

## **I. THE SCRIPTURES:**

### **A. Inspiration**

I believe that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God (II Timothy 3:16). In other words, God breathed the scriptures to man and man wrote down what God breathed by the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:20-21). Inspiration is of the writings not the writers. No human being is at the origin of the Bible; God is its sole author. The Scriptures are not the thoughts of man but the thoughts of God.

### **B. Finality**

Since “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God”, I believe that we have all we need. There is no reason to look anywhere else for God’s word. Secondly, The Scriptures are final because it is the only source of Faith (Romans 10:17). Thirdly, The Scriptures are complete because a curse is placed on those who add to or subtract from it (Revelation 22:18-19). Finally, God’s word is final because we are not to even think above that which is written (I Corinthians 4:6).

### **C. Authority**

I believe that the scriptures are the authority because of all of its claims. For example “Thus saith the Lord” is found over 400 times in the scriptures. Secondly, as much as we need food to survive physically, more importantly, we need the scriptures to survive spiritually (Luke 4:4). Thirdly, God’s word is the authority because of the unique work it performs in peoples lives (Hebrews 4:12-13). In closing, God’s word has radically changed more lives than any other person or thing, which confirms its authority.

## **II. THE GODHEAD:**

### **A. The Trinity**

I believe that the trinity means three in one. We know that there is only one God (Malachi 2:10). The word “*Elohim*” (Genesis 1:1) is the Hebrew word for God, which is found 2249 times in the Old Testament. “*Elohim*” is a plural form meaning more than two; therefore, this leads me to believe in the trinity. The word trinity is not a Biblical term, but it is used to aid our understanding of God in passages like I John 5:7 where “the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost... are one”. In Matthew 28:19, there is a clear declaration of the trinity “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost are working in unity. For example, in creation, God the Father created the heavens and the

earth (Genesis 1:1); then, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters (Genesis 1:2); and finally, God the Son, which is the word of God (John 1), created light (Genesis 1:3).

#### B. God, The Father

I believe that there is only one God (I Corinthians 8:6); He is the only true, living and eternal God (Jeremiah 10:10); He is light and in Him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5); He has approved His word (John 6:27); He has the position of leadership in the Godhead (John 5:30); He sent the Son (John 20:21); He sends the Holy Ghost (John 14:26); He gives power to the Son (John 5:19); He raised The Son from the dead (Galatians 1:1); He is glorified when His word is confessed (Philippians 2:11). He answers prayers (Matthew 19:18); He draws people to Himself (John 6:44); He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (II Peter 3:9).

#### C. God, The Son

I Believe that God the Son is one with God the Father (John 10:30); He is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world (Revelations 13:8); He was given for the salvation of the world (John 3:16); He was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:23); He was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:4); He was without sin (Hebrew 4:15); He came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10); He is the only way of Salvation (Acts 4:12; John 14:6); He died, was buried and rose again the third day ( I Corinthians 15:1-4); He has commanded the church to preach the Gospel (Mark 16:15); He is preparing a place for the church (John 14:2); He is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high (Hebrews 1:3); He intercedes for those who come to God by Him (Hebrews 7:25); He is coming again to take the church with Him in the Fathers house (John 14:3); He will reign a thousand years on the earth (Revelation 5:10; 20:4)

#### D. God. The Holy Spirit

I believe that God the Holy Spirit conceived God the Son in Mary (Matthew 1:20); He speaks through the believers (Mark 13:11; Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25); He teaches the believers what to say (Luke 12:12); He is sent after the glorification of Jesus Christ (John 7:39); He reminds the believers of the word of God (John 14:26); He guides into all truth (John 16:13); He gives power to the believers to witness (Acts 1:8); He gives utterance (Acts 2:4); He is a gift to those who repent (Acts 2:38); He comforts (Acts 9:31); He calls believers for a special purpose (Acts 13:2), and sends them (Acts 13:4); He intercedes for the believer to God the Father (Romans 8:26); He satisfies (Romans 15:16); He gives liberty (II Corinthians 3:17); He is contrary to the flesh

(Galatians 5:17); He dwells in the believers (II Timothy 1:14); He sanctifies the believers (II Thessalonians 2:13); He gives different gift to the believers (Hebrews 2:4); He is a witness in the believers of the work of God (Hebrews 10:15);

### **III. CREATION:**

I believe that God created the world and the universe in 6 literal days and rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day just as the Bible clearly declares (Genesis 1). I believe that the days of creation are literal because the Hebrew word *yome* found in Genesis 1 is used to describe a 24 hour period. I believe that God created the universe out of nothing and that He sustains it by His power (Hebrews 1:1-3).

### **IV. SALVATION:**

#### **A. Salvation:**

Deliverance from sin and Spiritual death (II Corinthians 1:10) – Salvation is the work that Christ was sent to do; He came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). He is the only way of salvation (John 14:6).

