

# **i BELIEVE**

**A Survey of Christian Doctrine**

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**Wednesdays 6:30pm**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

# i-BELIEVE

Lesson 1: Doctrine Matters

Lesson 2: The Scriptures

Lesson 3: God: The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit

Lesson 4: Man

Lesson 5: Salvation **and** God's Purpose of Grace

Lesson 6: The Church

Lesson 7: Baptism & Lord's Supper **and** The Lord's Day

Lesson 8: Kingdom

Lesson 9: Last Things

Lesson 10: Evangelism & Missions **and** Education

Lesson 11: Stewardship **and** Cooperation

Lesson 12: Social Order

Lesson 13: Peace & War **and** Religious Liberty

Lesson 14: The Family

Each lesson will include the text of The Baptist Faith & Message 2000, following with added key texts and key discussion points. The goal of this study is interaction for the sake of understanding. So, feel free to write notes, ask questions and participate. It is not necessary to attend each lesson, though it will be beneficial.

## Background Resources

- The Baptist Faith & Message 2000, found at [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net)
- Baptist Faith & Message 2000, Series with 21-parts given at Wake Crossroads Church by Dr. Daniel Akin, found at [www.danielakin.com](http://www.danielakin.com)
- Doctrine: What Christians Really Believe by Mark Driscoll & Gerry Breshears
- Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem

## Doctrine Matters

- 1. To know God personally.** Christianity is much more than a general or vague sense of faith, mixed together with hope and good intentions. The Christian faith is rightly knowing God through a dynamic grace-faith relationship with Jesus Christ. This does not mean a person must have the entire Bible memorized or every theme mastered. But, if we have the Bible (God's Word), and numerous resources at our fingertips to better understand the written and living Word, then why would we not grow in our understanding so that we may grow in our love for God?  
*Luke 10:27* "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"  
*Jude 1:20-21* "But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life."
- 2. To know truth & error.** Christianity is more than an experiential and emotional relationship with God. The Christian faith is based on historical, theological and moral truth. And truth is not like Jello (hard to nail down), but is something absolute and objective. Even more, the Christian faith must be promoted and defended from that which is false and out of bounds. If not, then you misunderstand a large theme and purpose of the New Testament.  
*Acts 2:42* "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' DOCTRINE and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers"  
*Romans 16:17* "I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the DOCTRINE that you have been taught; avoid them"  
*1 Timothy 6:3* "If anyone teaches a different DOCTRINE and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing..."  
*2 Timothy 4:3* "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound DOCTRINE, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit up their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth"  
*Jude 1:3* "contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints."
- 3. To properly live the Christian life.** Christianity is more than academic knowledge of beliefs. The Christian faith is rooted in theological truth which produces the fruit of godly and righteous living. However, good fruit only comes from good roots. In fact, you cannot have one without the other. Much of the New Testament carries this example; Paul's teaching starts doctrinal and then leads to the practical. ("Therefore...")  
*Ephesians 4:14-16* "so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of DOCTRINE, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."
- 4. To Lead Generations.** Christianity is more than a faith for a single culture, era or people. The Christian faith is for every culture of every era among every nation.  
*Psalms 78:6-7* "so that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments"

- **Doctrines:** A doctrine is a systematic teaching on a given topic. So, Christian doctrine is what the whole Bible teaches us about a particular topic and its essential purpose. In other words, doctrine is not based on a single verse or passage but arrives from the entire scope of the Bible in both the Old and New Testaments.
  
- **Open Hand vs. Closed Hand:** There is no doubt that Christianity affirms absolute truth and a set standard of beliefs. However, there are some topics or doctrines that we do not have full information or understanding from the Bible. Christians can disagree over some topics. But, there are many that are not up for debate. Therefore, it is appropriate to discuss doctrine in terms of those that are open handed (hold loosely; secondary/minor; agree to disagree for purpose of unity) and others that are closed handed (hold tightly; primary/major; disagreement means differences and perhaps division). God views His truth and right beliefs very seriously, so do not shy away from properly understanding these differences.
  
