

*Grace Baptist Church
of Strathroy*
Articles of Faith

THE ARTICLES OF FAITH of Grace Baptist Church of Strathroy

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Adopted and Partially Edited with Permission by:

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
OF STRATHROY

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Grace Baptist Church of Strathroy's ARTICLES OF FAITH

The following "Articles of Faith" have been taken from various Baptist statements as updated in certain areas to meet present-day threats to the Faith. These "ARTICLES OF FAITH" are printed herewith and are part of Grace Baptist Church's official documents and papers.

I. THE BIBLE

A. Its Inspiration And Inerrancy. We believe in the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments (Genesis through Revelation); that the Bible is a completed revelation; that the process of its Divine inspiration has never been, nor will it ever be, duplicated; that the entire Bible was originally written by a process of the plenary, verbal, inspiration of God; that the Bible is infallible and of unlimited inerrancy in the areas of creation, science, geography, chronology, history, and in all other matters of which it speaks (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; John 17:17); that the books known as the Apocrypha are not the inspired Word of God in any sense whatever; that, as the Bible uses it, the term "inspiration" (or the process of being "Godbreathed") refers to the **original writings**, not to the writers (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 2:13); and that the writers are spoken of as being "holy men of God" who were "moved" (or "carried" or "borne" along) by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21; Acts 1:16) in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally, plenary, and verbally inspired, free from any error, infallible, and inerrant, as no other **writings** have ever been or ever will be inspired (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

B. Its Supreme Standard. We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming; that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read or understood, until it leads to Him (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23); that all the Bible was designed for our practical instruction (Mark 12:26, 36; 2 Timothy 3:16-17); that the Bible is to be the true center of Christian unity (John 17:17); that it is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried (2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12); and that the subjects of this judgment include all groups and individuals.

C. Its Preservation. We believe God has promised in both the Old and New Testaments to preserve His Words as given to us in the original Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek texts (Psalm 12:6-7; 78:1-8; 119:89, 111, 152, 160; Isaiah 30:8; 40:6-8; Ecclesiastes 3:14; Matthew 4-4; 5:17-18; 24:35; 28:20; John 10:35; Colossians 1:17; 1 Peter 1:23-25; 2 John 1:2, and elsewhere); that, by His Providential care, God has kept His Word pure down through the ages as He promised; and we believe what our Baptist forefathers wrote in their London Baptist Confession of 1677 and 1689, which states in part:

"The Old Testament in Hebrew, (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations) BEING IMMEDIATELY INSPIRED BY GOD, and BY HIS SINGULAR CARE AND PROVIDENCE KEPT PURE IN ALL AGES, are therefore AUTHENTICAL; . . . "

D. Its Proper Original Language Texts. We believe that the original language Texts which have been Providentially preserved and are the closest to the original autographs of the Bible are the Old Testament Traditional Masoretic Hebrew Text that underlies the King James Bible, and the New Testament Traditional Greek Text that underlies the King James Bible (as found in *The Greek Text Underlying The English Authorized Version of 1611* as published by the Trinitarian Bible Society in 1976).

E. Its Faithful English Translation

1. The Superiority Of The King James Bible. We believe that the King James Bible (or Authorized Version) of the English Bible is a true, faithful and accurate translation of these two

Providentially preserved Texts, which in our time has no equal among all of the other English Translations; that the translators did such a fine job in their translation task that we can without apology hold up the King James Bible and say "This is the WORD OF GOD in English!"; that, in some verses, we must go back to the underlying original **language Texts for complete clarity; and that we must** compare Scripture with Scripture.

2. The Use Of The King James Bible. We believe that the King James Bible should be used in all preaching services, in the Sunday School, in all Christian literature and publications, in all memory work, and in all other places; that all the verses in the King James Bible belong in the Old and the New Testaments because they represent words that were in the original Texts; and that, though there might be other renderings from the original languages which could also be acceptable to us today, for an exhaustive study of any of the words or verses in the Bible, the student should return directly to the Traditional Masoretic Hebrew Text and the Traditional Received Greek Text rather than to any other translation for help.

