



# Statement of Faith Second Slavic Baptist Church

*Sacramento, CA*



## STATEMENT OF FAITH

This document is an official statement of faith of the PCSBA (Pacific Coast Slavic Baptist Association) that Second Slavic Baptist Churc is a part of. This confession of faith is based on the “Christian Baptist Confession of Faith” edited by I. V. Odintsov, 1928.

## I. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

### II. GOD

### III. MAN

### IV. SIN

### V. SALVATION

### VI. THE CHURCH

### VII. MARRIAGE

### VIII. CIVIL GOVERNMENT

### IX. THE SPIRIT WORLD

### X. LAST DAYS

## I. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Scriptures or written Word of God are now contained in all the following 66 Books of the Bible.

THE OLD TESTAMENT: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

THE NEW TESTAMENT: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John, III John, Jude, The Book of the Revelation.

We believe that these 66 Books in their entirety are God's Revelation of Himself to men, are inspired by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 1:11-12; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Heb. 1:1- 2) and are the sole source of the knowledge of God. We teach that the Bible in its original documents was Divinely inspired and is the infallible and inerrant Word of God. We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to men (2 Pet. 1:19-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Ps. 119:105; Acts 17:11; Rom. 3:21; 2 Tim. 3:15-16; Rev. 22:18)

We believe that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice. Although there may be several applications of any given passage, there is but one true interpretation. We teach that the Word of God is an objective Revelation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, as one diligently applies the literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation of every text of Scripture in its proper context. It is the responsibility of every believer to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of scripture and make proper application of its truths in all circumstances of life.



## II. GOD

We believe that there is but one living, true, and eternal God (Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; 1 Tim. 2:5); Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:26, 3:22; Matt. 3:16-17, 28:19; John 14:26; 2 Cor. 13:13; 1 John 5:7), Who in His essence and attributes is perfect, eternally equal and indivisible (John 1:7-10, 10:30, 16:13-14; 1 John 2:23) so that the Father is the true, eternal God (Matt. 6:9; Eph. 4:6), the Son is the true, eternal God (Is. 9:6; John 1:1-14, 5:23, 8:58-59, 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Heb. 1:3-10; 1 John 5:20), and the Holy Spirit is the true, eternal God (Gen. 1:2; Matt. 12:32; Acts 5:3-4, 20:28; 1 Cor. 2:11, 3:16-17, 12:11; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Eph. 4:30; 1 Pet. 4:14). We teach that the Triune God is eternal (Ps. 90:2; Eph. 4:5-6; 1 Tim. 1:17), omnipotent (Gen. 17:1; Rev. 4:8), most wise (Is. 40:28; Rom. 11:33-34, 14:26), omniscient (Ps. 139:2-4; Acts 15:18; Heb. 4:13), omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-10; Jer. 23:24). We teach that knowledge of this God comes solely from the Divine Revelation of Scripture and through the illumination of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 11:25-27; John 14:26; Rom. 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:21, 2:14).

### God the Father

We believe that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Ps. 145:8-9; 1 Cor. 8:6). He is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, (Gen. 1:1-31; Eph. 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler of the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Ps. 103:19; Rom. 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Eph. 4:6), but He is Spiritual Father only to believers (Rom. 8:14; 2 Cor. 6:18). God has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Eph. 1:11-12). He continually governs all creatures and events. In His sovereignty God is neither author nor approver of evil or sin but in fact hates sin (Hab. 1:13; John 8:38-47), while not abridging the accountability of all moral and intelligent creatures for sin (1 Pet. 1:17). God has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own through eternal salvation (Eph. 1:4-6). He saves and forgives the sins of all those who come to Him through faith in Jesus Christ and becomes upon adoption their Father (John 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Heb. 12:5-9).

### God the Son

We believe God the Father created all things according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operations. We teach that Jesus Christ, the second person in the Trinity possesses all the divine excellences, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30).

We believe that in His incarnation (God becoming man) Christ voluntarily surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, God the Son accepted all the characteristics of humanity and so became God- man (Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2:0).

We believe that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (Micah 5:2; Col. 2:9), was virgin born (Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35), was God incarnate (John 1:1, 14), and that the purpose of His incarnation was to reveal God to men and redeem men from the bondage of sin (John 1:29; Heb. 7:25-26; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross, that His death was voluntary,

substitutionary, and propitiatory (Rom. 3:24-25, 5:8; 1 Pet. 2:24). We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of Christ's death, the repentant sinner, believing in Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, is freed from the penalty and power of sin, is declared righteous, and adopted into the family of God (Rom. 3:25, 5:8-9; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:24, 3:18).