- **Confessions:** “No creed but the Bible”; - - - “exaggerated individualism” E.Y. Mullins
  - (1) That they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptist body, large or small, for the general instruction and guidance of our own people and others concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, viz., repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
  - (2) That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. As in the past so in the future, Baptists should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient at any time.
  - (3) That any group of Baptists, large or small, have the inherent right to draw up for themselves and publish to the world a confession of their faith whenever they may think it advisable to do so.
  - (4) That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.
  - (5) That they are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other realms of life. Baptists cherish and defend religious liberty, and deny the right of any secular or religious authority to impose a confession of faith upon a church or body of churches. We honor the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, affirming together both our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the Word of God.

Baptist churches, associations, and general bodies have adopted confessions of faith as a **witness to the world, and as instruments of doctrinal accountability**. We are not embarrassed to state before the world that these are doctrines we hold precious and as essential to the Baptist tradition of faith and practice.
  
- **BFM with 4 Updates:** Sometimes “truth emerges from error”
  - o 1925 Controversy: evolution and anti-supernatural bent (Modernism vs. Fundamentalism)
  - o 1963 Controversy: the authority of the Bible
  - o 1998 Controversy: the family
  - o 2000 Controversy: basis for truth, numerous theological issues including the authority of the Bible, open theism, substitutionary atonement, exclusivity of the gospel, the Lord’s Day, abortion, homosexuality, and the role of women.
  
- **Attitude of prayer & humility:**  
*Psalm 119:18 “Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your law”*  
*1Corinthians 8:1 “knowledge puffs up but love builds up”*

# GROUP DISCUSSION & NOTES

- ✦ In what ways (if any) has this introductory discussion changed your view of doctrine?
  
- ✦ What is likely to happen to an individual or church that gives up learning and loving sound doctrine? Where have you seen this to be true? Do you have biblical support of this?
  
- ✦ Look at the outline of topics to be covered in this study. Which are you excited to know about and which make you feel cautious? Are there any that you think a fuller understanding would help bring clarity and contentment in your present circumstances?
  
- ✦ What is the difference between an Open Hand Doctrine and a Closed Hand Doctrine?
  
- ✦ Why are prayer & humility important attitudes for studying doctrine?
  
- ✦ What comments or questions do you have?

# THE BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE 2000 (BFM)

## I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

### Key Texts:

**Psalm 19:7-10:** "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

**Matt 5:17-18:** "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."

**2 Timothy 3:15-17:** "and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

**2 Peter 1:19-21:** "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

### Key Ideas:

- ✚ **The Bible is inspired:** "theopneustos / God-breathed"; written by men and God
- ✚ **The Bible is inerrant:** truth w/o any mixture of error, totally true and trustworthy; God's character is not errant or untrustworthy and neither is His word.
- ✚ **The Bible is intimate:** salvation is the end purpose; written by God and revealed to us for faith

### Key Discussion:

- ✚ What does it say about the Bible that it is profound enough for scholars yet simple enough for a child-like faith? Is reading and understanding the Bible necessary for salvation?
- ✚ If the Bible is inspired and inerrant, what does that mean for your life? If you have concerns that the Bible is inspired and inerrant, what should you do; how will you resolve your questions?
- ✚ Can a person make the Bible say whatever they want? Is there a single or multiple correct interpretations?
- ✚ Why do you think its important to have the Bible translated into people's languages? What translation of the Bible do you use?
- ✚ How should Christians view other religious scriptures (Apocrypha, Mormons, JW, Quran, etc.)?

## **II. God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### **A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

### **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 6:16,27; 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; Rev 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

### **C. God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31;5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6;*

*Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

### **Key Texts**

**Genesis 1:1-2, 26** “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters....Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”

**Exodus 20:1-3:** “And God spoke all these words, saying: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.”

**Deuteronomy 6:4:** “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!”

**Isaiah 42:8** “I am the Lord; that is my name, my glory I give to no other.”

**John 1:1-2, 14; 10:30** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth;... I and the Father are one.”

**Matthew 28:19:** “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

**Romans 8:14-16:** “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, —Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

**Galatians 4:4-7:** “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

**Philippians 2:11** “every tongue [will] confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**Colossians 1:15, 19** “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation...For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.”