#### **B. Regeneration:**

A new beginning or rebirth (Titus 3:5) – Jesus said “ye must be born again” (John 3:7), this is the only way to see the kingdom of God.

#### **C. Justification:**

God pardons all the sins and counts the sinner just, only through faith (Galatians 2:16) – Christ took our sin that He may give His righteousness (II Corinthians 5:21).

#### **D. Redemption:**

To purchase back something once lost, by the means of a ransom (Matthew 20:28) – We were eternally lost and dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1) but Christ gave Himself for an eternal redemption for us (Hebrews 9:12).

E. Faith:

To place one's hope in something or someone (Romans 8:24) – our hope or faith is directed toward God who rewards us (Hebrews 11:6; 12:2). Faith in God produces confidence in our lives (I John 2:28).

F. Repentance:

To change one's mind and purpose concerning sin (Matthew 27:3) – without repentance there is no remission of sin (Mark 1:4).

G. Grace:

An undeserved gift (Ephesians 2:8) – if it were not for the grace of God, death would be our just reward (Romans 6:23).

H. Propitiation:

To appease or satisfy (Romans 3:25) – Sin must be paid for and Christ met the need for sin to be paid for (Romans 3:23; 5:8; 6:23; I John 4:10).

I. Imputation:

To take one's record of sinfulness or righteousness (James 2:23; Romans 5:13) – When we believe in Christ, His righteousness is imputed to our record (Romans 4:22-24).

J. Forgiveness:

To remove guilt and punishment of sin (I John 1:9) – death is the result of the absence of forgiveness (John 8:24).

K. Sanctification:

To set apart and cleans for God's purpose (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:26) – sanctification comes by the word of God to please God by developing the mind of Christ (I Thessalonians 3:13; Philippians 2:5).

L. Spirit Baptism:

To have God's Holy Spirit enter one's life (John 1:32; John 15:26; Acts 1:8) – The baptism of the Spirit happens at the moment of salvation (John 7:39), and the Holy Spirit becomes a constant companion who teaches all things and reminds the believers of God's word (John 14:26). There is no Christian life without the Holy Spirit (John 4:24; Romans 8:9).

M. Eternal Security:

To know without a doubt that eternal life is a present possession (I John 5:13) – eternal life is the life of the Eternal one in us (I John 5:20).

## N. Apostasy

A falling away (II Timothy 3:1-9) – in the end times many shall turn away from the truth and try to turn others from the truth; therefore we must teach the truth that people might not fall into the snare of the devil (Jude 4; II Peter 2:17-21).

## O. Glorification:

To receive glory (Romans 8:30) – The goal of God’s children is to be like Christ and glorify Him through our lives (John 17:22).

## V. GIVE THE PLAN OF SALVATION THE WAY YOU WOULD PRESENT IT TO AN UNBELIEVER.

God loves you (John 3:16)

You have sinned against God (Romans 3:23)

You must pay for your sin (Romans 6:23; James 1:15)

The good news is that Christ died for our sins (Romans 5:8; Galatians 1:4; John 14:6)

You must repent by confessing your sins to God and trust in Jesus Christ for your salvation (Luke 13:3; Proverbs 3:5; Romans 10:13; I John 5:13).

## VI. WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The Gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day ( I Corinthians 15:1-4).

A. Do you believe that the saved are the elect of God chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world? (Ephesians 1:4; I Peter 5:13; Romans 8:29)

Yes, the key word is “foreknow” found in Romans 8:29; God is omniscient and knows who will reject or choose Him. Therefore, God elects those He knows will choose Him (I Peter 1:2).

B. Do you believe that God’s sovereignty does not negate man’s freedom and responsibility, and that all men are invited genuinely to believe and to be saved?

Yes, “The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9).

C. Do you believe that both conceptions given above are Biblical and incomprehensively true?

Yes

D. Do you believe that 'healing' is part of its mission or message?

No, 'healing' was a sign given to the world at the time to confirm that Jesus was the Son of God (Acts 2:22). He did not have a healing ministry but a revealing ministry (John 8:12)

E. Do you believe in 'speaking in tongues'?

No, I believe that this was a miracle used of God in the early church to accomplish Old Testament prophecy (Isaiah 28:11-12; I Corinthians 14:22). This gift in early church history has now passed because we have God's perfect revelation to us; therefore, no other revelation is needed (I Corinthians 13:8-10).