We believe that our justification is made on the basis of the literal, physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He intercedes as our Advocate and High Priest (Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Rom. 4:25, 8:34; Heb. 7:25, 9:14; 1 John 2:1).

We believe the literal physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave according to the scriptures and that through His resurrection, God the Father confirmed the deity of His Son, and proved that God has accepted the atoning work of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. We teach that the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29, 14:19; Rom. 1:4, 4:25, 6:5-10; 1 Cor. 15:20, 23).

We believe that Jesus Christ will come at the rapture to receive His church, which is His body, unto Himself. After this He will return with His church in glory to establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20). We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ as the mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5), is the one through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23), being the Head of His body the Church (Eph. 1:22, 5:23; Col. 1:18), the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David (Is. 9:6; Luke 1:31-33). Jesus Christ is the final judge of all who reject Him and fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and personal Savior (Acts 17:30-31).

## **God the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person in the Trinity, possesses all the attributes of God including intellect (1 Cor. 2:10-13), emotions (Eph. 4:30), will (1 Cor. 12:11), eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, (Is. 40:13-14). He is almighty and truthful (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes, He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Jer. 31: 31-34; Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3-4, 28:25-26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 10:15-17).

We believe that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We teach that the Holy Spirit sovereignly acted in the creation (Gen. 1:2), the incarnation (Matt. 1:18), the written revelation (2 Pet. 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

We believe that a unique work of the Holy Spirit began in this age when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17, 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ i.e. His Church (1 Cor. 12:13). His activity today includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5, 2:4; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 2:22).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing (immersing) all believers into the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers believers for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (Rom. 8:9, 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13). We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher Who guided the apostles and prophets as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer from the moment of salvation (Eph. 1:13-

14), and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled) the Spirit by submitting all spheres of their lives to the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We believe that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. Spiritual gifts glorify Jesus Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost, building up and strengthening believers in the faith and truth, by equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ (John 16:13 – 14; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 2 Cor. 3:18, Eph. 4:7- 12). We teach that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles were sovereignly bestowed by the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets in the beginning days of the church for the purpose of authenticating the apostles as the revealers of divine truth. These gifts were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers nor evidence of having received the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11, 13:8-10; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:1-4).

### **III. MAN**

We believe that man was directly created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin, possessing true wisdom, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:7, 16-17; Deut. 30:19; Joshua 24:15; Jer. 21:8; James 3:9). Man was created a trinity having body, soul and spirit (Gen. 2:7; 1 Thes. 5:23). God gave man the wisdom and authority to subdue the world around him (Gen. 1:28, 2:15; Ps. 8:7).

We believe that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, and have dominion over all things God had created (Gen. 1:26-28; Is. 43:7; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11).

### **IV. SIN**

We believe that Adam's sin of disobedience was his rebellion against the absolute authority of God. Man sinned through the cunning of Satan, fell away from God, incurring the penalty of spiritual and physical death (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 6:23, 8:6; Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13). Attempting to become a god, man rejected the Lordship of his Creator, became subject to the wrath of God, and a slave to sin (Rom. 3:9-23). We teach that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men (Gen. 6:3; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12-18) who born in sin (Ps. 51:5, 58:3), are inclined to evil (Gen. 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21-22, 16:14; Luke 24:25; Rom. 3:10-18, 8:7), and have become children of wrath (Eph. 2:3).

### **V. SALVATION**

We believe that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Eph. 1:7, 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

#### **Atonement and Justification**

We believe that it was not possible for God to redeem man from the horrible consequences of his fall without the complete appeasement of His wrath and Holy Justice. Because of this God from eternity past predestined His only begotten Son Jesus Christ



to be offered as a propitiatory sacrifice for man's sin. In the fullness of time, Jesus Christ, Son of the living God came to earth, took on the likeness of man in order to redeem the human race. While on earth, Christ in perfect obedience fulfilled all the law, offered His life as a sacrifice for us on the cross. In doing so He became a curse for us paying the penalty for our sins by bearing the wrath of God on our behalf.

We believe that Jesus Christ, the perfect Son of God is the single source of our complete and eternal salvation resulting in the forgiveness of our sins, our justification, imputation of Christ's righteousness to us and the deliverance from eternal death, the power of Satan and hell, eternal life. As a result of our atonement the believer having died to sin now hates it and instead desires and does good. Jesus Christ, having obtained our atonement through His death, arose from the dead on the third day, has ascended into heaven and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. Christ has sent us the Holy Spirit Who inclines believers to receive the Divine blessings of this glorious redemption. As our High Priest, Jesus Christ intercedes for us before the Father, is always among us, and will one day return to take us to heaven where He has prepared a place for us.