**Revelation 22:13** “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

### **Key Discussion:**

☛ Does God exist? If so, what is he like?

- God is exclusive despite today’s pluralistic, PC, tolerant society.
- Since God is exclusive, salvation is exclusive – one way!
- God is eternal, all-powerful and all-knowing (past, present & future events) and yet personal. He is not a force but one God in three equal persons: The Father; The Son; The Holy Spirit.

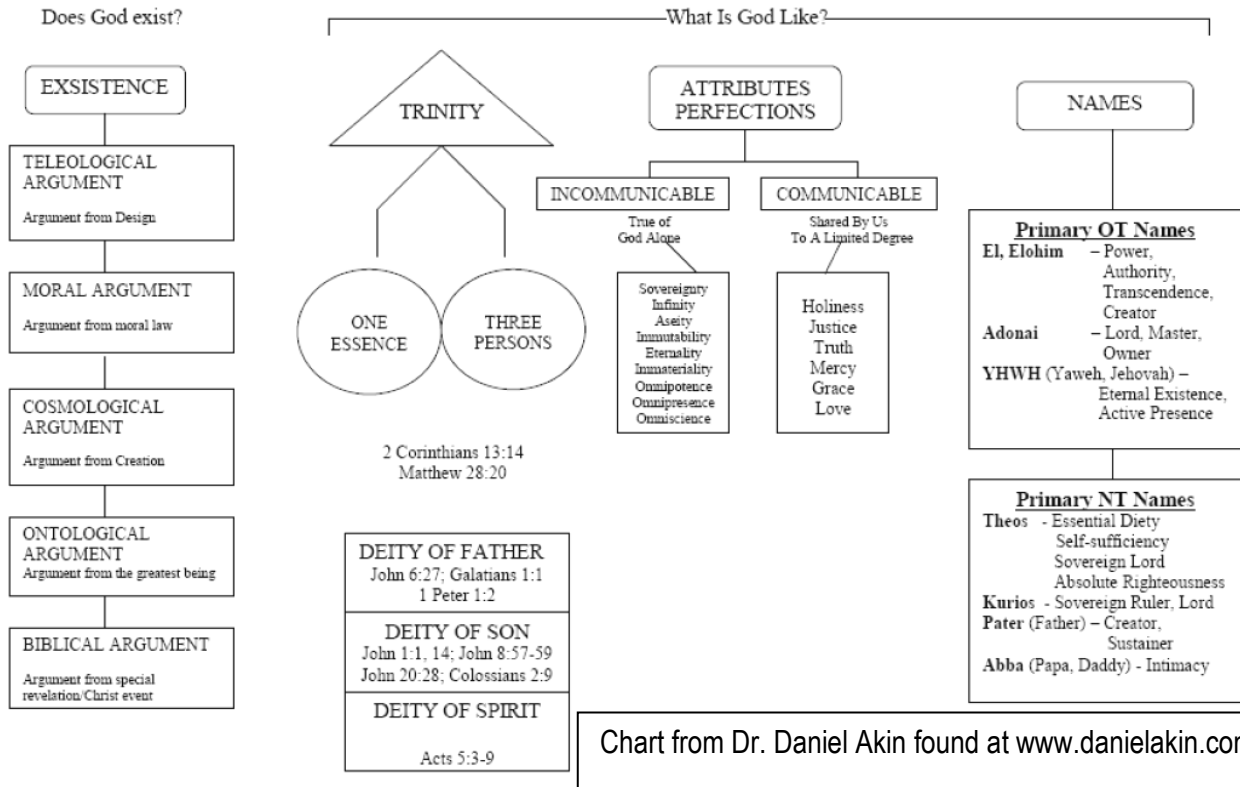
☛ If there is one God, why do we worship God [the Father], Jesus and the Holy Spirit?

