**Vail Valley Baptist Church**

**Constitution, Bylaws,**

**Member Covenant, & Statement of Faith**



**Revised: March, 2021**

**Vail Valley Baptist Church**

**Constitution, Bylaws, & Member Covenant**

**CONSTITUTION**

**Section 1. Name**

The name of this congregation shall be Vail Valley Baptist Church (Vail Valley or VVBC).

**Section 2. Purpose**

This church exists by the grace of God alone, for the glory of God alone, which shall be for the ultimate purpose in providing and maintaining a place of worship, edification, fellowship, discipleship, and evangelism for the glory of God. We take God’s Word, the Holy Bible, as the only authoritative rule of faith and practice.

**Section 3. Affiliation**

We, the members of Vail Valley, declare our affiliation shall be with the following agencies and schools: the Catalina Baptist Association of Southern Arizona, the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, and any other evangelical organizations approved by the church.

**Section 4. Declaration of Faith**

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the The Baptist Faith and Message 2000. We band together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. We believe the ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Any follower of Christ may partake of the elements of the Lord’s Supper and to the waters of baptism.

**Section 5. Member Covenant**

Since we have committed ourselves to Jesus Christ and have experienced the acceptance, forgiveness, and redemption of God our Father, we covenant together as members of this church that with God’s help through the guiding presence of his Spirit:

* We will walk together in brotherly love.
* We will show loving care for one another and encourage, counsel, and admonish one another.
* We will assemble faithfully for worship and fellowship, and will pray earnestly for others and ourselves.
* We will endeavor to bring up those under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
* We will seek, by Christian example and personal effort, to win others to Christ and to encourage their growth toward Christian maturity.
* We will share one another’s joys and endeavor to bear one another’s burdens and sorrows.
* We will oppose all conduct which compromises our Christian faith and will uphold high standards of Christian morality.
* We will voluntarily submit ourselves to one another and to the discipline of the church.
* We will prove the reality of our conversion by living godly, fruitful lives.
* We will maintain a faithful ministry of worship, witness, education, fellowship, and service.
* We will be faithful stewards of our resources and abilities in sharing the gospel with all nations.
* We will seek to earnestly live to the glory of God who brought us out of darkness into his marvelous light.
* We will regularly celebrate this covenant together within our fellowship gatherings.

**BYLAWS**

**Section 6. Membership**

**6.1 Statement of Policy**

Membership in this church is open to all persons who have publically testified to their faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord and have given evidence of that faith by following the Lord in believer’s baptism by immersion in water, and who are in agreement with the covenant and the statement of faith of this church.

**6.2 Acceptance of Members**

Membership in this church may be attained in one of the following manners:

* By scriptural baptism by immersion after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
* By transfer of church letter from another Baptist Church.
* By testimony of their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.
* By restoration to the church membership after the reconciliation process of church discipline.

Membership may be finalized after completing the following requirements:

* Successfully completing Vail Valley’s membership class.
* Signing Vail Valley’s member covenant.
* Being voted into membership by the current members of Vail Valley.

**6.3 Duties and Privileges of Membership**

In accord with the duties listed in this church covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God’s leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only members of this congregation shall be entitled to hold leadership roles in the church’s ministries, whereas non-members and members alike are encouraged to attend and participate in this church’s ministries. It is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members’ meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such matters as may be submitted to a vote.

**6.4 Discipline and/or Removal**

Any member guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the church leadership, and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline should only be considered after individual private admonition has failed or in the case of egregious unrepentant sin (1 Corinthians 5:5). This discipline’s purpose being:

* Love for the individual and a desire for God’s best in his or her life (Matthew 22:39, John 13:35).
* For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (Proverbs 15:5; 17:10; 25:12; 27:5, 1 Corinthians 4:14; 5:5, Ephesians 6:4, 1 Timothy 1:20; 3:4-5, Hebrews 12:1-11, Psalms 119:115).
* For the instruction and good of other Christians, as an example to them (Proverbs 13:20, Romans 15:14, 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33, Colossians 3:16, 1 Thesalonians 5:14, 1 Timothy 5:20, Titus 1:11, Hebrews 10:24-25).
* For the purity of the church as a whole (1 Corinthians 5:6-7, 2 John 1:10, 2 Corinthians 13:10, Ephesians 5:27, Jude 24, Revelation 21:2).
* For the good of our corporate witness to non-believers (Proverbs 28:7, Matthew 5:13-16, John 13:35, Acts 5:10-14, Ephesians 5:11, 1 Timothy 3:7, 2 Peter 2:2, 1 John 3:10).
* And supremely for the glory of God by reflecting his holy character (Deuteronomy 5:11, 1 Kings 11:2, 2 Chronicles 19:2, Ezra 6:21, Nehemiah 9:2, Isaiah 52:11, Ezekiel 36:20, Matthew 5:16, John 15:8, Romans 2:24; 15:5-6, 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, Ephesians 1:4; 5:27, 1 Peter 2:12).

