tim 3:16,17; II Peter 1:20,21)

DISPENSATIONALISM

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. There are seven dispensations three of which - the law, the church, and the kingdom - are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; I Cor. 9:17, 10:32; II Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-27; Rev. 20:2-6)

THE GODHEAD

One Triune God, eternally co-existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each eternal in being, identical in nature, equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 14:10, 26; II Cor. 13:14; I Peter 1:2)

THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

(A) The Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became wholly man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin, Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. (Luke 1:35; John 1:1,2,14)

(B) The Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a sinless representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 3:24,25, 5:10; Eph. 1:7; I Peter 1:3-5, 2:24)

(C) The Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9,10; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24, 7:25; I John 2:1,2)

THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(A) The Holy Spirit is a Person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 12:12-24; II Cor. 3:6; Eph.1:13-14)

(B) He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth; and it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (John 16: 13; Eph. 5:18; I John 2:20,27)

(C) God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts, and He, by His Spirit, gave gifts to believers for the building of the church; the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today in the use of their (the saints) sovereignly bestowed gifts for the total building up of the body of Christ. (I Cor. 12:4-12; II Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-16)

THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN

Satan is a person, a fallen cherub, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of man; he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6,7; Is. 14: 12-17; Ezek. 28:12-19; Matt. 4:2-11; 25: 41; I Peter 5:8; Rev. 20:10)

THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN

Man was created in the image and likeness of God, but in Adam's sin, the 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. 3:10-18,23, 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3, 12, 4:18)

THE CONDITION OF MAN AND ITS CONSEQUENCE

Because of the lost condition of man as separated from his Creator by his offenses against God (sin), his selfishness (rejection of God's authority in his life) and his inability to remedy that condition, man is destined to remain in that condition until physical death; death on the earth is the result of the sinfulness of man; unless this lost condition can be completely altered, after death he shall be judged of God and ultimately separated from God incurring for all eternity the wrath of God. (Romans 3:23, 5:12, 6:23; Heb. 9:27)

SALVATION

(A) God in His love for His creation and in particular mankind undertook, on our behalf, while we were still sinners, to save us from His own impending wrath; He altered the believer's condition through the new birth (born again experience); He cleared the believer's guilt, forgave all his sin, cleansed him and made him His own child through the death of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in full payment for sin; and guaranteed the believer's everlasting life through the resurrection of Christ. (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8-11, 8:9-11; I John 3:9, 5:1,18)

(B) Salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died as the substitute for sinful man by shedding His precious blood on Calvary to pay the penalty for our sins. By faith in Him and His works, we are redeemed, forgiven of our sin and reconciled to God. (John 1:12; II Cor. 5:18-21; Eph. 1:7, 2:8-10; Col. 1:14-22; I Peter 1:18,19)

(C) The new birth (born again experience) is accomplished by the Spirit of God at the moment of true faith in the Christ and is essential to salvation. He regenerates us, cleanses us, baptizes us into the body of Christ and comes to live or dwell in us. (John 3:3-8; Rom. 6:3-5; I Cor. 12:13; Titus 3:3-7; Eph. 1: 12-14)

(D) All the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40, 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1,38,39; I Cor. 1:4-8; I Peter 1:3-5)

(E) Salvation is the Spirit-induced response to a person placing faith in the Gospel. The Gospel is the full account of God's plan and work in restoring man from his depraved and lost condition to a right standing and relationship with Himself. The elements of the Gospel include the Person of Jesus Christ as the fully righteous Son of God as Savior and Lord, His death on the cross for sinners as predicated in the Holy Scriptures, His burial, and His resurrection from the dead three days after His death as confirmed by many

witnesses and predicated by the Holy Scriptures. Personal faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ as found in the Gospel is essential in salvation. (Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9-13; I Cor. 15:1-8)