- “ontological equality but economic subordination” – meaning each person is equally divine in being but have unique and shared roles
- Father, a perfect one, not mother or any other PC terminology – God is the Creator and Sender of the Son for redemption
- Jesus is fully God and fully human – Jesus is the sent Son to obey the Father’s will
  - Contra JW, Mormons, and host of other cults and atheists
- Holy Spirit is fully God – Spirit is sent by the Father and Son to affirm their role in the life of a believer

- Personally involved in creation, prophecy, salvation, scriptures and resurrection. He is a Person not a “force” or an “it”.
- For every believer, contra Pentecostal teachings of a later “second blessing”
- Theological Errors:
  - Modalism (God expressed in modes not persons) is present among Oneness Pentecostals or The United Pentecostal Church
    - Denies personhood of God, giving him little ability to relate
    - Bible has false imagery (Jesus prays to Father...sends Spirit...)
    - Atonement is meaningless of Jesus’ sacrifice to God’s wrath on sin
  - Arianism (Son is a creature and not divine) is present among Jehovah’s Witness
    - Denies Jesus’ claims of divinity, acceptance of worship
    - Denies Biblical language of Jesus’ eternality (the Word; I AM)
  - Tritheism (God is multiple) is present among Mormonism (LDS) and practically every new age philosophy
    - Denies OT & NT affirmations of God’s exclusivity
    - Denies Jesus & Spirit unique relationship with God

✚ Ultimately, prayer to God is a relational privilege apart from other religions.

## Theology Proper



### III. Man

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

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

#### Key Texts:

**Genesis 1:26-27:** “Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

**Genesis 3:15-16:** “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire *shall be* for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”

**Genesis 9:6:** “Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.”

**Romans 5:19:** “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”

#### Key Discussion:

- ✪ How should a person view themselves and others, in light of the fact they are made in God’s image?
  - Humanity has a noble status above all other creation being created in God’s image and “very good”
  - Sacred personality; every person of every race. Therefore, any view of humanity that diminishes another on any grounds (gender, race, age, intelligence, physical form, circumstance of conception, etc.) is unbiblical and immoral.
  - Identity issues... not self-esteem but from God’s image
    - Like God, humans have personhood (relationship/community), intellect, emotion, spirit (more than physical matter)
- ✪ What do you think the different genders say about God?
  - Humanity has defined gender of male and female which is a reflection of God’s image.
  - Both male & female are of equal essence and worth though different in function or role (see Article on Family)
- ✪ How should a person view themselves in light of the Fall – sin nature?
  - Humanity has an ignoble status in that of a sinner, which is generationally perpetuated.
  - We sin because we are sinners (inherited) AND we are sinners because we sin (initiated)
  - Christ became man to redeem humanity and restore God’s image in man
  - Desperate need for a Savior
    - Doctrine demands a missionary mandate for all peoples (Mat 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)

## IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept 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. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