II. THE BIBLICAL DISPENSATIONS

A. Definition. We believe that the dispensations are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on the earth through man under varying responsibilities; that the changes in the dispensational dealings of God with man depend upon changed conditions or situations in which man is successively found with relation to God, and that these changes are the result of the failures of man and the judgments of God; that different administrative responsibilities of this character are manifest in the Biblical record; that they span the entire history of mankind; that each ends in the failure of man under the respective test and in an ensuing judgment from God; that three of these dispensations or rules of life are the subject of extended revelation in the Scripture, namely, the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present Dispensation of Grace (John 1:17), and the future dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom on earth; that these are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused, as they are chronologically successive; and that so-called "covenant theology" as found in "reformed theology" is unscriptural.

B. Not Ways Of Salvation. We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation, nor different methods of administering the so-called Covenant of Grace; that they are not in themselves dependent on covenant relationships; that they are ways of life and responsibility to God which test the submission of man to His revealed will during a particular time; that, if man trusts in his own efforts to gain the favor of God or salvation under any dispensational test, because of inherent sin, his failure to satisfy fully the just requirements of God is inevitable and his condemnation sure.

C. Salvation By The Blood of Christ. We believe that according to the "eternal purpose" of God (Ephesians 3:11) salvation in the divine reckoning is always "by grace, through faith" (Ephesians 2:8-9); that it rests upon the basis of the shed Blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7); that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation; and that man has not at all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation (1 Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25).

D. Salvation By Faith. We believe that it has always been true that "without faith it is impossible to please" God (Hebrews 11:6); that the principle of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints; that it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God (John 1:29); that it is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ; that they did not understand the redemptive significance of Christ; that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ (1 Peter 1:10-12); that their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in Hebrews 11:1-40; and that their faith thus manifested was counted unto them for righteousness (Cf. Romans 4:3 with Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:5-8; Hebrews 11:7).

III. THE TRIUNE GOD

We believe in the Deity, unity, equality, and eternity of the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-19; John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 1 John 5:7-8); that these Three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections (Mark 12:29; Acts 5:3-4; Revelation 1:4-6); that They are worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience; that this Triune God is the One and only living and true God (Exodus 20:2-3; 1 Corinthians 8:6); that He is everlasting, immutable, of infinite power, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth (Revelation 4:11); and that He is the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible; subsisting in Three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-16).

IV. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST--HIS VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that, as provided and proposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14); that He was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35); that He received a perfect human body and a sinless human nature; and that He is both the eternal Son of God and God the Son--perfect God and perfect Man (John 1:14, 18; Hebrews 4:15).

V. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST--HIS PERSON

We believe in the essential, absolute, eternal Deity, and the real and proper, but perfect and sinless, humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ; that Christ is the eternal Son of God, and God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father (John 1:1-2); that when the fulness of time was come, He took upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties thereof, including a perfect human spirit, soul, and body, yet without sin; that He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance; that the two whole, perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and Manhood, were inseparably joined together in one Person, without conversion, composition, or confusion; that this Person is very God and very Man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man (Philippians 2:5-8); that, on the human side, Christ became and remained a perfect man (Luke 2:40); that He was without sin throughout His entire life even though He "was in all points tempted like as we are" (Hebrews 4:15); that He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man; and that His earth life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ in His human nature thus united to the Divine, was sanctified, anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure; that He had within Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; that it pleased the Father that in Him all fulness should dwell; that He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth; and that He was thoroughly furnished to execute the office of Mediator and Surety.

VI. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST--HIS BLOOD

We believe that the doctrine of the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is of great importance in the Bible; that

