The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4
Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19
Joshua 8:34
Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11, 89, 105, 140
Isaiah 34:16; 40:8
Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32
Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29
Luke 21:33; 24:44-46
John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17
Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11
Romans 15:4; 16:25-26
2 Timothy 3:15-17
Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12
1 Peter 1:25
2 Peter 1:19-21

God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all-powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is distinct, yet without division of nature, essence, or being.

GOD THE FATHER

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all people.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7
Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.
Leviticus 22:2
Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6
1 Chronicles 29:10
Psalms 19:1-3
Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8
Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13
Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19
Mark 1:9-11
John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8
Acts 1:7
Romans 8:14-15
1 Corinthians 8:6
Galatians 4:6
Ephesians 4:6
Colossians 1:15
1 Timothy 1:17
Hebrews 11:6; 12:9
1 Peter 1:17
1 John 5:7

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GOD THE SON

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin, Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God and fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission.

Genesis 18:1ff.
Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.
Isaiah 7:14; 53
Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19
Mark 1:1; 3:11
Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46
John 1:1-18,29; 10:30, 38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16, 28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20, 28
Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5, 20
Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3, 34; 10:4
1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8, 24-28
2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9
Galatians 4:4-5
Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10
Philippians 2:5-11
Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9
1 Thessalonians 4:14-18
1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16
Titus 2:13-14
Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15, 24-28; 12:2; 13:8
1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22
1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9
2 John 7-9
Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16

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GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables people to understand the truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts people of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls people to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer for the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

Genesis 1:2
Judges 14:6
Job 26:13
Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.
Isaiah 61:1-3
Joel 2:28-32
Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19
Mark 1:10,12
Luke 1:35; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49
John 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14
Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6
Romans 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27
1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11, 13
Galatians 4:6
Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18
1 Thessalonians 5:19
1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1
2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16
Hebrews 9:8, 14
2 Peter 1:21
1 John 4:13; 5:6-7
Revelation 1:10; 22:17

Humanity

Mankind was created as male and female in the image and likeness of God. Falling into temptation, man rebelled against God in the garden and fell from innocence. The fall of man brings a curse and brokenness in the relationship between God and man, man and fellow man, and man and the created world. Due to mankind's sin, death, sin and evil have entered into God's good world.

Being made in the image of God, human life is sacred, whether that human life exists in pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged and every other stage or condition of life, from conception through natural death. As such we are called to defend, protect and greatly value human life.

According to God's good design, he has ordained marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman, to be ended only by death. Regarding sex, God created sex as a gift to be enjoyed within the covenant of marriage. The exercise of sexual expression outside the biblical definition of marriage in any manner is contradictory to God's design for sexuality and marriage. Both husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to lovingly lead his wife as Christ loved the church. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ.

God assigns gender to his people, male (man) and female (woman), as he created them sexually and biologically different, but with equal personal dignity and value. These two, distinct, complementary genders each fully reflect the image and nature of God.

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Humanity (Continued)

Obedience to God's design for sex, biological gender, and marriage is the path to experiencing God's blessing. Decisions to change, alter, or modify God's will in marriage, sex, or gender are part of man's brokenness and lead to despair.

Genesis 1:26-31; 2:5, 7, 15-25; 3:19; 9:6; 25:8
Exodus 20:12
Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Joshua 24:15
1 Samuel 1:26-28
Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128:1-4; 139:13-16
Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15, 17; 31:10-31
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9
Isaiah 6:5; 44:2; 49:5; 59:1-2
Jeremiah 1:4-5; 17:5
Malachi 2:14-16
Matthew 5:27-32; 16:26; 18:2-5; 19:3-12
Mark 10:6-12
Luke 23:46
John 3:17; 10:10
Acts 17:26-31
Romans 1:10-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 8, 12, 19; 6:6, 23; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29
1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 6:9-11, 18-20; 7:1-16; 15:19, 21-22
Galatians 5:16-21
Ephesians 2:1-22; 5:21-33; 6:1-4
Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11, 18-21
1 Timothy 1:10; 5:8, 14
2 Timothy 1:3-5
Titus 2:3-5; 3:3-7
Hebrews 13:4
James 1:13-15
1 Peter 3:1-7; 5:6-7

Salvation

Scripture teaches that God is distinct from us in persons and essence. He is the Creator of all things and has made us in His image and likeness within His creation. We were made for a relationship with Him though He is superior to us in every way. God's character is holy, meaning that He is perfectly balanced in qualities like His love and justice. Being holy, it is right for God to hold mankind accountable for sin and yet lovingly provide a way of escape from judgment. Salvation is God's deliverance of people from his wrath through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All of mankind has rebelled against God and are condemned to eternal death and separation from Him. Jesus, God's Son, was sent to die in the place of condemned sinners to make it possible for them to be brought back into a right relationship with their Creator. Through faith in Jesus, who was raised from the dead, people can experience God's forgiveness and have hope of eternal life with Him.

When a person turns to God and places their trust fully in Jesus they are "born again" by the Holy Spirit. This means that the Spirit of God comes to dwell forever in the spirit of the believer making them alive to God and able to live a "new" life that honors the Lord. The believer is sealed by the Holy Spirit for the day of Christ's return and is assured of being spared from God's wrath. After Christ's return, believers will dwell with God forever.

Salvation is experienced when a person's faith is placed in Jesus Christ for forgiveness and a right relationship with God. This is the experience of "new birth" sometimes referred to in the Bible as "regeneration". All of those saved by God's grace are justified by grace, being pardoned of their sin and granted the righteousness of Christ. Salvation is worked out in our lives as we submit to the work of Christ's Spirit, motivating and empowering us to obey Him, sometimes referred to in the Bible as "sanctification". Salvation will be realized fully when Christ returns again to take us to be with Him forever, referred to as "glorification."

