



## Statement of Faith

The Word of God is foundational and absolutely essential to our understanding of God, His plan, our place, purpose, and way of life on this earth. We believe doctrinal accuracy and, in conjunction with a literal interpretation of the Bible, is vital for the Christian life and the promoting of true spiritual maturity.

Friendship Baptist Church is evangelical in nature and is committed to a historical/grammatical approach to the Scriptures based upon a firm belief that the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. It is inerrant in its origin and speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind; it is also the sole and final source of all that we believe as a church.

The fundamentals of our doctrine are Jesus was born of a virgin, is the only son of God, lived a sinless life, died on the cross as a substitute for sinful people, and rose bodily from the dead three days later. Furthermore, we believe in the imminent return of Christ Jesus to rapture His Church. We also hold to a Pre-Tribulation and Pre-Millennial position concerning end-time events. (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:18-25; Matt 5:16; 15:18-20; Mk 12:28-31; Lk 6:31; Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6; 1 Thess 5:22)

### Section 1. Scriptures

We believe the Bible in its entirety is inspired by God and by His Holy Spirit He called and moved men to write the very words of Scripture. This inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings—historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic to the smallest word and inflection of a word as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe the whole Bible in the originals is therefore without error.

We also believe the Bible is God's divine revelation of Himself to mankind and that all Scriptures are ultimately a testimony to Christ, Who is the focus of this divine revelation. No portion of the Old or New Testaments is properly read or understood until it leads to this truth about the Lord Jesus Christ concerning His person and work in both His first and second coming.

Furthermore, we believe all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction.

(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; Matt. 5: 17-18, 22:29; Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 21:33; 24:27, 44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 1:16; 2:16ff.; 17:2-3, 11; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; 16:25-26; 1 Cor. 2:13; 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Pet. 1:19-21).

### Section 2. The Godhead

We believe the Godhead eternally exists in three persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—and these three are one God, having the same nature, attributes and perfections, and worthy of the same respect, confidence and obedience (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4-6).

### 1. **God the Father**

We believe God, as Father, reigns from His throne in heaven today as He watches and cares for His universe, His creatures, and the course of human history according to the plans and purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. Our access to God the Father is through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. (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.)

### 2. **God the Son**

Christ is the eternal only begotten 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 complete His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord. (Genesis 18:1; Psalms 2:7; 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.)

### 3. **God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. He exalts Christ and, through illumination, He enables mankind to understand truth. He convicts mankind of sin and calls individuals to the Savior for regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and imparts 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.

Furthermore, we believe some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were given to be used as signs to authenticate the message of the first century church. This does not imply that we discount such gifts today. We simply believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Spirit, and the complete deliverance of the body from sickness and death awaits the fulfillment of our salvation in the resurrection. We believe, in accordance with the sovereign will of God, healing is available through the prayer of believers. We believe other non-sign gifts were given to the Church and through the exercise of these gifts in the Church, believers who learn and apply the truth of Scripture to their lives will mature spiritually. We further believe euphoric experiences may be valid manifestations of the grace of God, but they do not necessarily contribute to one's spiritual maturity. (Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7; 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; 4:8, 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, 23, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; 13:8; 2 Cor. 12:12; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:11-16; 30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; James 5:14; 2 Peter 1:21; 2:2; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.)

### **Section 3. Mankind**

We believe mankind has been created by God in His image and likeness, and the humanistic theory of the evolution of man from a lower life form is contrary to the Scriptures. We believe mankind was originally created and fell through his willingness to surrender to sin. As a consequence of his sin, mankind became spiritually dead in his trespasses and sins while also subjugating himself to the power of Satan. We also believe his spiritual death and the total depravity of the human nature has been transmitted to the entire human race with the lone exception begin the Man Christ Jesus who was virgin born. (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Psalm 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Rom. 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 John 3:8)

### **Section 4 Life**

We believe all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. Therefore, we are called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 139).

### **Section 5 Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality**

We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26 – 27) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18 – 25) We believe God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2 – 5; Hebrews 13:4) We believe God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18 – 20; 1 Corinthians 6:9 – 10)

We believe in order to preserve the function and integrity of Friendship Baptist Church as the local body of Christ and to provide a biblical role model to our members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Friendship Baptist Church in any capacity, or who serves as volunteers, agree to and abide by this statement on Marriage, Gender and Sexuality. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14 – 16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22)

We believe God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19 – 21; Romans 10:9 – 10; 1 Corinthians 6:9 – 11)

We believe every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28 – 31; Luke 6:31) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accordance with Scripture nor the doctrines of Friendship Baptist Church.