Christ's Blood has been under attack in centuries past as well as in recent decades by modernist apostates, Mary Baker Eddy, R. B. Thieme, Jr., John MacArthur, Jr., and others; that Christ's Blood is not a mere figure of speech or "metonym" to be equal to "death"; that Old Testament sacrifices had two distinct parts: (1) the death of the sacrifice; and (2) the application of the blood of the sacrifice; that death was not sufficient, but the blood had to be applied properly (Exodus 12:6-7; Leviticus 16:6, 14, 15); that it is the blood that makes "atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17:11); that Christ's Blood was "shed for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28); that Christ's Blood "purchased" the Church (Acts 20:28); that Christ's Blood was from God, as to its source, hence, it is Divine (Acts 20:28); that Christ's Blood provides redemption (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 5:9); that Christ's Blood is incorruptible (1 Peter 1:18-19); that Christ's Blood propitiates God the Father; that Christ's Blood justifies us (Romans 5:9); that Christ's Blood brings us near to God (Ephesians 2:13); that Christ's Blood gives us peace (Colossians 1:20); that Christ's Blood provides forgiveness (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:22); that Christ's Blood provides reconciliation to God (Colossians 1:20); that Christ's Blood purges the conscience (Hebrews 9:14), purifies the heavenly things (Hebrews 9:23), cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7), and washes us from our sins (Revelation 1:5; 7:14; Hebrews 9:12-14, 18-24; 10:19-22); that Christ's Blood gives us boldness and access to the holiest in heaven (Hebrews 10:19); that Christ's Blood makes us perfect in every good work to do His will (Hebrews 13:21); and that Christ's Blood overcomes Satan (Revelation 12:11).

VII. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST-- HIS BLOOD ATONEMENT

We believe that Christ was made like unto us in all things, sin and its consequences only excepted, from which He was clearly void, both in His flesh and in His spirit; that in fulfillment of prophecy He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that, being rejected of that nation, He, according to the eternal counsels of God, gave His life as a ransom for all (John 1:11; Acts 2:23; 1 Timothy 2:6.); that He came to be the Lamb without spot, Who, by the shedding of His incorruptible Blood in the sacrifice of Himself once made, (1 Peter 1:18-19; Acts 20:28) takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29); that in Him is no sin (1 John 3:5); that all the rest of us, although born again in Christ by faith, offend in many things; and that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:10).

We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, Christ voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb whose shed Blood took away the sin of the world (John 1:29); that He bore the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose (Romans 3:25-26); that His death was, therefore, substitutionary in the most absolute sense, "the just for the unjust" (1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Hebrews 10:5-14); that by His sacrificial death and the shedding of His Blood He became the Savior of the lost.

VIII. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST--HIS SOUL AND SPIRIT'S DISSENSION, BODILY RESURRECTION, BODILY ASCENSION, HIGH PRIESTHOOD, AND BODILY RETURN

A. His Soul and Spirit's Dissension. We believe that after the Lord Jesus died on the cross, His soul and spirit went immediately to the center of the earth for three days and three nights during which he spent an unspecified time in both paradise and hell. "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12:40);

“Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)” (Romans 10:7.) After His death, He descended first. Ephesians 4: 9,10 states “(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)” There are two key words in verse nine, “first” and “parts,” meaning “first” – before his ascension, and “parts” – meaning two – paradise and hell. Psalm 16:10 states “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” “Thou” – meaning God, did not leave Him (Jesus) in hell, neither did he allow His (Jesus’) body to begin to decay (“corruption.”)

B. His Bodily Resurrection. We believe that, according to the Scriptures, Christ arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died (Matthew 28:6-7; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 39-40; John 20:20, 27; Acts 2:27-31; 5:30; 13:34-37; 1 Corinthians 15:4); and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers. (Philippians 3:20.)

C. His Bodily Ascension. We believe that in departing from the earth in His resurrection body, Christ ascended into Heaven (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; John 20:17; Acts 1:9-10); that there in heaven, He presented His Blood on the Divine Mercy Seat in fulfillment of the Day of Atonement type (Leviticus 16:14-15, 17; John 20:17; Hebrews 9:7, 12-14, 22, 24; 12:22-24); and that He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His **redeeming work** was perfectly accomplished. (Hebrews 1:3.)

D. His High Priestly Work. We believe that, in Heaven, He now sits at the right hand of God the Father as our Great High Priest, interceding for His own (Mark 16:19; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 1:3; 2:17; 5:9-10; :25; 12:2; 1 John 2:1); that He became Head over all things to the church which is His body; and that, in this ministry He ceases not to intercede and advocate for the saved.

E. His Bodily Return. We believe that Christ will return in this same body to fulfill all the Scriptures pertaining to the events surrounding His Second Coming (Acts 1:9-11); that He will come first in the Rapture of the Church before the Tribulation of seven years (1 Thessalonians 4:16); that He will then return with His saints in power and glory to set up the Millennium as the Messiah of Israel (Zechariah 14:4; Matthew 24:29-31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8; Revelation 1:7; 3:21).