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Salvation (Continued)

The statements below further explain various aspects of the salvation that can be experienced through faith in Jesus Christ.

GRACE

We believe that God's grace does not come to us as the result of human effort or worthiness, but is the provision of God's mercy and love freely given to those who will believe in His Son. Grace gives to us what we do not deserve nor can earn by our performance. It is by God's grace that a person is able to experience forgiveness and a right relationship with Him. Believers in Jesus Christ stand in the grace of God, and by it they have hope. For those in Christ, grace abounds far beyond sin and its consequences, to the end that condemned sinners are now able to have eternal life through Jesus Christ.

SIN

We believe that all people are sinners and unable by human performance to earn, deserve, or merit salvation. We believe that the wages of sin is death, and that apart from God's grace no one can be saved. We believe that none are righteous before God, and that apart from the conviction and regeneration of the Holy Spirit, none can be saved. Mankind is clearly fallen and lost in sin.

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Salvation (Continued)

FORGIVENESS

We believe that Jesus Christ died as a substitute for and a satisfaction of God's righteous judgment against sin "for the whole world". God redeems and forgives all who will believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation from sin, death, and hell . We believe that eternal life is a gift of God, and that whoever believes in Jesus Christ will not perish, but will have eternal life. This eternal life was purchased by the death of Jesus Christ in the place of sinners. The atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ was sufficient to save the entire human race, but becomes effective only in those who believe.

John 1:12-13; 3:16-18; 16:8-11
Romans 3:10-12, 24-28; 5:1-2, 8, 15-19, 20-21; 6:19-22, 23; 8:18, 29-30; 11:6
Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:4-10
Philippians 2:12-13
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
1 Timothy 4:10
Titus 3:5
Hebrews 2:9
1 Peter 1:18-19, 23-25
2 Peter 2:1
1 John 2:2; 4:9-10

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Salvation (Continued)

ELECTION

We believe that God chose believers before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight and in love has predestined them to be adopted as His children. Those whom God has foreknown He has predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. We believe that God offers salvation to all who will call on His name. We also believe that God calls to Himself those who will believe in His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible also teaches that there is a universal command to repent given to all people. God clearly does choose, but man must also, by the power of God's Holy Spirit, accept God's invitation to salvation.

Matthew 22:14
John 1:12-13; 16:8-11
Acts 17:30-31
Romans 8:29-30, 10:13
1 Corinthians 1:9
Ephesians 1:4-6
1 Peter 1:2, 23-25
Revelation 22:17

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Salvation (Continued)

PERSEVERANCE

We believe that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, and that there is no condemnation to those who are in Jesus Christ. Those who have been chosen and called by Jesus will not be lost, for God promises to bring to completion the good work He has started. For those who are saved, they are sealed by the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption. Those who are born again of God will continue in faith to the end and will not finally fall away.

John 6:37, 10:27-28
Romans 8:1, 29-30, 38-39
Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30
Philippians 1:6
Hebrews 3:4
1 Peter 1:5
Jude 24

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The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, maturing in wisdom and character, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation and each member is accountable to Jesus Christ and His will as revealed in Scripture. The scriptural officers of a local church are elders and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of elder is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20;
Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6;
13:1-3; 14:23, 27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28
Romans 1:7
1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17;
9:13-14; 12
Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22;
3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32
Philippians 1:1
Colossians 1:18
1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14
Hebrews 11:39-40
1 Peter 5:1-4
Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3

Baptism and The Lord's Supper

We believe that the universal church of Jesus Christ is made up of every person who has been "born again." People are born again by God's grace through their faith (trust) in Jesus Christ. Water baptism is an outward act of obedience and a symbol that signifies that a person has in fact received Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Baptism publicly identifies them with Christ and the local expression of His church.

We believe in baptism of believers through immersion in water. This was the meaning of the Greek word "baptizo" before, during and after the time of Jesus and the Apostles. It is also evident in the New Testament accounts of persons being baptized that they were immersed. The New Testament letters also give evidence that the symbolism in baptism corresponds to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. A person being put under the water symbolizes their death to sin and self, the old way of living, and coming up out of the water symbolizes their resurrection with Christ to a new way of life.

In the Scriptures, water baptism always immediately followed a person's conversion experience. Though water baptism does not "save" a person it signifies that they have been "saved" and shows their desire to be affiliated with a local expression of the church. It was always a first step, a sort of initiation rite into life as a Christian, which also "marked" them as a member of the visible, local church.

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Baptism and The Lord's Supper (Continued)

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20
Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26
Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20
John 3:1-8, 23
Acts 2:37-42; 8:12-13, 36-39; 9:17-18; 10:44-48; 16:30-34; 20:7
Romans 6:3-5
1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29
Ephesians 2:8-9
Colossians 2:12
Titus 3:3-7

The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which people enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1
Isaiah 9:6-7
Jeremiah 23:5-6
Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10, 23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29
Mark 1:14-15; 9:1
Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42
John 3:3; 18:36
Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31
Romans 5:17; 8:19
1 Corinthians 15:24-28
Colossians 1:13
Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28
1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13
Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22

Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all people in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever with the Lord in the new heavens and new earth.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9
Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27, 30, 36, 44; 25:31-46; 26:64
Mark 8:38; 9:43-48
Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28
John 14:1-3
Acts 1:11; 17:31
Romans 14:10
1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28, 35-58
2 Corinthians 5:10
Philippians 3:20-21
Colossians 1:5; 3:4
1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.
2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2
1 Timothy 6:14
2 Timothy 4:1,8
Titus 2:13
Hebrews 9:27-28
James 5:8
2 Peter 3:7ff.
1 John 2:28; 3:2
Jude 14
Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13