## Section 6 The First Advent of Christ

We believe the first advent of Christ was purposed and pre-announced by God as revealed in the prophecies of the Scriptures, and as the eternal Son of God, Christ Jesus, came into this world to manifest God to men. He fulfilled prophecy and became the Redeemer of a lost world. He was born of the virgin and received a human body and a sinless human nature. Christ Jesus became and remained a perfect man but sinless throughout his life; yet He retained His absolute deity being God and man at the same time. (Luke 1:30-35; 2:40; John 1:1-2, 18; 3:16; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 4:15)

We believe in fulfillment of prophecy, He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King and being rejected of that nation, He gave His life as a ransom for all. (John 1:11; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Tim. 2:6)

We believe in His infinite love for mankind, He voluntarily became the divinely sacrificial Lamb of God as payment for the sin of the world. Therefore, His death was substitutionary (the just for the unjust), and by His death He became the Savior of the lost. (John 1:29; Rom. 3:25-26; 2 Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5-14; 12 Pet. 3:18)

Furthermore, we believe He arose from the dead with His glorified body according to the Scriptures, and His resurrection body is the pattern of that glorified body which ultimately will be given to all believers. (John 20:20; Phil. 3:20-21)

We also believe upon His ascension from the earth, He was accepted of His Father, and His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. (Heb. 1:3)

We believe He became Head over all things to the church which is His body, and in this ministry He continues to intercede and advocate for the saved. (Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1)

## Section 7 Salvation

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

1. **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 person to Him as Lord and Savior.

2. **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 into a relationship of peace and favor with God.
3. **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/her. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

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

5. **The Extent of Salvation**

We believe when an unregenerate person exercises faith in Christ he/she passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life and is accepted by the Father through the finished work of His Son, Christ Jesus. As an adoptive child of God, He extends full rights and privileges to His child. From the moment of salvation, the new believer is in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is therefore in no way required by God to seek a so-called “second blessing” or a “second work of grace.”

6. **Eternal Security**

We believe that the divine gift of eternal life is given by God from His limitless love for mankind. This act is based upon His grace and not merit, and because of the regenerating abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, true believers everywhere are once saved and kept saved forever.

However, we also believe God is holy and righteous, and He cannot overlook the sins of His children. He will, when they willfully and consistently sin, chasten them and correct them in love. He has undertaken the task of saving and keeping them forever, and in the end will present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son.

7. **Assurance**

We believe all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ are assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior. This assurance is not founded upon any imaginary discovery of their own worthiness but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word. (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; Luke 10:20; 22:32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 13:1; 14:16-17;15:1-16; 17:17, 23; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 13:39; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:1, 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; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8, 17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:3, 7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 2:10; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 7:25; 9:24-28; 10:22; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; 4:17; 5:11-12, 13; Jude 24; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.)

## Section 8      The Church

1. **The Universal Church** We believe the church is composed of individuals who are called, surrendered, and have placed their faith in the risen and ascended Son of God, The Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Spirit each are baptized into one body being members one of another, and are responsible to maintain the unity of this body in the Spirit of peace by rising above all narrow-minded prejudices and denominational bigotry, fervently loving one another with a pure heart (Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-27; Rom. 10:9-11, 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-24; 4:3-10; Col. 3:14-15).

2. **The Local Church** We believe it was God's intention that the local church be a body of baptized believers who have publicly identified with Christ and organized after the family unit. This local body is to be fully committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and to each other for the purpose of carrying out His will through the activities of the universal church. We are to communicate the truth of God's Word to His people and the world, to worship Him with our every act and deed, to emulate His loving care for all people, to cooperate with other like-minded Christian assemblies in meeting needs and sharing His Gospel, and to function under the lordship of Christ as an autonomous body free from external controls of any religious organizations. (Acts 2:41-47; 4:19; 5:29; 1 Cor. 1:1-2; 1 Thess. 1:1; Heb. 10:24-25).

## **Section 9      The Ordinances of the Church**

We believe the Scriptures teach two ordinances. We are commanded to baptize new believers in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. We also are to practice the Lord's Supper till Christ Jesus returns.

We believe in baptism by immersion, yet we recognize this may not always be possible due to extenuating circumstances; therefore, at times, we may also use the form of pouring when immersion is not an option.

The Lord's Supper is observed each month at FBC. The Lord's Supper may be practiced during a corporate worship service or within small groups, and with individual members who are providentially hindered from attending public worship services. (Matt. 28:19-20 Cor. 11:23-26).

## **Section 10     The Christian's Walk**

We believe each believer is called with a holy calling to live his/her life in such a manner as to glorify God in word and deed, and the ability to live such a life is by the power and indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. Each believer must continuously contend with the flesh because of our fallen condition, which necessitates the need to be kept by the Holy Spirit and constantly in subjection to Christ. We firmly believe each believer needs to learn how to feed themselves upon the Word of God; therefore, FBC requires all who desire membership in our church to participate in a New Member's Class. This class seeks to equip our members with the tools and knowledge they need to mature in their Christian walk and faith. (Rom. 6:11-13; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 1:4-7; 3:5-9)

## **Section 11     The Christian's Service**

We believe divine enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Holy Spirit of God upon all who are saved. While there is diversity of gifts each believer is equipped by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit of God wills. In the apostolic church, there were certain gifts, i.e., apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers that were appointed by God for the perfecting and equipping of the saints for their work in the ministry. We believe God continues to call and gift individuals to carry out the perfecting and equipping of His saints today.