We believe that justification before God is an act of God (Rom. 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Jesus Christ, repent of their sins (Is. 55:6-7; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38, 3:19, 11:18; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:10) and confess Him as their personal Lord and Savior (Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Cor. 4:5; Phil. 2:11). The righteousness of Christ is apart from any virtue or work of man (Rom. 3:20; 4:6) but is because Christ took our sins upon Himself and imputed His righteousness to those who believe in Him (Col. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:24). The born-again believer is therefore clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21). By this we mean that God is just, and the justifier of him who believes in Christ.

## **Regeneration**

We believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). This is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the hearing of the Word of God (John 5:24) when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, with faith accepts Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance and confirmed by Biblical attitudes toward life and conduct. Good works done by believers in obedience to God's Word are evidence and fruit of regeneration as the believer submits to the leading of the Holy Spirit (1Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 2:10, 5:17-21; Phil. 2:12; Col. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor.3:18). Such a conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

## **Sanctification**

We believe that every believer is sanctified, that is, set apart from the world unto God as His possession through justification and is therefore declared Holy by God. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and has to do with the believers standing before God and should not be confused with progressive sanctification i.e. the believers present walk and condition. (Acts 20:32; Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30, 6:12; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 2:1, 10:10, 14, 13:12). We believe that through the power of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the



Word of God the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:1-22; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Thess. 4:3-4, 5:23).

In this respect, we teach that every born-again believer is involved in a daily conflict between his new nature and the old sinful nature of fallen man. Despite this provision for victory is made through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. This struggle with sin continues throughout the entire believers life, is never ended and any claims to the total eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. We teach that victory over sin is only possible with the help of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Phil. 3:12; Col. 3:9-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

## **Security**

We believe that all genuine believers are born again, saved and redeemed and are therefore kept secure by the power of God and Whom they can fully trust to keep them secure in His hand (John 5:24, 6:37-40; Rom. 5:9-10, 8:1, 31-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 7:25, 13:5; 1 Pet. 1:5; Jude 24). We teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation and that scripture clearly forbids living in a state of sin. Those who live in a pattern of sin have no scriptural assurance of eternal salvation and are Christians in name only (Rom. 6:15-22; Gal. 5:13, 25-26; Tit. 2:11-14; 1 John 5:16).

## **VI. THE CHURCH**

We believe that all those who place their faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior are immediately placed (baptized into) one united spiritual body, the Church, which is the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:7), of which Christ is the head (Eph. 1:22, 4:15; Col. 1:18).

We believe that the Church is a unique spiritual organism designed by Jesus Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Eph. 2:11, 3:6). The Church is presently God's people and is distinct from Israel (1 Cor. 10:32). We teach that the formation of the Church began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the Rapture after which it will forever remain with Christ (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).

We believe that the establishment, priority, and continuity of local Churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27, 20:17, 28; Gal. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Cor. 11:18-20; Heb. 10:25). According to Christ's teaching as well as the teaching and example of the Apostles, in order to fulfill all the teaching of the New Testament, it is the responsibility of each believer to not remain alone but to join with other disciples of Christ as members of one body, as living stones of the house of God (Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:5), for their mutual edification, comfort, and help (1 Thess. 5:11, 14; Jude 20), in order to continue in the apostles doctrine, fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:42). This union of genuine disciples of Christ is the true Christian Church (John 8:31, 10:27), whose unchanging rule and guide is the Word of God (Eph. 2:20; 2 Tim. 3:16).



## Spiritual Gifts

We believe that the purpose of the Church is to glorify God (Eph. 3:21), by building itself up and strengthening of one another in the faith (Eph. 4:13-16), in accordance with the Word of God (2 Tim. 2:2, 15, 3:16-17). The Church is also a place for the mutual fellowship of believers (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), and the keeping of the ordinances (Luke 22:19, Acts 2:38-42). Ultimately the most important mission of the Church is for every believer to be involved in worldwide evangelism (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8, 2:42).

We believe that for the edification of the Church, ministry to one another, and worship of God, each born-again believer is given spiritual gifts from God (Rom. 12:5-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; 1 Pet. 4:10-11). These spiritual gifts are given to each believer by the Holy Spirit according to His Sovereign will for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry and building up of the Church.

