A PERSONAL CONFESSION OF FAITH

What I *believe*



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PREFACE

…I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep for that day the deposit I have entrusted to him.

2 TIMOTHY 1:12

I hold no creed but the Word of God, and I set nothing beside it. What follows is not a creed above the Scriptures but a confession beneath them: the things I have searched out in the Word, weighed before the Lord, and am fully persuaded of.

I have written plainly, because the faith was once delivered to the saints, and it is not mine to soften. I have written gladly, because every line of it leads to a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. Doctrine is not a cold thing to me. It is the shape of His glory, and the ground under my feet.

> Beloved, using all diligence to write to you of our common salvation, I have been obliged to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.
> JUDE 1:3

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CONTENTS

Six parts, eighteen articles

I God and His Word 4

1 The Holy Scriptures 5
2 The Godhead 5
3 Creation 6

II The Son of God 8

4 The Person of Christ 9
5 The Work of Christ 9

III The Holy Spirit 11

6 The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit 12

IV Sin and Salvation 13

7 Man, Sin and Satan 14
8 Salvation by Grace 14
9 Eternal Security and Assurance 15

V The Assembly of God 17

10 The Assembly, the Body of Christ 18
11 Gathered to His Name 18
12 Baptism and the Lord's Supper 19
13 Headship and Divine Order 20
14 Separation and Holiness 21

VI Things to Come 23

15 The Dispensations, Israel and the Assembly 24
16 The Blessed Hope 25
17 The Tribulation, the Appearing and the Kingdom 26
18 Resurrection, Judgment and the Eternal State 27

In closing 29

PART I

God and His Word

The foundation

ARTICLES 1–3



ILLUSTRATION *The Word, laid open*

The sum of thy word is truth, and every righteous judgment of thine is for ever.

PSALM 119:160

ARTICLE 1

The Holy Scriptures

I BELIEVE

I believe that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, verbally and fully inspired: every word breathed out by God, and not the thoughts only. Holy men of God spake under the power of the Holy Spirit; therefore the Scriptures as originally given are without error in all that they affirm, whether of salvation, of history, or of creation.

The Bible is my sole and final authority in every matter of faith and practice. It is sufficient, and it is complete: it needs no tradition, council or new revelation to finish it, and nothing may be added to it or taken from it. I read it in its plain, literal, grammatical and historical sense, and I seek to cut in a straight line the word of truth, distinguishing what God says to the Jew, to the Gentile, and to the assembly of God.

I DENY

- I deny that the Bible merely contains the Word of God, or becomes the Word of God only when it speaks to me. It is the Word of God.
- I deny that any tradition, creed, council or private revelation stands beside the Scriptures or above them.
- I deny that the plain sense of Scripture may be set aside by allegory, by myth, or by the shifting verdicts of human learning.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> [16] Every scripture is divinely inspired, and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in
> righteousness; [17] that the man of God may be complete, fully fitted to every good work.
>
> 2 TIMOTHY 3:16–17

> [20] knowing this first, that the scope of no prophecy of scripture is had from its own particular interpretation, [21] for
> prophecy was not ever uttered by the will of man, but holy men of God spake under the power of the Holy Spirit.
>
> 2 PETER 1:20–21

SEE ALSO John 10:35 · Matt 5:18 · 1 Cor 2:13 · John 17:17 · Ps 138:2 · Rev 22:18–19 · 2 Tim 2:15 · 1 Cor 10:32

❧ *I am a literalist (in the plain, grammatical and historical sense). Simply stated, if God says it, that settles it for me — whether I can comprehend it or explain it or not.*

ARTICLE 2

The Godhead

I BELIEVE

I believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons — the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit — each fully and equally God, one in essence, in glory and in majesty, yet distinct in Person and never to be confused. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; and there is but one God.

He is holy, righteous and true, and God is love. He is infinite, eternal and unchanging; He knows all things, is present everywhere, and is almighty. He is the Creator, Upholder and Judge of all, and He is working out His own eternal purpose, which centres in His beloved Son.

I DENY

— I deny that God is one Person appearing in three modes or roles.

— I deny that the Son or the Holy Spirit is a created being, a lesser god, or an impersonal force.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> Hear, Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah;
> DEUTERONOMY 6:4

> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;
> MATTHEW 28:19

> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
> 2 CORINTHIANS 13:14

SEE ALSO John 1:1 · Acts 5:3–4 · John 14:16–17 · Heb 1:8 · Eph 1:10 · 1 John 4:8

❧ *Therefore I worship the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit — and I bow before a God whose depths I will never exhaust.*

ARTICLE 3

Creation

I BELIEVE

I believe that God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, out of nothing, by His word, in six literal days, and that on the seventh day He rested. All that He made was very good. The Son of God was the Creator: by Him were created all things, and all things subsist together by Him.

I believe that Adam and Eve were real and historical persons, directly created by God — Adam formed of the dust of the ground, and Eve taken from Adam — and made in the image of God, male and female. The Lord Jesus Himself spoke of them as made so from the beginning.

I DENY

— I deny that man evolved from lower forms of life, or that God created by means of evolution.