**6.5 Membership Termination**

Membership in this church may be terminated in the following ways: death, transfer to another church, exclusion by action of this church, or by written request of the individual.

**Section 7. Officers and Committees**

**7.1 Officers**

All church officers must be members of this church in good standing. Officers of this church may include: senior pastor, associate pastors, deacons, clerk, secretary, and treasurer. This church shall employ or call officers, as needed, by the congregation and leadership.

**7.2 Pastor**

7.2.1 Pastor’s Qualifications: The pastor’s qualifications shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-3, and Titus 1:6-9. His training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership.

7.2.2 Pastor’s Responsibilities: These generally fall into the following areas: preaching, teaching, counseling, administration, planning, and shepherding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes. He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism. The pastor shall be an ex officio member of all church standing committees, except the pastor search committee. He shall secure pulpit supply in times of his absence.

7.2.3 Pastor’s Call: A pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs. A pastor search committee shall be appointed by the church, with the approval of the personnel committee, to seek out a suitable pastor and this committee’s recommendation will serve as a nomination. The pastor search committee will recommend only one candidate at a time. The pastor’s election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two week notice shall be given to the church members. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of those members present is necessary for a pastoral candidate.

7.2.4 Pastor’s Terms of Service: The chosen pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least thirty days notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed. There shall be a written, mutual contract/agreement between the pastor and the church.

**7.3 Deacons**

7.3.1 Deacon’s Terms of Service: The church shall appoint as many deacons as is wise and prudent to meet the needs of the congregation. Deacons shall be elected for a term of service of two years or until the term of office is terminated by either request of the individual or that of the church. After a deacon’s two year term, the deacon must not serve in the capacity of a deacon for a minimum of one year unless the church votes to extend the term of service. Deacons shall serve their terms on a rotational basis, such that the majority of deacons will not cease their terms at the same time.

7.3.2 Deacon’s Qualifications: A church deacon must meet the scriptural qualifications listed in Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. A deacon shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life, and be a committed Christian servant of the church and a partner in ministry with the pastors, and be a supporter and promoter of the church’s faith, practice, programs, and ministries.

7.3.3 Deacon’s Election: When a deacon vacancy occurs, the pastors and personnel committee will enlist active qualified candidates whom they will recommend to the church. The duties, qualifications, and importance of the office of a deacon will be interpreted to the candidate. The leadership of the church will present the candidate to the church membership to be voted and appointed to the office of deacon.

7.3.4 Deacon’s Duties: Elected deacons shall elect the chairman of their body. Deacons serve as a body of counsel to assist the pastors concerning the progress and welfare of the church. They assist the pastors in ministering to the needs of the congregation, seek to resolve any fellowship problems and conflict of the church, and assist the pastors in administering the church ordinances. In the absence of the pastors, the chairman of the deacons shall serve as an advisory member to all departments and committees of the church.

7.3.5 Deacon’s Ordination: When the leadership of the church recommends the ordination of deacons, the ordination service shall be scheduled as led by the pastor. The ordination of deacons shall be by and for the service of the local body of Vail Valley Baptist Church alone.

**7.4 Trustees**

7.4.1 Trustee’s Terms of Service: There shall be at least three trustees serving at the same time within the church. Trustees shall be elected for a term of service of three years or until the term of office is terminated by the individual request or that of the church. After a trustee’s three year term, the trustee must not serve in the capacity of a trustee for a minimum of one year, unless wisdom dictates otherwise and the church extends the term of service.

7.4.2 Trustee’s Qualifications: A church trustee shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life, be a committed Christian leader and partner of the pastors, and a supporter and promoter of the church’s faith, practice, programs, and ministries.

7.4.3 Trustee’s Election: When a trustee vacancy occurs, the pastors and personnel committee will enlist active qualified candidates whom they will recommend to the church. The duties, qualifications, and importance of the office of a trustee will be interpreted to the candidate. The leadership of the church will present the candidate to the church membership to be voted and appointed to the office of trustee.

7.4.4 Trustee’s Duties: Elected trustees shall elect the chairman of their body. Trustees serve as a body to hold trust the property of the church. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property of the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and on behalf of the church.

**7.5 Committees**

Through the cooperative efforts of the pastors and the personnel committee, all church committees shall be formed as needed. Each committee shall consist of at least a chairperson who is a member in good standing. The only permanently standing committees of this church shall be the personnel and finance committee.