We believe each member of the body of Christ is to put into practice their gifts within the local church to fulfill the will of God in ministering to the needs of the church, the community, and missions throughout the world.

We also believe, apart from the gift of salvation which is bestowed equally to all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his/her service for the Lord, and these rewards will be given at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His Church to Himself. (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 12:4-11; 2 Cor. 5:10 Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 4:10-11)

## **Section 12     The Great Commandment & The Great Commission**

We believe the message of Christ Jesus is clear to carry out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. We are to "Love God with all our heart" which is our worship, "Love our neighbor" which is our ministry, "Go and make disciples" which is our evangelism, "Baptizing them" which is our fellowship, "Teaching them to do" which is our discipleship.

We believe that once saved we are divinely counted to be witnesses in this world, and we are to make Christ known to all of mankind. (Matt. 22:37-39; 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11)

### **Section 13 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. (Ex. 20:8-11; Matt. 12:1-12; 28:1ff; Mk 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Lk 24:1-3, 33-36; Jn4:21-24; 20:1, 19-28; Acts 20:7; Rom 14:5-10; 1 Cor 16:1-2; Col 2:16; 3:16; Rev 1:10)

### **Section 14 The Rapture**

We believe, per the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive His Church/The Bride into heaven. His Church consists of both those who are alive and remain unto His coming as well as those who have fallen asleep/died in Christ Jesus. This event is the blessed hope, and for this reason we should be constantly looking for the return of Christ. (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Tit. 2:11-14)

### **Section 15 The Tribulation**

We believe the rapture of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of "Israel's seventieth week" as spoken of by the prophet Daniel. The Church of Christ will be in heaven during the period of "Israel's seventieth week" better known as the seven years of tribulation. This will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, and the latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob's trouble which our Lord called the Great Tribulation. We believe universal righteousness will not be realized until the Second Coming of Christ at the end of these seven years, and we also believe the world is drawing closer and closer toward this time of judgment (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15-21; Rev. 6:1-19:21)

### **Section 16 The Second Coming of Christ**

We believe the period of great tribulation on the earth will reach its apex at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth. He will return with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age. He will bind Satan and place him in the abyss and lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation. He will restore Israel to her own land and fulfill God's covenant promises. (Deut. 30:1-10; Isa. 11:9; Ezek. 37:21-28; Matt. 24:15-25:46; Acts 15:16-17; Rom. 8:19-23; 11:25-27; Rev. 20:1-3).

### **Section 17 Heaven & the After Life**

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 and remain there in conscious bliss until the resurrection of their glorified bodies. When Christ returns to rapture His Church the soul and body reunite and shall be with Him forever in glory.

For the unbelieving, their spirits/souls remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne, which occurs at the close of the millennium reign of Christ Jesus. The soul and body of the unbelieving will then be reunited and cast into the lake of fire. There is also an eternal body, which will not be annihilated but will experience an everlasting punishment and separation from the presence of the Lord. (Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)

### **Section 18 The Dispensations**

We believe the dispensations are stewardships by which God directs His purposes on the earth through man under various responsibilities. We believe the dispensations span the entire course of human history and through the biblical record we are able to witness the different administrative responsibilities and the

character manifested in each age. The end result of each dispensation finds the failure of mankind under the respective test and in the ensuing judgment of God.

We believe in seven dispensations, and three of these are the subject of extended revelation in the Scriptures: the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of the church, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom. We believe these are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused, as they are chronologically successive.

Furthermore, we do not believe the dispensations are ways of salvation or different methods of administering a "Covenant of Grace." They are not, in themselves, dependent on covenant relationships but are ways of life and responsibility to God which test the submission of mankind to His revealed will during a particular time. According to the "eternal purpose" of God, salvation is always "by grace through faith" and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ.

Lastly, we believe it has always been true that "without faith it is impossible to please God," and Old Testament saints were saved by faith in a coming Savior and Redeemer. However, it was historically impossible for them to comprehend to the same extent as we do today the nature of the prophecies, sacrifices, and the incarnate, crucified Son of God. We believe they did have some understanding of the prophecies and types of the suffering Savior and other details, yet although vague, their faith was counted unto them for righteousness. (Gen. 15:1; Rom. 4:3-8; 1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3: 2, 9, 11; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4; Heb. 11:6; 1 Pet. 1:10-12)

## **Section 19    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. Thus missionary effort on the part of all rests upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerated 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 constantly seek 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.)

## **Section 20    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.)



## **Section 21 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. Therefore, they are 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.)

## **Section 22 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.)

## **Section 23 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.)