(F) All men are responsible before God and are from birth sinners spiritually dead in their trespasses and sins, unable of their own strength to convert themselves, and are under the penalty of death. The Bible states clearly that believers are chosen in Christ (elected) before the foundation of the world and that this election was based upon His foreknowledge of them. The teaching of the Holy Scriptures is that believers were born of God not through bloodlines, family lines or genetics, their own will or the will of any other man. The Bible also states that believers are given to the Lord Jesus Christ by the Father and that none can come to Him but by the Father's drawing them. Those coming to Jesus He will in no way cast out. But they must come to Him and they must place personal faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, Lord and Savior. It is also evident that all men are not saved because they do not come to Him and do not believe Him. Therefore salvation is not universal and is God-originated, not based upon human decision. Mercy is in the One who gives it not the one who needs it. No one will go to heaven who did not want to and who did not place personal faith in Christ Jesus, that faith being a gift of God wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit. Conversely no one will miss heaven who wanted to go and who wanted to believe. Left to themselves no one would come to God. Apart from God's intervening work on the behalf of believers, none would be saved. (John 1:12,13; 6:37,39,44,45; Rom. 9:6-29, 8:29,30, 3:10-18; Eph. 1:4, 2:1-10; I Peter 1:2; Rev. 13:8)

PRACTICAL SANCTIFICATION -- OBEDIENCE OF THE BELIEVER

CONFLICTS OF THE BELIEVER

(A) Since the believer in Christ is a new creation, his way of life prior to conversion, the flesh, is passing away. He will have an internal struggle or conflict between the "new man" in him created by the Holy Spirit and the remnants of a life trained and stained (the flesh or "sin in my members") by the totally depraved "old man" who used to live in him. The conflict will go on until he is in the presence of the Lord. The conflict can only be won by humble, faithful dependence upon the Holy Spirit by the believer. (Rom. 7:14-25, 8:1-11; II Cor. 5:17; Ga l. 5:16-26; I Pet 2:11)

(B) Every believer lives in an environment dominated by a system of beliefs and values which grow out of and is driven by sin. The believer is no longer of this world's system and a conflict with the Spirit-created new man and this system now exists and will continue until the believer is taken into the presence of the Lord. We are not to love this world but scrutinize our every thought and action as to its origin in God or this world system. (John 17:14-19; Rom 12:1-2; Eph 4:17-24; I John 2:15-17)

(C) Every believer before trusting Christ was controlled by a wicked spiritual system dominated by Satan and his fallen angels. A believer is delivered from the darkness of these evil principalities, powers and rulers, but he is not immune from their influence as he wrestles against these forces that: oppose God's work; prevent proclaiming the gospel; pervert the Scriptures; produce lying wonders; promote false teachings, discouragement and division in the church; and undermine every standard of God and Christ. (Psalm 91:11-12; Matt .4:6; Rom. 8:38; II Cor. 2:10-11, 4:4, 10:3-5, 11:13-15; Eph. 2:2, 6:12; Col. 1:13, 2:15; I Thess. 2:18; II Thess. 2:9; I Tim 4:1-5)

LIVE IN THE SPIRIT

It is the duty and privilege of every born-again believer to walk in the Spirit (following the biblically-enlightened leading of the indwelling Holy Spirit.) and to be filled with the Spirit (under the dominant control of the indwelling Holy Spirit) as a matter of his daily behavior and activities. (Gal. 5:16-26; Rom. 8:1-27; Eph. 5:18-6:18)

LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN

(A) It is the evidence of true salvation and the duty of every believer to love all other believers in Christ; this love is the fruit of the indwelling Holy Spirit and must find tangible expression in the life of the believer. (John 13:34-35; Gal. 5:22, 6:9-10; James 2:14-25; I John 3:17, 4:7-5:1)

(B) We should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers and those who oppose us. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21, 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; II Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; I John 3:17-18)

SEPARATION AND LIBERTY

(A) All the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; God commands us to separate from religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances. (Rom. 12:1,2, 14:13; II Cor. 6:14-7:1; II Timothy 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11)

(B) It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word. The Holy Scriptures clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an opportunity for the flesh or as an opportunity to dispute with, offend or cause a weaker brother to fall. This liberty is precious and never to be sacrificed by being entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Rom. 13:13,14, 14:1-23; I Cor. 8:1-13; Gal. 5:1,13; Titus 2:11-15; I Peter 2:15,16)

EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS

(A) Evangelism is the conscious, obedient effort of the believer to share the Gospel with a lost person with the full intention of securing a positive response from him of faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ for the saving of his soul. Since the Holy Spirit's convincing work is essential to an effective presentation of the Gospel, it is essential that the witnessing believer be totally reliant upon the Holy Spirit to convince those who are lost to trust Him. Since salvation is given only to those who believe the Gospel, an accurate presentation of the Gospel must be made. In this presentation of the Gospel certain elements must be present for the person to believe. These elements include an awareness on the part of the hearer of his condition before God (a sinner, separated from God by His sin and with no ability to come to God on his own); an awareness of the hearer of the consequences of his condition (condemnation and death, or eternal separation from God in everlasting punishment); God's response to the sinner's dilemma (sending His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to pay the sinner's penalty as his substitute with His death on the cross and resurrection); the method whereby Christ's saving work can be applied to his life (turning from sin and self-confidence to total confidence, trust, reliance or faith in who Jesus is and what He has done for him); and the invitation to the convicted hearer to accept this free gift of eternal life. (John 6:44, 45, 47, 16:8-11, 11:25-26; Acts 16:30, 31, 17:30-31; Rom. 3:10-18, 23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-13; I Cor. 2:2-5, 15:1-8; II Cor. 5:11; Col 1:28; I Peter 3:15)

(B) God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the obligation of the saved to witness by life and by word to the truths of the Holy Scripture and to seek to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 5:20)

STUDY AND INSTRUCTION IN AND OF THE WORD

It is the duty and obligation of every believer to be instructed in the Word of God by gifted and qualified teachers of the Word and to methodically and consistently study the Word of God on his own in

order to be properly equipped for ministry and every good work as well as to give a good answer for the hope resting in him. (Eph. 4:11-14; II Tim. 2:15, 3:16-17; I Peter 3:15)

PRAYER

It is the duty and privilege of every born-again believer to engage in both individual and corporate prayer as commanded by the Holy Scriptures and that such prayer is to be offered continually. (I Tim. 2:1,2,8; I Thess. 5:17-18)

WORSHIP

It is the top priority, privilege, honor, duty and obligation of every born again, Spirit-controlled believer in Jesus Christ to joyfully and freely offer to God praise (saying what is true about God), thanksgiving (grateful acknowledgement of what He has done for him), totally surrendered obedience and acts of mercy, kindness and compassion. Such worship is to have God as its central aim and focus. It is to be biblically truthful, filled with joy and extending from a heart of the worshipper who has been awakened, convicted, enlightened and enlivened by the Holy Spirit. It is the duty of every believer to humble himself before God, submitting mind and heart to God's Word and Holy Spirit in a state of receptive preparedness and confident anticipation. Such worship involves the whole man and is to be personal and public, private and corporate, and should be the goal of every public service of Edgemont Bible Church. (Deut 6:5; Psalm 5:11, 32:11, 34:1-3, 111:1, 149:1,3-6; John 4:23-24; Acts 2:46-47; Eph 1:3-14; Phil 4:4; Heb 10:19-22, 11:6, 13:15-16; I Pet 2:9)

GIVING

Every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. Proportionate giving is a distinct and positive command in the Holy Scriptures, and obligates ourselves to a systematic contribution for the support of the Church of such portion of our income, as we believe God requires of us. Every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. A Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the proportionate giving or offering once the gift has been made. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; I Tim. 5:17-18; I John 3:17)

RELATIONSHIPS

MARRIAGE

God has ordained that marriage is the monogamous union for life of one man and one woman. It is a covenant relationship between the man and woman and God, and is honorable for all mankind both believer and unbeliever. The divine institution of marriage dates from the time of man's original creation. Marriage is designed for the happiness of all humans; increasing of population; the raising up of godly children; and for the prevention of fornication. The marriage relationship is used to represent the union between God and His people Israel. It is also used to represent the love of Christ to His saints. (Gen. 1:27-28, 2:18-24, 9:1; Mal. 2:4,15; Is. 54:5; Jer. 3:1-14; Ho. 2:9,20; I Cor. 7:2; Eph. 5:23-27; Heb. 13:4)

FAMILY

(A) God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle and appropriate discipline, including scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18, 22:15, 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; I Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; I Pet. 3:1-7)

(B) Men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader

of the home and men are to be the leaders (pastors, elders and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (I Cor. 11:3; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; I Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or elder. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12, 19; Rom. 7:1-3; I Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

HUMAN SEXUALITY.