**7.6 Personnel Committee**

The personnel committee, in cooperation with the church leadership, shall be responsible throughout the year for nominating and filling various positions of service in the church, both new and vacated. Also this committee shall aid in the development of new church committees. The personnel committee shall have the number of members as is prudent and wise with one member ideally serving as a deacon. The terms of service will be three years or until the term of office is terminated by the request of the individual or that of the church. After a three year term, the member must not serve on the personnel committee for a minimum of one year, unless wisdom dictates otherwise and the church votes to extend the term of service.

**7.7 Finance Committee**
The finance committee shall have the responsibility of assuring that the adopted budget is adhered to. It shall recommend financial policies to the church and shall foster and promote programs of stewardship. In consultation with the church leadership for the new church year, it shall draw up and submit to the church an annual budget during the month of November for the next calendar year. This committee shall be responsible for an annual audit of the treasurer’s books. The finance committee shall have the number of members as is prudent and wise. The terms of service will be three years or until the term of office is terminated by request of the individual or that of the church. After a three year term, the member must not serve on the finance committee for a minimum of one year, unless wisdom dictates otherwise and the church votes to extend the term of service.

**Section 8. Church Ordinances**

 **8.1 Believers' Baptism**

Believers’ baptism is the immersion in water of any person who has believed in Jesus Christ as personal savior, who has confessed said belief publically, and who has indicated a commitment to follow Jesus Christ as Lord. The pastor, or whomever the church leadership shall authorize, may baptize, at a regular or special worship service, any person fulfilling the above requirements.

**8.2 Lord’s Supper**

The Lord’s Supper is the symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Body of Christ, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and anticipate his second coming. The pastor, or whomever the church leadership shall authorize, may administer the Lord’s Supper as wisdom dictates.

**Section 9: Church Meetings**

**9.1 Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday for the worship of God, for preaching, instruction, and evangelism. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or designated person in the absence of the pastor.

**9.2 Members’ Meetings**

A Member’s Meeting may be called by the pastor, and with other church officers, or by action of the church to consider special matters of significant nature. A two week notice must be given for the called business meeting.

**9.3 Meeting Etiquette**

Meetings shall be conducted in a Christlike manner, to the glory of God.

**9.4 Church Items Requiring Vote**

The following items require vote by the church membership:

* Calling of pastors and paid officers.
* Adoption of the annual budget.
* Real property purchases.
* Accepting or the occurrence of indebtedness.
* Pastor’s and paid officer’s salaries and compensations.
* Adoption and/or amending the church constitution and by-laws.

**Section 10. Amendments**

The church constitution and bylaws may be amended upon the condition that the proposed amendment has been made available to each member in writing, allowing two weeks prior to voting on said amendment. A two-thirds majority vote shall be necessary to effect a constitution amendment.

**Section 11. Dissolution**

In the event of dissolution of this organization, all unencumbered properties and finances shall be given to the Catalina Baptist Association. All such decisions regarding this matter would be made by the majority vote of the remaining members of this corporation prior to final dissolution.

**Section 12. Statement on the Covenant of Marriage, Family and the Sanctity of Life**

We believe that all humans are created in the image of God and thus every person is of inestimable worth. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term *marriage* has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Vail Valley as the local Body of Christ, it is imperative that all members of VVBC, including persons employed by VVBC in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on the Covenant of Marriage, Family and the Sanctity of Life. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking his mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and unloving behavior or attitudes that are directed toward any individual or groups are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of VVBC. As a congregation of covenant members we reserve the right to operate according to the guiding principles of Scripture and these foundational documents.

Vail Valley Baptist Church

​14840 E. Colossal Cave Road, Vail, AZ 85641

**Vail Valley Baptist Church Statement of Faith**

**Baptist Faith and Message 2000**

**1. 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.

**2. 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 free 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, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

**A. 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 men.

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; Psalm 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.

**B. 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, 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. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

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.

**C. 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 men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, 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 unto 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.

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.

**3. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

**4. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

**A. Regeneration**, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

**B. Justification** is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

**C. Sanctification** is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

**D. Glorification** is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29;15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13;Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

**5. God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79;2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19;Hebrews 11:39–12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

**6. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, 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 operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor 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.

**7. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. 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 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

**8. The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

**9. 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 men 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.

**10. 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 men 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 in Heaven with the Lord.

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.

**11. Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53;John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5;Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

**12. Education**

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people. In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19;Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

**13. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

**14. Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

**15. The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35;Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12–14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

**16. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war. The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

**17. Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

**18. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The 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 love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. 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. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 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; Malachi 2:14-16;Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.