IX. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. His Person And Presence. We believe that the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God; that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in creation (Genesis 1:1-3); that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the Divine promise; that He dwells in every believer; that, as the Indwelling One, He is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service; that He never takes His departure from the church, nor from the feeblest of the saints (John 14:16-17; 16:7; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:22); that He is ever present to testify of Christ, seeking to occupy believers with Him and not with themselves nor with their experiences (John 16:14); that His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church in the Rapture (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

B. His Ministries. We believe that, in this age, certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit, and that it is the duty of every Christian to understand them and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience; that He restrains evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; that He convicts the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-11); that He regenerates all believers (John 3:6); that He indwells and anoints all who are saved (Matthew 28:20; John 14:16-17; Acts 5:32; Romans 8:9, 15, 23; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 John 2:20-27); that He seals believers unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30); that He baptizes into the one body of Christ of all who are saved (Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; 1 Corinthians 12:13); that He intercedes for the believers (Romans 8:26-27); and that He fills for power, leading,

bearing witness, teaching, and service those among the saved who are yielded to Him and who are subjects to His will (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; John 14:26; Acts 4:8, 31; Romans 8:14, 16; Ephesians 5:18).

C. His Temporary Gifts. We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were temporary (given only in the Apostolic Age); that although God still heals individuals in miraculous ways, the Apostolic gifts mentioned above are no longer applicable today (we do not believe in "Apostolic succession"); that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or the filling of the Spirit; and that the deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection (1 Corinthians 13:8-12).

D. His Counterfeit. We believe the Charismatic Tongues Movement is an unscriptural error relating to God the Holy Spirit and is not of God; that genuine tongues in the New Testament were authentic languages rather than the present ecstatic utterances which are counterfeit and spurious; that the sign gifts such as speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, special knowledge, and others, were all sign gifts which were manifested during the Apostolic age; that all such sign gifts ceased with the completion of the New Testament canon around 90 or 100 A.D. (1 Corinthians 13:8-12); that this movement seeks to unite apostates with believers in an unscriptural, ecumenical movement; and that true believers should separate from the Charismatic Tongues Movement immediately and completely. (2 Corinthians 6:14--7:1; Ephesians 5:11)

X. THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

We believe the Biblical account of the creation of the physical universe, angels, and man *ex nihilo* (Genesis 1-2; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:3; and that this account is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of the Triune God in six literal solar days without any evolutionary process, either naturalistic or theistic. (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31)

XI. THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created by a direct work of the Triune God and not from previously existing forms of life (Genesis 1:1-2, 26-27; 2:7); and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, the first parents of the entire human race; that man fell through sin (Genesis 2:17; 3:6); that, as a consequence of his sin, man lost his spiritual life and innocency, becoming dead in trespasses and sins (Genesis 6:5; Psalm 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6); that he became subject to the power of the devil; that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad apart from divine grace and faith in Christ (Romans 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:1-3, 8, 10; 1 Timothy 5:6).

XII. THE CHRISTIAN'S TWO NATURES

We believe that a saved person has two natures, the old nature (the flesh), and the new nature (the indwelling Holy Spirit) (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 7:15-25; Galatians 5:16-17); that we are called with an holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:1-2, 4); that we should live in the power of the indwelling Spirit so that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Romans 6:11-13; 8:12-13; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:22-24); that the flesh, with its fallen, Adamic nature, in this life is never eradicated (Galatians 5:16-17; John 3:6); that it is with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage (John 3:6; 1 John 1:8, 10); and that it needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives

to the dishonor of our Lord (1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

XIII. THE CHRISTIAN'S SERVICE

We believe that Divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon all who are saved (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11); that, while there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit; that each believer is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will; that in the Apostolic church there were certain gifted men--apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers--who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-15); that today there are no apostles or prophets, but there are still some men who are especially called of God to be evangelists, pastors and teachers; and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these gifted men shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God; and that these gifts of evangelists, church leaders and pastors are not given to women (I Corinthians 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:11-14).

We believe that in the body of Christ men and women stand spiritually equal and constitute the Church universal. We believe women have had and always will have their God-given gifts and roles within this body. Accordingly, as the primary role of believing men is to be husbands and fathers, so the primary role of women is to be wives and mothers. Modern secular feminism has destroyed the importance of these positions and blurred the differences between men and women.