God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24, 19:5, 13, 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Deut 22:5; Rom. 1: 26-29; I Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE

(A) Human life begins at conception and the unborn child is a human being. From the moment of conception until the death of the human being his life is under the merciful and just providence of God. Each human being is in the image of God and is responsible to Him for every aspect of his life. Each human being is formed by God in the womb of his mother and God is the maker of every "normality" and "abnormality". All souls belong to Him and the death of that person is left to God and God alone. Since God is its maker, human life is to be respected and treated with the love of God from conception to death. Because all life belongs to God and is sanctified by Him the following statements shall be true for this body of believers in Christ. (Gen. 9:6; Ex. 4:11, 20:13; Lev. 19:18,34; Ps. 94:9, 139:13-16, 146:8,9, 145: 8,9, 14-16; 24:1; Ezek. 18: 4; Mark 12:31; Rom. 13:9)

(B) All forms of abuse against human beings are a violation of the work of God in man and are prohibited by God's Word. This includes acts of rage, prejudice and neglect of care. (Gen. 9:5, 6; Ex. 20:13; Eph. 4:26, 31,32; James 1:19,20)

(C) The ultimate abuse of humanity is the intentional taking of human life. This is murder, a transgression of God's Law, and is therefore sin. This includes so-called "mercy killings" or "euthanasia", and suicide. The only exceptions to this rule are those of capital punishment, acts of war and acts of self-defense. The unintentional taking of another's life while resulting in death is not equal to murder. (Gen. 9:5,6; Ex. 20:13; Num. 35: 16-28; Deut. 19:4-10)

(D) Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental or social well being of the mother are acceptable. (Ex. 21:22-25; Job 3:16, 10:10,11; Ps. 51:5, 139:15-16; Is. 44:24, 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5, 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

(E) God's Word holds the governments of humanity responsible for the punishment of those who take another's life intentionally. Capital punishment is the prescribed treatment for murderers. This is the responsibility of the civil government and not the related individuals or family of the murdered victim. God's Law prohibits personal vengeance. (Gen. 9:5,6; Deut. 19:11-13; Rom. 13:1-7; Rom. 12:14-21)

(F) It is the responsibility of the governing body of a people to avenge the unjust and intentional taking of human life by another people. Any government or group of people making an unprovoked attack

upon another group of people in which human life is taken as a result is guilty of murder. It is the right and duty of the government of the victimized people to avenge the murder of its people upon the guilty parties of the aggressor country or group. (Rom 13:1-7; I Pet. 2:13,14)

(G) For any person or group of people to sit by and watch as one person or a group of persons abuse or murder others, when it is within their power to stop it, is sin. Whereas murder of the victimizer is not within the options of the one witnessing or being aware of the act, all other means of speech and deed, including legal force are within his power to prevent or stop the act. It is the duty of followers of Christ to seek the prevention or cessation of abuse by appeal to the abuser or, if not heard, to appeal to the higher authority. It is the privilege of the believer to give aid, care and even shelter to the victims. (Esther 7:1-10; Ps. 82:1-4; Prov. 24:11,12; Is. 1:16,17, 58:6,7; Ezek. 3:17-19; Philemon 1:10-18; Heb. 13:3, 12:12,13)

(H) It is the ultimate duty and privilege of every believer to not only give physical aid to the victims but to give the gospel of Jesus Christ to every man, both abused and abuser, seeking for them the mercy of God for their sin. (Gal. 6:10; Rom 1:14-16,12:13, 17-21; Titus 3:8; Heb. 13:3; James 2:15, 16; I John 3:17,18)

LAWSUITS BETWEEN BELIEVERS

Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. The church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. (The process is defined in Article III, Membership) (I Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other or violate Holy Scripture. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; I Pet. 2:13-14)

NATURAL WORLD

(A) God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. It was Created by Him, through Him and for Him. It is held together by His Word. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11; John 1:2; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:3; II Peter 3:4-6)

(B) The current natural world is steadily in decline due to the curse brought upon it by man. It groans and labors to be free from the corruption of bondage. It will be delivered one day by the Lord Jesus Christ when He returns. (Gen. 3:17-18; Is. 11:1-9, 65:17-25; Rom. 8:19-23; Rev. 21-22:5)

(C) Though God is immanent in His creation, He is transcendent in His relationship to it. Creation is not an extension of His existence, but all things exist by Him and in Him. Man is the only being in His earthly creation who was made in His image. Human beings are not relatives, equals or brothers of other life forms, though all forms of life on earth are interactive and interdependent with one another. (Gen 1:27; Ps. 8:6-8, 104:10-32, 145:15-16; Acts 17:11)