## **VII. ESCHATOLOGY:**

I believe that the next event on God's calendar is the rapture of the church. There is no other prophecy to be fulfilled before the coming of the Lord for the believers (I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 22:20). The rapture of the church is preceded by perilous times when men reject the truth (II Timothy 3:1-5). I believe that the rapture is previous to the tribulation (I Thessalonians 5:9-11; Revelation 3:10-11). The coming of Christ is unannounced because He comes as a thief in the night (Matthew 24:44; I Thessalonians 5:2). The tribulation period will begin when the Spirit of God will removed His restraining work and allow the Anti-Christ to be revealed (II Thessalonians 2:7-8; Daniel 9:27). The tribulation period will be 7 years long when God will judge the earth (Revelation 11:2-3). During the tribulation period the judgment seat of Christ will take place followed by the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:8-11). After that Christ will return physically to earth in judgment (Zechariah 14:4) and start the millennial kingdom (Zechariah 14:9-21; Revelation 20:4). At the end of the millennial kingdom the unsaved dead of all ages are resurrected and judged at the great white throne and will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity (Revelation 20:11-15). The devil, the beast, and the False prophet are also cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10). Following the millennium, the eternal abode of the redeemed, will be ushered in (Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 21-21).

## **VIII. ECCLESIOLOGY:**

### **A. What is 'The Church which is His Body'?**

Those who have been born again through believing the Gospel from the day of Pentecost to the rapture (I Corinthians 12:27) – Paul was writing to the church in Corinth telling them that every one of them who have placed their faith in Christ no matter their different gifts were a part of the body of Christ.

### **B. What is the kingdom of God?**

I believe that the kingdom of God is every thing or every one that has been put in subjection to God (Matthew 3:2). It is the rule of the sovereign God over all his creatures and things (Psalms 103:19; Daniel 4:3). It is also referred to as the sphere that one may enter into through new birth (John 3:5). In several instances the kingdom of heaven is included in the kingdom of God.

### **C. What is the kingdom of heaven?**

I believe that the kingdom of heaven is the sphere of profession which may be real or false (Matthew 13:1-11; 25:1-13). Since the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are closely connected, they are many times synonymously used.

### **D. The Local Church:**

#### **1. What is a Local New Testament Church?**

The Church is a group of baptized believers who have voluntarily joined themselves together to carry out the Great Commission (I Peter 2:9).

#### **2. What are its scriptural officers?**

I believe that the two officers are the Pastor [(Acts 14:23) – Elder, and Bishop are synonymous to pastor (Acts 17:20-28; I Timothy 3:1-7)] and Deacons (Acts 6:1-6; I Timothy 3:8-13).

#### **3. What is its mission in the world?**

I believe that the mission of the church is the command of God to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature teaching them observe all things given by the Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:20).

#### **4. What are its ordinances?**

I believe that the ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 11:20-34).

##### **a. To whom should they be administered?**

The believers: – Baptism (Acts 2:41) – by immersion

– The Lord’s Supper (I Corinthians 11 – dealing with the church)

b. By whom should they be administered?

The Church: – Baptism (Matthew 28:18-20)

– The Lord’s Supper (I Corinthians 11 – dealing with the church)

5. Who is to be admitted into the fellowship of the Local Church?

Those who are saved (Acts 2:47).

a. Should a person hold membership in more than one church? Explain.

No, I believe that a believer should join himself to other believers and identify with them (Acts 9:26). Paul joined himself to disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. He became a part of that body of believers. It would be difficult for one to pay the tithe to however many churches he holds membership in. It would be hard to be involved in different churches at the same time.

b. By what method are members dismissed?

When a member trespasses against another member, he must confront the trespasser one on one, if the problem is not solved, other members must witness the situation, and if the problem persists the church must be involved in the discipline before the dismissal of that member (Matthew 18:16-17).

6. What form of church government is taught in the New Testament?

I believe that the Bible teaches a congregational church because every member is personally accountable to God (Romans 14:11-12).

7. What place do associations, conventions and councils have in the conduct of the local church?

Churches of like faith may be interdependent and form associations as long as each church keeps its autonomy (I Peter 5:2).

a. To whom is the local church responsible?

I believe that the Local church is responsible to God (Matthew 16:18; Romans 14:11-12)

b. What is the final authority of the church in matters of faith and practice?

I believe that the word of God is the final authority of the church in matters of Faith and practice (II Timothy 3:16-17).

8. What is its relation to the State?

I believe that the Church must be separate from the State but be subject to it as long as it doesn't interfere with the churches' affairs to it (Romans 13:1-7; 16-17).

## **IX. SEPERATION:**

### **A. Personal**

I believe that each believer must be separated from the world to the Lord (Romans 12:1; Exodus 33:13). This separation is not a physical one because we are to be in the world but not of the world (John 15:19; 17:15).

### **B. Ecclesiastical**

I believe that each believer must stay separated from those who deny the doctrine of Christ (II John 7-11).

## **X. BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES**

- Believer's baptism by immersion only – Acts 8:38
- Authority and absolute inerrancy of the Bible – II Timothy 3:16-17
- Priesthood of the Believers – Hebrews 4:14-16
- Two ordinances (Baptism/the Lord's Supper) - Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 11:20-34
- Independence and autonomy of the Local Church – Matthew 16:18
- Saved Church membership – Acts 2:47
- Two officers (Pastor/Deacon) - Acts 14:23; Acts 6:1-6
- Separation (Church and State/Personal/Ecclesiastical) – Romans 12:1