Scriptures are clear that male leadership is called to the local church positions of deacon, elder or pastor. No amount of debate can water down what the Bible says about the individual and distinct callings of both sexes, in regard to gifts and positions. Women play a very important role in church life, and we would encourage them to seek excellence in their God-given opportunities, but the role of pastor and deacon is biblically reserved for men. (1 Tim. 2:9-15; 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 2:1-8; I I Cor. 14:34-35)

XIV. SATAN AND FALLEN AND UNFALLEN ANGELS

A. Satan's Creation And Fall. We believe that God created an innumerable company of spiritual beings, known as angels; that one, "Lucifer, son of the morning"--the highest in rank--sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:6); that a great company of the angels followed Satan in his moral fall; that all of the fallen angels became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes; and that others who fell are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (2 Peter 2:4; June 1:6).

B. Satan's Influences. We believe that Satan is the originator of sin (Genesis 3:1-19; 5:12-14); that, under the permission of God, he, through subtlety, led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Ephesians 6:10-12); that he is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped (2 Thessalonians 2:4); that he who in the beginning said, "I will be like the most High," in his warfare appears as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:13-15); that he counterfeits the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine (1 Timothy 4:1-3); and that these systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the Blood of Christ and of salvation by grace alone.

C. Satan's Judgement. We believe that Satan was judged at the cross, though not then executed (Colossians 2:15); that he, as usurper, now rules as the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4); that at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years (Revelation

20:1-3, 10); that after the thousand years, he will be loosed for a little season (Revelation 20:7); and that he will then be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," where he "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

D. Unfallen Angels. We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God (Luke 15:10; Ephesians 1:21; Revelation 7:11-12); and that they are sent forth from God as ministering spirits to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:14).

E. Man Lower Than The Angels. We believe that man was made lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:6-7); that, in His incarnation, Christ took for a little time this lower place that He might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels (Hebrews 2:6-10.)

XV. THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in innocence, in the image and likeness of God, and under the law of his Maker (Genesis 1:26); that by voluntary transgression Adam fell from his state of innocence (Genesis 3:1-6); that all men sinned in him (Romans 5:12, 19); and that because of this all men are totally depraved, are partakers of Adam's fallen nature, are sinners by nature, choice and conduct (Romans 3:10-19); and that all men are under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Romans 1:18, 20).

XVI. THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Proverbs 14:32; Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans:17-18); that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His sight (John 8:32; Romans 6:23); that all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse (I John 5:19); that this distinction holds among men both in and after death; that the saved will enter into the joys of heaven (John 14:1-3; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8); and that the lost will undergo everlasting conscious suffering in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:14-15).

XVII. SALVATION ONLY THROUGH CHRIST

A. The Basis Of Salvation. We believe that the salvation of sinners is Divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of Jesus Christ,, the eternal Son of God (Jonah 2:9); that Christ, by the appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin (Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:14-17); that He fulfilled the Divine law by His personal obedience, thus qualifying Himself to be our Savior; that He shed His incorruptible Blood in His death (Leviticus 17:11; 1 Peter 1:18-19); that He fully satisfied the just demands of a holy and righteous God regarding sin (Galatians 3:13); that His Blood sacrifice consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr (Matthew 26:28); and that this sacrifice was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree (Isaiah 53:4-7; Romans 3:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 4:10).

B. The Means Of Salvation. We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again; that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven (Isaiah 64:6; John 3:5, 18; Galatians 6:15; Philippians 3:4-

9); that a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation (John 3:16; Acts 15:11; 1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 2:8-9); that only those thus saved are sons of God; that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ (Leviticus 17:11; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19); that He was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our room and stead (Romans 5:6-9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Titus 3:5); and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no "lordship salvation," no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least degree to the value of the Blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His Person true and proper Deity with perfect and sinless humanity (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18).

C. The Reception Of Salvation. We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ (John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 1:16-17; 3:22, 24-26; 4:5; 10:4; Galatians 3:22); that repentance is a vital part of believing; that repentance is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; and that no other acts, such as holy living, confession, "lordship salvation," baptism, prayer, or faithful service, is to be added to believing as a condition of salvation.