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

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

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

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

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

## V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

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

### **Key Texts:**

**Genesis 3:15:** "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

**Genesis 15:6:** "And he [Abraham] believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness."

**John 3:5:** “Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

**John 3:16:** “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

**Acts 4:12:** “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

**2 Corinthians 5:17-21:** “Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

**Ephesians 2:8-9:** “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✚ Salvation starts with and depends on God, not humanity.
  - Election & Predestination are biblical terms, do not be afraid of them (Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4-5).
  - This reminds us salvation is a gift of grace not a personal work of boasting.
- ✚ Salvation is exclusive rather than the theological buffet (pick & choose) of pluralism, universalism and inclusivism (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).
  - Pluralism: All religions lead to God. YET, view ignores truth claims of certain teachings.
  - Universalism: All persons saved. YET, view ignores human free response; fatalistic
  - Inclusivism: Some saved but so are some others by different means. YET, view ignores truth claims of Christianity.
- ✚ Salvation is “eternal redemption”
  - Salvation from sin (self & disobedience) to service (worship) to God
  - Can you lose your salvation? NO! If any part of salvation depended on you then it would be possible. But it doesn’t. Christ’s substitutionary death was sufficient to provide full forgiveness of sin, do not cheapen or diminish the cross. True believers will persevere based on Christ’s perseverance for us. Further, eternal life is, well, forever – not until...
    - Security of Believer: John 6:38-40, 10:27-30; Romans 8:11, 8:38-39; Ephesians 1:13-14; Philippians 1:6; 1Peter 1:5; Jude 1:24; Hebrews 7:25
    - Are you really a believer?: 1 John 2:19; Mark 4; Matthew 7:15-23; Hebrews 6:4-6
- ✚ Salvation accompanies a host of other theological words to not fear but understand the richness of God’s work in creation for humanity.
  - **Regeneration:** God’s sovereign work to bring awareness of sin and awakening to new life – born again – in Christ by His Spirit (John 3; 1Corinthians 2:10-16; Ephesians 2:4-5).
    - Spiritual work of God: (John 3:3, 6:44)
    - Repentance and faith (John 5:24, 6:29, 6:35...). Repentance is a change of mind and heart that leads to a change of life and behavior.
  - **Justification:** God’s righteous declaration that a sinner has been forgiven and made right, not by mere erasure of wrong but through propitiation – substitutionary sacrifice (Rom 3:21-26, 5:1, 8:1, 30; 2Cor 5:21).
  - **Sanctification:** God’s persevering work to set us apart and bring about spiritual growth in Christian character, convictions, competency of stewardship (Romans 8:28-29, 12:1-2; 1Cor 6:19-20; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12)

- **Glorification:** God's faithful purpose to bring His people into the fullness of their faith, body & soul made new through the resurrection (Romans 8:28-30; 1Corinthians 15; 2Thessalonians 1:10-12).
- ✚ Calvinism & Arminianism
  - Do not define yourself based on another human being. Doctrine comes from Scripture not saints (remember Article 1?).
  - Certainly, God elects and predestines individuals to salvation but does so in a manner that does not violate human freedom or moral responsibility to repent of sin and believe the gospel. Salvation starts with God and any person calling unto Him will be saved. In sum, the Bible presents a picture of both God's sovereignty and human freedom; it is a beautiful tension of mystery and worship.

✚ **What Questions do you have concerning Salvation and God's Purpose of Grace?**

## VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

*Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.*

### **Key Texts:**

**Matthew 16:15-19** *"He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*

**Acts 2:42-47** *And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

**Ephesians 4:11-16** *And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

**1 Timothy 3:15** *"so you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth."*

**Hebrews 10:19-25** *"Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,*

*not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

**1 Peter 5:1-4** *“So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

**Revelation 22:17** *“The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.*

**Key Discussion:**

- ✪ The Bible uses various metaphors for the church: family/children (2Cor6:18;1Tim 5:1-2); Christ’s bride (Eph 5:32); branches on a vine (Jn 15:5); an olive tree (Rom 11:17-24); a field of crops (1Cor 3:6-9); a building (1Cor 3:9); a harvest (Mt 13; John 4:35); the body of Christ (1Cor 12); God’s house or a new temple or living stones (Heb 3:6; 1Pet 2:5); a priesthood (1Pet 2:5); the pillar and bulwark of the truth (1Tim 3:5). What do these metaphors say about God’s view of the church? Which stand out to you and why?
  
- ✪ What is the purpose of the church?
  - Love God
  - Love Others
    - Believers
    - Unbelievers
  - Lead Generations
  
- ✪ What does it mean to be a member of a church? What is your specific role in the church? What do you appreciate most about your local church home? Least?
  
- ✪ What is the purpose of pastors or elders in a church? What is the purpose and role of deacons in a church? Is the office of pastor or deacon open to anyone?
  
- ✪ What are hindrances to church unity? Should “church discipline” be practiced today?

## VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. *Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

### **Key Texts:**

**Matthew 3:13-17** *"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

**Matthew 28:19-20** *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

**Mark 14:22-25** *"And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."*

**Acts 2:41-42** *"So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."*

**1 Corinthians 11:23-29** *"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself."*

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✪ Is baptism necessary for salvation (ordinance vs sacrament)? Church membership ("Baptist")? Participation in the Lord's Supper?
- ✪ Does the mode of baptism matter (sprinkle, pour or immersion)?
- ✪ Is the Lord's Supper only symbolism or is it more significant? How does it compare to the OT Passover?

## VIII. The Lord's Day

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

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

### **Key Texts:**

**Exodus 20:8-11** *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

**Mark 2:27-28** *"And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."*

**Colossians 2:16-17** *"Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ."*

### **Key Discussion:**

- Sunday is not the Sabbath but is the day the Lord Jesus was resurrected and therefore the day Christians worship today. Further, the first day was the day God created light (symbol of understanding and hope). And even more, the first day was the day Jesus gave the Holy Spirit to believers at Pentecost.
- ✪ Why is consistent participation in corporate worship important? Is it enough to simply worship God on your own or in nature?
  
- ✪ If the Sabbath is a shadow of things to come, what is the greater reality?

## IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52;25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42;John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28;Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9;5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*

### **Key Texts:**

**Genesis 12:1-3** *"Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

**Exodus 19:5-6** *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."*

**Mark 1:14-15** *Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

**Matthew 6:10, 33** *"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven... But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."*

**Colossians 1:13** *"He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son"*

**Titus 2:14** *"who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."*

**Revelation 21:1-2** *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."*

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✪ What is Jesus' kingdom reign? Has already happened, is happening or will happen?
  
- ✪ How does a view of Jesus' kingdom shape the way a Christian lives?
  
- ✪ Where do those go who do not participate in Jesus' kingdom? Which kingdom will you be participating in and why do you think such?

## **X. Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11;17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1ff; 22:13.*

### **Key Texts:**

**Matthew 16:27** *For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.*

**Matthew 24:29-31** *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

**Acts 17:30-31** *"The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."*

**1 Corinthians 15:23-26, 50-57** *"But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.... I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

**Philippians 3:20-21** *"But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."*

**1Thessalonians 4:13-17** *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will*

*descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

**2 Peter 3:7-13** *“But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”*

**Revelation 1:7; 22:12-13** *“Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.... “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”*

**Revelation 21:1-8** *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”*

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✪ What does it say about God’s character that there will be a final judgment of both believers and unbelievers?
- ✪ How does the awareness that there will be a final judgment affect life today? Is there an element of fear as you contemplate that Day? If so, reflect on 1John 4:16-18.
- ✪ What would it mean to invest into eternity, knowing this world perishes?
- ✪ What most excites you about heaven?
- ✪ Why do you think the BFM does not provide an exact nature of the tribulation (pre-, mid-, post-); the millennium (pre-, a-, post-); the anti-Christ or false prophet?

## **XI. Evangelism and Missions**

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

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

### **Key Texts:**

**Matthew 9:37-38** *"Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."*

**Matthew 28:19-20** *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

**John 20:21** *Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."*

**Acts 1:8** *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

**Romans 10:13-15** *"For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"*

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✪ Why do you think God choose to use believers to spread the gospel message, rather than another means for individuals to know about God's salvation?
  
- ✪ What happens if Christians and churches are not intentional about evangelism and missions? How are you and your church seeking to be intentional?
  
- ✪ How should Christians and churches balance the command to make disciples both locally and globally?

## **XII. 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.*

### **Key Texts:**

**Genesis 1:28** *And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

**Deuteronomy 6:7-9** *You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

**Proverbs 3:13-15** *Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her.*

**Luke 2:40** *And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.*

**2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17** *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth....But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work."*

### **Key Discussion:**

- ☛ Why do many view Christianity as an "unthinking religion"? Bible encourages education and wisdom; Jesus was wise and a teacher of large crowds & individuals; Much of educational institutions were started by religious groups – specifically Christians.
  
- ☛ Describe the partnership of education next generations between the home, the school and the church.