We believe that the gifts of miracles, tongues, divine revelation and healing were given to the early church in the Apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the Apostles message (Acts 3:12, 5:12; 2 Cor. 12:12). Spiritual gifts have been given to the church today for the purpose of equipping believers for edifying one another (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 14:12). We believe that God is mighty and does hear and answer the prayers of believers today for the sick and suffering in accordance with His perfect will (Luke 18:1-6; 2 Cor. 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

## The Local Church

We believe that God ordained the local Church as the visible link to the body of Christ – the universal Church. We teach the autonomy of the local Church, free from any external human authority or control. The local Church has the right of self-government and the freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations except at the request of the local Church. Local Churches may cooperate with each other in the presentation and propagation of the faith, however, the extent, form, and methods of their cooperation is determined solely through their Pastors and their interpretation and application of scripture (Acts 15:19-31, 20:28; 1 Cor. 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

## Qualifications of Church Leaders

We believe that the one supreme authority for the Church is Christ (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18) and that church leadership, spiritual gifts for ministry, Church order, discipline, were established by Christ as taught in scripture. The local Church is led and served by leaders chosen and ordained by the Church (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11, Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-5). The Biblically designated officers are male elders, pastors, bishops, teachers, evangelists, and deacons.

We believe that when Scripture speaks of pastors, bishops, teachers, evangelists, it does not teach ranks of leadership but rather speaks interchangeably of the many functions of a church leader. Church leaders are responsible to lead by praying, faithfully preaching and teaching, performing the Lord's Supper, Baptism, marriage, as well as praying for the sick and for blessing with the laying on of hands (Acts 6:4; 1 Tim. 3:1-7). These are God given responsibilities to elders as servants of Christ (Acts 20:28, 31; 1 Tim. 5:17-22; Heb. 13:17). In addition, a council of elders helps the pastor in providing spiritual leadership in all aspects of the development of ministry of the local Church.



## Pastors and deacons

Pastors and deacons must meet the Biblical qualifications as taught in scripture. The main duties of deacons is to serve under the leadership of elders, helping them exercise oversight in the practical matters of church life. (Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:8-13). Ordination of leaders (pastors, elders, teachers, evangelists, and deacons) chosen and found qualified by the local church is performed by experienced local church pastors as well as pastors invited from other churches (1 Tim. 3:10). Church leaders are accountable first of all to Christ Himself, to one another, to the church as well as to the board of elders. We teach that these Church leaders lead or rule the Church as servants of Christ and have His authority in directing the Church (1 Tim. 5:20). The congregation is to submit to their leadership.

## Church Discipline

We believe that the spiritual growth of believers occurs through the nurturing power of God's Word (1 Pet. 2:2). Because of this we teach the importance of discipleship (Matt. 28:19-20; 2 Tim. 2:2), and mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matt. 18:5-14), as well as the need for church discipline for sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of scripture (Matt. 18:15-22; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16). The goal of church discipline is the restoration of the believer to fellowship through repentance and forgiveness of their sin (1 Tim. 1:5).

## Ordinances

We believe that two ordinances have been committed to the local church by the Lord Jesus Christ: baptism and the Lord's Supper which are symbolic of the new spiritual life the believer is living (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion is the testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior Jesus Christ, and is demonstrated by his union with Christ in death to sin and resurrection to a new life by obedience to God (Rom. 6:1-11). Water baptism is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes (1 Cor. 11:26). Participation in the Lord's Supper occurs in a spirit of humility and self-examination as the believer reflects upon the sacrifice of Jesus Christ which brings salvation (1 Cor. 11:28-32).

We believe that the bread and wine are merely representative of the flesh and blood of Christ and the Lord's Supper is only for those who have been saved by being born again, have obeyed the Lord in Christian baptism, and are at peace with God and other members of the local church (1 Cor. 10:16).

## VII. MARRIAGE

We believe that marriage was instituted by God (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:22-23; Heb. 13:4) between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:18, 24) for companionship, mutual support, and propagation of the human race. We teach that Christians may only marry in the Lord i.e. with believers (1 Cor. 7:1-16, 39; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:23; 1 Tim. 4:1-4).

Marriage is a mutual dedication of a man and a woman to each other in the presence of God as well as His church until death. All problems which may arise between a hus-

band and his wife should be resolved in a spirit of Christian love and humility according to the standards of scripture. We teach that scripture prohibits divorce except for fornication, or in cases when an unbelieving spouse leaves a believing husband or wife (1 Cor. 7:15).

Marriage is not only a Divine institution celebrated by the church, but also civil in nature and therefore must be done in accordance with the laws of the country of residence (Col. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:3-5).

We believe that a man is to have only one wife and a woman only one husband as long as they both live (Matt. 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 6:16). We teach that divorce for unbiblical reasons as well as remarriage of an unbiblically divorced person is prohibited by scripture (Matt. 19:6-8; 1 Cor. 7:10-11).