XVIII. REPENTANCE

A. The Frequency of 'Repentance' and 'Repent.' The noun 'repentance' is found in 25 verses in the New Testament of the King James Bible. In 24 of those instances METANOIA is the Greek term underlying it. The verb 'repent' is found 22 verses in the New Testament of the King James Bible. In 20 of those instances METANOEO (which is the verb form of METANOIA) is used.

B. The Meaning of 'Repentance' and 'Repent.' The Greek words for 'repentance' (METANOIA) and 'repent' (METANOEO) come from two Greek words, META (a 'change') and NOIA from NOUS (the 'mind'). The literal meaning of 'repentance' or 'repent' therefore is 'a change of the mind.'

C. 'Repentance' and 'Repent' Applied to Salvation. Accompanying genuine saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is 'repentance' or a change of mind regarding sin and the Saviour. The sinner changes his mind about his own sin which will condemn him to an eternal hell. His sin which was once loved is now hated. The sinner changes his mind about the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour. He is now seen as the One Who died for that sin and as the only Deliverer from sin's penalty of hell. Because of this change of mind the sinner turns to the Lord Jesus Christ in genuine saving faith and is born-again for all eternity. Without such change of mind regarding sin and the Saviour, the sinner does not see any reason or need to exercise genuine saving faith in that Saviour."

D. What 'Repentance' and 'Repent' Does NOT Mean. Repentance in salvation does not mean that a person completely rids themselves of their former sinful actions, words and thoughts. We do not subscribe to the false doctrine that:

‘An alleged believer who continues to struggle with certain sin(s) after salvation must have had an unreal repentance and therefore is not truly saved’

As we have already stated, repentance is a vital part of believing; that repentance is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; and that no other acts, such as holy living, confession, "lordship salvation," baptism, prayer, or faithful service, is to be added to believing as a condition of salvation. Faith and repentance go hand-in-hand; a sinner that is not repentant, will not see any reason or need to exercise genuine saving faith in Jesus Christ. Questioning an individual's claim of salvation based upon him not achieving a relative, concocted standard of holy living, and blaming such on "an unreal repentance" is very dangerous, because such reasoning causes him to look inside himself and to examine his own experience, rather than to look solely on the Lord Jesus Christ and to trust solely on His shed blood. If a person claims to be a Christian and is

not truly saved, we believe that the Holy Spirit will bring about that realization through the balanced, unadulterated preaching of God's Word, not through the propagation of the said false doctrine via manipulative tactics and the misuse of Scripture.

That being said, genuine salvation will bring about change (as discussed under the following subheading: "The Results of the New Birth" which is under subsection "XIX. The New Birth.") The important distinction is that the degree of change in an alleged Christian's life cannot possibly be selected and/or quantified, in order to determine the authenticity of the alleged Christian's conversion experience.

XIX. THE NEW BIRTH

A. The Definition Of The New Birth. We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again (John 3:3, 5; Ephesians 2:1, 5; 1 John 5:1); that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 2:13; John 3:8); that it happens the instant a person believes on and receives the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior (Acts 16:30-31); that it is instantaneous and not a process (John 5:24); that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God (Romans 3:23; 6:23); that the new creation is brought about by our sovereign God when we exercise personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; that this faith comes about under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit in connection with our voluntary faith in the gospel of Christ; that its proper evidence appears in a transformed and holy life.

B. The Results Of The New Birth. We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises faith in Christ which is illustrated and described as such in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new (John 5:24; 2 Corinthians 5:17); that, being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever (John 17:23); that, though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of His blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God; that he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ (Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; Ephesians 1:3; 2 Peter 1:4; Colossians 2:10; 1 John 5:11,12); and that the believer is in no way required by God to seek a so-called "second blessing" or a "second work of grace."

We believe that genuine salvation produces a change in the life of the sinner as James 2:14,17,18 alludes to. The change that takes place may vary greatly from one Christian to another, depending entirely upon how much the individual yields themselves to the Spirit of God (Romans 6). In Matthew 13, Jesus speaks about the difference in fruit being produced in a given Christian's life, some producing "an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold." It is a scriptural fact that some Christians will get into heaven by the 'skin of their teeth' (1 Corinthians 3:15), producing very little fruit or change in their life (Lot is an example of this).