## XIII. Stewardship

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

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

### **Key Texts:**

**Deuteronomy 8:18:** *“And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.”*

**Psalm 24:1** *“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein”*

**Malachi 3:8-10:** *“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, „In what way have we robbed You?“ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.”*

**Matthew 6:1-4:** *“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.”*

**Matthew 6:19-21:** *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

### **Matthew 25: 14-29 Parable of the Talents**

**2 Corinthians 8:9:** *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”*

**2 Corinthians 9:6-8:** *“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”*

**1 Peter 4:10** *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace”*

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✪ What is the motivation for being faithful stewards of our time, talent and treasure?
- ✪ What is the difference between OT tithing and stewardship in the NT?
- ✪ How does the way you view stewardship reflect the condition of your heart?
- ✪ Are there areas of stewardship where you are being unfaithful and need repentance and growth? What specific and practical steps do you need to take?

## **XIV. Cooperation**

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

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

### **Key Texts:**

***Matthew 10:11*** “And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart.

***Mark 9:39-40*** “But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. For the one who is not against us is for us.

***Philippians 1:18*** “What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice”

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✪ What does it mean that a SBC church is autonomous? How does the SBC Cooperative Program affirm the principle of cooperation?
- ✪ What does unity among Christians say to the unbelieving world?
- ✪ What are the theological boundaries or limitations for cooperating with others groups? Where would/should you draw the line from cooperating with groups who do not agree theologically?

## **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

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

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

### **Key Texts:**

#### ***Exodus 20:3-17 The Ten Commandments***

***Micah 6:8:*** “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”

***Amos 5:14-15*** “Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said. Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.”

***Matt 5:13-16:*** —You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. —You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. ||

#### ***Luke 10:25-37 The Parable of the Good Samaritan***

***James 1:27:*** —Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. ||

### **Key Discussion:**

- ⊛ How can a Christian express their values without being viewed as condemning? Is it wrong to be judgmental towards society?
- ⊛ What was right about the “social-gospel”? What was wrong about the “social-gospel”?

## **XVI. 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.*

### **Key Texts:**

***Isaiah 2:4:*** “He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.”

***Matthew 5:9:*** “Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.”

***Matthew 5:43-45:*** —You have heard that it was said, „You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

***Romans 12:18-19:*** “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.”

***Romans 13:1-4:*** “—Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.”

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✪ Which is the true Biblical option: Activism (war is appropriate), Pacifism (war is inappropriate) or Selectivism (war is conditionally appropriate)? When can war be just? What is the role of government to ensure peace among its people?
- ✪ How is the gospel of Jesus the remedy for war?
- ✪ What can you do, as a single individual, to promote peace? Hint: see previous Article XV.

## **XVII. 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.*

### **Key Texts:**

#### **Romans 13:1-7 Role of Government**

**1 Timothy 2:1-2** *First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way."*

**James 4:12** *There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?"*

**1 Peter 2:11-17** *"Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor."*

### **Key Discussion:**

- ✪ Why is it not the role of government to bring about religion? Why is it not the role of religion to bring about civil government? (cf. Luke 9:53-56)
- ✪ Early Baptists emphasized personal responsibility of religion. Even more, the U.S. was founded in large part to religious liberty. Do you see this right being protected or prevented today? Why should Christians promote religious liberty for other religions?

## **XVIII. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.*

### **Key Texts:**

**Genesis 2:18-25** *“And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: „This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”*

**Exodus 20:12** *“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.”*

**Deuteronomy 6:4-9** *“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*

**Psalm 127 & 139**

**Ephesians 5:21 – 6:4** *“submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

**Key Discussion:**

- ✪ Reviewing Genesis 1 – 4, describe the foundational relationships God created.
  
- ✪ Why do you think today’s culture is seeking to redefine traditional marriage and family life? Topics may include divorce, homosexuality, abortion, parenting.
  
- ✪ What are some ways Christian’s can seek to affirm and promote the biblical values of marriage and family life?
  
- ✪ What is biblical submission and how is it different from the way it is presented in the media and society?

# NOTES

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