(D) Man has been given by God the responsibility for the care (stewardship) of God's creation. The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it. He owns it; man uses it. The land and its resources have been given to man for sustenance, provision, protection, assistance and productivity, and are to be treated with respect and thoughtful care as gifts from God. (Gen. 1:20, 2:15, 9:2-4; Deut. 25:4; Ps 24:1; Prov. 12:10-11)

(E) All the things of our natural world are temporary and carry no eternal value. Therefore, no lasting connections can be made with them. Ultimately, the current world, cursed by our sin, shall be

destroyed and replaced by a new one, which shall be without the curse of sin. The believer is to avoid entanglement with the need to accumulate and possess this world's goods. He is free to use all things legitimately available to him. He is to be content with such things as he has. (Prov. 30:7-9; I Tim. 6:5-10, 6:17; Heb. 13:5)

THE CHURCH

(A) The Church, which is the body and espoused bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present age. (I Cor. 12:12-14; II Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22,23, 5:25-27)

(B) The establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).

(C) The local church is solely under the authority and control of Christ as revealed in Holy Scriptures and is to remain free from any external authority or control that violates those Scriptures. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; I Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; Col. 1:18; I Pet. 5:1-4)

(D) Water baptism and the Lord's Supper are Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; I Cor. 11:23-26)

(E) This church is in full fellowship with all those who are born-again through faith in Jesus Christ the Lord. The church rejects all cooperative association with those whose belief and practices are based in deceit, false teaching, pragmatism or the "end-justifies-the-means". Additionally, this church unalterably opposes any "dialogue" or overture whatsoever, which has as its ultimate purpose the breaking down of the determination of Christians to stand true to their God; the purity of the Holy Scriptures; the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the traditional Christian faith, as outlined in the New Testament. It is our duty to exercise discernment through Scripture, research of the movement and prayer before any commitment is made. (Acts 17:11; Rom. 16:17-18; II Cor. 4:2; Col. 2:8-10; Titus 3:9-11; II Peter 2:1; I John 5:9-10; Rev. 2:2)

RESURRECTION AND JUDGEMENT - REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

(A) It is destined for man to die once and after this to be judged by his Creator God; the basis for this Judgment shall be personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ with which a person shall go on to eternal life and without which a person shall go on to judgment and everlasting punishment. (John 3:16,36, 5:21-29, 12:47,48; Acts 10:42, 17:30-31; Heb. 9:27)

(B) Following the resurrection of the believers in Christ (the Church) there will be a time of Judgment for the believer known as the Judgment Seat of Christ in which he will be judged for the motive and manner in which he has conducted his life on earth. This will result in loss or reward for the future state but not in condemnation by separation from God. (I Cor. 3:11-15, 4:5; II Cor. 5:10; II Tim. 4:8; Rev. 22:12)

(C) All men will be bodily resurrected, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to Judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28,29, 11:25,26; Rev. 20:5,6,11-15)

THE RAPTURE AND SECOND ADVENT (COMING) OF CHRIST

The "blessed hope," the rapture, is the pre-millennial, personal, imminent return of Christ for His saints, the Church, before the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints, the Second Advent, to establish His earthly Millennial Kingdom, which was promised to the nation of Israel. (Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; John 14:1-3; I Thess. 1:10, 4:13-18; II Thess. 1:7-10; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

THE ETERNAL STATE

(A) The souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; I Cor. 15:20-28, 51-58; II Cor. 5:1, 8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; Col 3:4; I Thess. 4:16,17; Rev. 20:4-6)

(B) The souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; II Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6,7; Rev. 20:11-15)

(C) All elect, chosen believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, God's Son. We will have bodies like His resurrected body; we will know Him as He knows us; we will know each other on the highest level of consciousness possible for us; we will know God and live in His presence. These things are not possible to us now because of our living in mortal bodies with indwelling sin. The conclusion of our redemption, sanctification and predestination takes place at our resurrection and/or rapture with Christ. (Rom. 8:23-25, 29; I Cor. 13:12, 15:35-57; II Cor. 5:1-8; Eph. 1:5; I Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 21:1-8; 22:1-5)

SECTION 2.02 – AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in church worship and education shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.