The degree of visible immorality in a given sinner's life will drastically effect the perceived change that takes place in his life after conversion. Just like the little visible change that took place in the life of good-living Corneleous in Act 7 after conversion would be much different than the pronounced visible change that took place in the life of Zacchaeus after his conversion in Luke 19. The change Zacchaeus made in his life was not a condition of his salvation. He could have continued struggling with the sin of thievery and still have been saved. Scripture says that he had immediate victory over that particular sin, but it is a fact that he would have struggled with other sins during the course of his life, perhaps even with the sin of thievery again. The point is that God gives every Christian the ability to overcome sin, but it is the convert's responsibility to yield to the Spirit of God so that He can enable the victory. After Corneleous' conversion, no one knew his heart, and he could very well have had intangible sins that he continued to struggle with, which no one could detect. The low degree of

change in a given convert's life does not warrant the accusation from other Christians that he is not truly saved. It is a fact that Christians can be very carnal and worldly (Church of Corinth, Lot). The important implication is that a drastic change took place within the heart of BOTH Corneleous and Zacchaeus when, in repentance, they placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, even though the degree of visible change was starkly different. Once saved, the grossly immoral sinner may have a difficult time overcoming certain sins. The same is true for a "good living" sinner who is converted and continues to struggle with certain sins that he is susceptible to (even though those sins may be undetectable to others.) Sometimes Christians gain the victory over a particular sin(s) for months or years, only to fall again in a time of spiritual weakness.

XX. JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the believer righteous upon the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ (Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1, 9; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9; Titus 3:5); and that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's incorruptible shed Blood (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

XXI. SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold; that it is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ's position (Hebrews 3:1; 10:10-14; 1 Corinthians 1:30); that, since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God; that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life; that, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life; that there is a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to "grow in grace," and to "be changed" by the Word of God, by the unhindered power of the Spirit, by confession of sin, and by the "Blood of Jesus Christ His Son [that] cleanseth [him] from all sin" (John 17:17; 1 John 1:7, 9; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23; Hebrews 12:10); that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be "like Him" (Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 John 3:2; Jude 1:24-25).

XXII. THE ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVERS

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father and God the Son; that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory Blood of Christ (Romans 5:9; Ephesians 1:7), because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven (Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2), because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever (Philippians 1:6; John 10:27-30; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1:1; John 5:24; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Romans 8:29; 1 John 5:13; Jude 1:24); that God is a holy and righteous Father; that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love (Hebrews 12:57); and that, having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, Who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29).

XXIII. THE ASSURANCE OF THE BELIEVERS

We believe it is the privilege, and not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scripture, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior (Luke 10:20; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 John 5:13); and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience (Luke 22:32; Hebrews 10:22).

XXIV. THE CHURCH

A. Definition Of The Church. We believe that a local church is an organized congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word (1 Corinthians 11:2; Acts 2:41-42; 20:17-28); that its officers are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11); that the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity rather than the social gospel or social action (Romans 15:26); that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; that the one and only Superintendent of the church is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that believers should not sue one another in secular courts (1 Corinthians 6:1); that it is Scriptural for true churches to help one another, and to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; and that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; that on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

B. Beginning Of The Church. We believe the Church Age, or the Dispensation of Grace began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1); and that there is a unity of all New Testament believers in the Church which is the Body of Christ as members of the family of God (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:22-23; 3:1-6; 4:11; 5:23; Colossians 1:18; Acts 15:13-18).

XXV. THE CHURCH'S GREAT COMMISSION

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth by His father into the world (John 20:21); that after they are saved they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses (2 Corinthians 5:18-20; 1 Peter 1:17; 2:11); and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world, by means of both home and foreign missions (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8).

XXVI. THE CHURCH'S TWO ORDINANCES: BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

A. Baptism. We believe that Christian baptism is the single immersion backwards of a believer in

water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our identification with the crucified, buried and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life (Matthew 3:16; 28:18-20; John 3:23; Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12); that baptism is to be performed under the authority of the local church; and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

B. The Lord's Supper. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of Christ's death until He come (Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28); that it should be preceded by solemn self-examination; that the Biblical order of the ordinances is baptism first and then the Lord's Supper; and that participants in the Lord's Supper should be immersed believers.