— I deny that the days of Genesis 1 were long ages, or that the opening chapters of Genesis are myth, poetry or parable.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
> GENESIS 1:1

> For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.
>
> EXODUS 20:11

> [16] because by him were created all things, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or authorities: all things have been created by him and for him. [17] And *he* is before all, and all things subsist together by him.
>
> COLOSSIANS 1:16–17

SEE ALSO Gen 1:31 · Gen 1:26–27 · Gen 2:7 · Heb 11:3 · Mark 10:6 · John 1:3 · Rev 4:11

❧ *Therefore I read the world as His workmanship, and give the glory to the Creator, who is blessed for ever.*

PART II

The Son of God

His Person and His work

ARTICLES 4–5

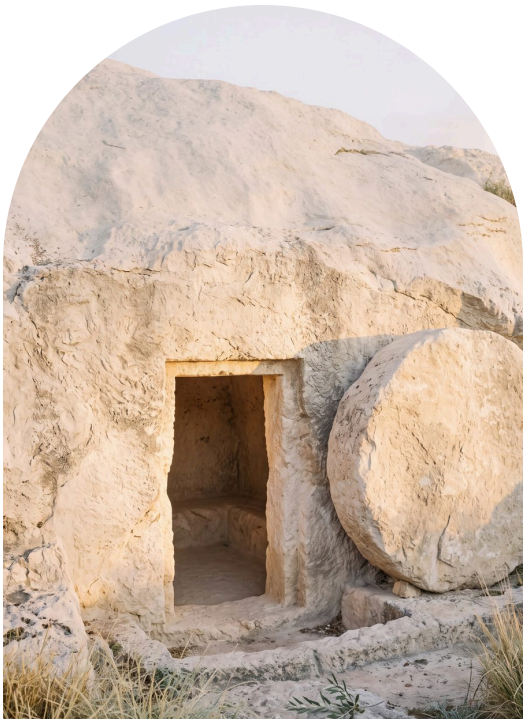


ILLUSTRATION *The empty tomb*

He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

MATTHEW 28:6

ARTICLE 4

The Person of Christ

I BELIEVE

I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God — the Son from all eternity, and not only from His birth — truly and fully God, equal with the Father, by whom all things received being. In the fulness of the time He became Man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, and He is now and for ever true God and perfect Man in one blessed Person.

His manhood was real and holy. He hungered, wearied and wept; yet in Him sin is not. He did no sin, He knew no sin, and He could not sin: His holiness was not the untried innocence of Adam, but the perfection of One who is God. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

I DENY

- I deny that He was ever less than God, or that in becoming Man He laid aside any part of His deity.
- I deny that He became the Son at His incarnation. He is the eternal Son, sent by the Father.
- I deny that He had a sinful nature, or that He could have sinned.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> [1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] *He* was in the beginning with God.
>
> JOHN 1:1–2

> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we have contemplated his glory, a glory as of an only-begotten with a father), full of grace and truth;
>
> JOHN 1:14

> For in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;
>
> COLOSSIANS 2:9

SEE ALSO John 1:18 · Heb 1:3 · Heb 1:8 · Isa 9:6 · Matt 1:23 · Luke 1:35 · Gal 4:4 · 1 John 4:9 · Phil 2:6–8 · 1 Tim 3:16 · 2 Cor 5:21 · 1 Pet 2:22 · 1 John 3:5 · Heb 4:15 · Heb 7:26 · John 8:58 · Heb 13:8

❧ *Therefore my heart has one Object. To be occupied with Him is my rest, my joy and my holiness.*

ARTICLE 5

The Work of Christ

I BELIEVE

I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross as the substitute for sinners. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree; He who knew not sin was made sin for us; He suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. God has set Him forth a mercy-seat, through faith in His blood, so that God is just and the justifier of him that believes. His precious blood is the only ground of redemption, of forgiveness and of peace.

His work is finished. By one offering He has perfected in perpetuity the sanctified. He was buried, and He was raised the third day in the same body, now glorified — flesh and bones, as He Himself said. He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God, where He lives always to intercede for us as our great High Priest, and where He is our Advocate with the Father.

I DENY

- I deny that the death of Christ was merely an example, a martyrdom, or a display of love without His bearing the judgment of God against sin.
- I deny that anything — works, sacraments, sufferings or prayers — can add to His finished work.
- I deny that His resurrection was spiritual only. He rose bodily from among the dead.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> [5] But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. [6] All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.
>
> ISAIAH 53:5–6

> [24] being justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; [25] whom God has set forth a mercy-seat, through faith in his blood, for the shewing forth of his righteousness, in respect of the passing by the sins that had taken place before, through the forbearance of God; [26] for the shewing forth of his righteousness in the present time, so that he should be just, and justify him that is of the faith of Jesus.
>
> ROMANS 3:24–26

> [12] But *he*, having offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down in perpetuity at the right hand of God, [13] waiting from henceforth until his enemies be set for the footstool of his feet. [14] For by one offering he has perfected in perpetuity the sanctified.
>
> HEBREWS 10:12–14

SEE ALSO 1 Pet 2:24 · 1 Pet 3:18 · 2 Cor 5:21 · 1 John 2:1–2 · Eph 1:7 · 1 Pet 1:18–19 · Heb 9:12 · Heb 9:22 · John 19:30 · 1 Cor 15:3–4 · Luke 24:39 · Rom 4:24–25 · Acts 1:9–11 · Heb 1:3 · Heb 7:25

❧ *Therefore I rest where God rests — in the blood of His Son. It is finished, and I add nothing to it.*

PART III

The Holy Spirit

The Comforter who abides

ARTICLES 6



ILLUSTRATION *The wind upon the barley*

The wind blows where it will, and thou hearest its voice, but knowest not whence it comes and where it goes: thus is every one that is born of the Spirit.