## VIII. CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that God has ordained governing authorities on earth in order to maintain civil order by rewarding good and to restrain evil men in a sinful, fallen world (Rom. 13:1, 4). We teach that Christians are obligated to be subject to all governing authorities and laws of the country in which they live if they do not violate principles taught in the Holy Scriptures (Matt. 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; Rom. 13:5-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-14,17). Christians are commanded by God to pray for governing authorities so that they according to God's will and merciful protection would use their delegated powers to promote peace and justice (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

We believe that human governments do not carry the sword in vain and have the right and duty to protect their citizens and inflict punishment on wrongdoers. We recognize, however, that evil is never overcome by evil (Rom.12:21, 13:4). Because of this we teach that military service is a matter of conscience for each believer and no one can condemn those who serve in the military nor compel military service upon those who for the sake of conscience request to be excused from service in arms.

## IX. THE SPIRIT WORLD

### Holy Angels

We believe that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshipped. Angels are not offered saving faith although they are a higher order than man. Angels were created to serve God and worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Heb. 1:6-14, 2:6-7; Rev. 5:11-14, 19:10, 22:9).

### Fallen Angels

We believe that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Is. 14:12-17; Ez. 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Gen. 3:1-15).

We believe that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Is. 14:13-14; Matt. 4:1-11; Rev. 12:9-10), the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 16:20). Satan shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Is. 14:12-17; Ez. 28:11-19; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

## Death

We believe that physical death is the separation of soul and body and that the human soul is immortal involving no loss of immaterial consciousness (Rev. 6:9-11). The soul of the redeemed believer passes immediately into the presence of Jesus Christ (Luke 23:43; Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:8), and that for the redeemed this separation will continue until the Rapture (1 Thes. 4:13- 17), when the soul and body of the believer will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Phil. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:3-44; 50-54).

We believe the bodily resurrection of all men, saved and unsaved. The saved will be resurrected to eternal life with Christ (John 6:39; Rom. 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Cor. 4:14) and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29; Rev. 20:13-15).

We believe that salvation is only possible during life and that after death no one can change their destiny (Luke 16:26). We teach that the souls of the unsaved are kept under punishment until the final resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Rev. 20:13-15), when the soul and the body will be united (John 5:28-29). They shall then stand at the Great White Throne judgment (Rev. 20:11- 15), and shall be cast into the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41-46), cut off from God in eternal torment (Dan. 12:2; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

## X. LAST DAYS

We believe that one day the Church of Jesus Christ will be raptured from this earth (Matt. 24:31; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thes. 4:16-17; 2 Thes. 2:1-10; Rev. 10:7). The bodies of believers living at that time will be changed, while the dead in Christ will be raised in a new body and shall all be united with the Lord and shall remain forever with Him. We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth in power and glory to bring to justice the wicked and establish His Kingdom (1 Cor. 15:24). We teach that the second coming of Jesus Christ will be preceded by a period of tribulation during which God's wrath will be poured out upon the inhabitants of the earth (Rev. 6- 19).

We believe that after the tribulation period, Christ will return to earth to establish His messianic kingdom for one thousand years on the earth (Rev. 20:1-7). During this time all the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ez. 37:21-28; Dan. 7:17-22; Rev. 19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of Antichrist and the False Prophet who will be thrown into the lake of fire. At this time Satan will be bound and sealed in the bottomless pit for a thousand years (Dan. 7:17-27; Rev. 20:1-7). We teach that the millennial kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel made in the Old Testament in which God promised to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience (Deut. 28:15-68; Is. 65:17-25; Ez. 37:21-28; Zech. 8:1-17), and during which time God dealt with the gentiles (Matt. 21:43; Rom. 11:1-26).

We believe that there will be a judgment of the unsaved before the Great White Throne of God where He will judge all the unsaved which He will resurrect according to the works which they did while living on the earth and then sent away to eternal punishment (Rev. 20:12-15, 22:12, 15).

## Eternity

We believe that after the Great White Throne judgment (2 Thes. 1:9; Rev. 20:7-15), the earth and everything on it will be dissolved (2 Pet. 3:10). God will then create a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells (Eph. 5:5). Following this, the heavenly city will come out of heaven (Rev. 21:2), and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Rev. 21-22). Our Lord Jesus Christ will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father ending His mission of saving the human race (1 Cor. 15:24-28) so that God may reign forever (1 Cor. 15:28).

We hold fast to Scripture which teaches that both blessedness of the redeemed as well as torment of the unsaved will be unchangeable and that both of these states are eternal and no transition can be made from one state to another. Remembering the words of our Lord “Behold I come quickly” with the Spirit and the bride of the church of which we are members we proclaim “Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus!”