XXVII. BIBLICAL SEPARATION

We believe Biblical separation is an important Bible doctrine; that we should obey the Biblical commands to separate ourselves wholly and completely unto God (2 Corinthians 6:14--7:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; 2 John 1:9-11); that evil, false doctrine, and spiritual compromise are all contagious (1 Corinthians 15:33); that separation from such evil is the only dependable Biblical safeguard to remain spiritually clean (2 Corinthians 6:17); that we should therefore separate ourselves from worldliness, modernism, ecclesiastical apostasy, Neo-evangelicalism, the Charismatic Movement, immorality, Biblical compromises, and "disorderly" brethren; that obedient believers should not have close fellowship either with unbelievers or with "disorderly" brethren (2 Thessalonians 3:6, 11, 14-15; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17); that we should repudiate cooperation with men or movements which attempt to unite true Bible believers and apostates in evangelistic or other cooperative spiritual efforts; that we should be in sympathy with, and have close fellowship with only those organizations or movements whose speakers, associates, leaders or sponsors are NOT connected in any way with religious apostasy, neo-evangelical compromise, or charismatic confusion; that we should be in sympathy with, and have close fellowship with only those persons who speak on the platforms of men, churches, organizations or movements whose other speakers, associates, leaders or sponsors are NOT in any way connected with religious apostasy, neo-evangelical compromise, or charismatic confusion; and that we should have the above principles of Biblical separation not only stated on paper, but also put into practice.

XXVIII. CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society (Exodus 18:18:21-22); that it began in Genesis 9:6 after the universal flood of Noah; that capital punishment for premeditated murder must be a part of Biblical government (Genesis 9:6; Romans 13:3-4); and that magistrates are to be prayed for, and those fulfilling the definition of Biblical government (2 Samuel 23:3; Romans 13:1-7) should be conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming King of kings (Daniel 3:17-18; Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; 5:29; 23:5).

XXIX. ISRAEL

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people (Genesis 13:14-17); that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ (Romans 11:1-32); that she will be regathered in the Holy Land in belief (Ezekiel 37); that, after the completion of the Church, Israel will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ; and that she will be blessed above all people during the thousand year Millennial reign of Christ her Messiah.

XXX. THE RAPTURE-- THE BLESSED HOPE

We believe that, according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of Christ in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54); that this event will be premillennial (before the Millennium) and pretribulation (before any part of the seven year Tribulation) (Revelation 3:10); that it may occur at any moment; that this event is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, for which we should be constantly looking (Titus 2:11-14); and that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in incorruptible, glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given immortal, glorified bodies without tasting death (1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:20-21).

XXXI. THE TRIBULATION

We believe that the translation or rapture of the church will be followed by the Tribulation of seven years, which is the fulfillment of Daniel's seventieth week for Israel (Daniel 9:25-27; Revelation 6:1--19:21); that, during the seven year Tribulation, the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven; that the whole period of Daniel's seventieth week will be a time of judgment on the whole earth; that at the end of the tribulation the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close; that the latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7i), which our Lord called the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:15-21); that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ; that the world is day by day ripening for judgment; and that the age of Grace will end with a fearful apostasy (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

XXXII. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe that the seven-year period of Tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth with his saints, his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, and he shall rule with power and great glory (Daniel 9:25-27; Matthew 24:29-31; 24:15--25:46; Acts 1:9-11; 15:16-17); that He will then sit upon the throne of David, establish His literal thousand-year millennial kingdom, bind Satan, place him in the abyss, and lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation (Psalm 72:8; Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-9; 32:1; Luke 1:30-33; Acts 2:29-30; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Revelation 20:1-4, 6, 14); that He will restore Israel to her own land and give her the realization of God's covenant promises (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; Revelation 20:13); and that He will bring the whole world to the knowledge of God (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9).

XXXIII. THE ETERNAL STATE

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence in heaven and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own (Luke 23:42; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23); that at this time, their bodies will be resurrected and, reunited with their spirits and souls, they will be with Christ forever in the glories and blessings of heaven (1 Corinthians 15:51-57); that the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:11-15); that at this time, their bodies

will be resurrected and, reunited with their spirits and souls, they will be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15); and that they will not be annihilated, but punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 1:6-7).

***GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
OF STRATHROY***

May 2005