JOHN 3:8

ARTICLE 6

The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

I BELIEVE

I believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, not an influence — God, equal with the Father and the Son. Since the day of Pentecost He dwells on earth in the assembly and in every believer. He brings demonstration to the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; He regenerates the sinner; and at the moment of faith He indwells and seals every believer, and baptises him into the one body of Christ. He is the earnest of our inheritance, and He will never leave the believer.

The believer is to be filled with the Spirit and must not grieve Him. The Spirit's great work is to glorify Christ. The sign gifts — apostleship, prophecy, tongues, and healing as a sign — belonged to the foundation of the assembly, confirmed the word at its beginning, and have ceased. God still hears the prayer of faith and heals according to His will, and the risen Christ still gives gifts for the building up of His body: evangelists, shepherds and teachers.

I DENY

- I deny that the baptism of the Spirit is a second experience after conversion, or that it is evidenced by speaking in tongues.
- I deny that there are apostles or prophets today, or that God gives new revelation beyond the completed Scriptures.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> For also in the power of one Spirit *we* have all been baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bondmen or free, and have all been given to drink of one Spirit.
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 12:13

> [13] in whom *ye* also have trusted, having heard the word of the truth, the glad tidings of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, ye have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, [14] who is the earnest of our inheritance to the redemption of the acquired possession to the praise of his glory.
>
> EPHESIANS 1:13–14

SEE ALSO John 16:7–8 · John 16:13–14 · Acts 5:3–4 · Titus 3:5 · Rom 8:9 · 1 Cor 6:19 · Eph 4:30 · Eph 5:18 · 1 Cor 13:8–10 · Eph 2:20 · Heb 2:3–4 · 2 Cor 12:12 · Jas 5:14–15 · Eph 4:11–12

❧ *Therefore my body is not my own. The Guest of heaven dwells in me, and I would not grieve Him.*

PART IV

Sin and Salvation

Lost, and found

ARTICLES 7–9



ILLUSTRATION *The door of the sheepfold*

I am the door: if any one enter in by me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and shall go out and shall find pasture.

JOHN 10:9

ARTICLE 7

Man, Sin and Satan

I BELIEVE

I believe that man was created innocent, in the image of God, and that Adam by his own disobedience fell; by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death. Every child of Adam is born with a sinful nature, is by nature a child of wrath, and is dead in offences and sins. There is not a righteous man, not even one. The heart is deceitful above all things, and man is wholly unable to save himself or to make himself acceptable to God.

I believe that Satan is a real and personal being, the adversary, the deceiver and the murderer from the beginning, who transforms himself into an angel of light. He was defeated at the cross, where Christ through death annulled him who had the might of death; and he will be cast into the lake of fire, to be tormented day and night for the ages of ages.

I DENY

— I deny that man is basically good, or that sin is only ignorance, weakness or circumstance.

— I deny that Satan is a myth, or a mere symbol of evil.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> For this cause, even as by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and thus death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
>
> ROMANS 5:12

> [10] according as it is written, There is not a righteous man, not even one; [11] there is not the man that understands, there is not one that seeks after God. [12] All have gone out of the way, they have together become unprofitable; there is not one that practises goodness, there is not so much as one: [23] for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
>
> ROMANS 3:10–12, 23

SEE ALSO Gen 1:26–27 · Ps 51:5 · Jer 17:9 · Eph 2:1–3 · John 8:44 · 2 Cor 11:14 · 1 Pet 5:8 · Heb 2:14 · Col 2:15 · Rev 20:10

❧ *Therefore I have no righteousness of my own to plead, and I want none. My only plea is Christ.*

ARTICLE 8

Salvation by Grace

I BELIEVE

I believe that salvation is wholly of God — by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. It is God's gift, not on the principle of works, that no one might boast. God justifies the ungodly who believe on Him; the believer is justified by faith and has peace with God, is born anew, and receives the right to be a child of God.

God calls every sinner to repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel is to be preached to all, and whoever comes to Him will not be cast out. God's sovereign grace and man's responsibility are both plainly taught in Scripture, and I hold both without subtracting from either. Good works are the fruit of salvation, never

its root.

I DENY

— I deny that baptism, the Lord's Supper, or any rite conveys saving grace.

— I deny that anyone can be saved by any other name, or by sincerity in any other religion.

— I deny that salvation can be earned, deserved, or completed by human effort.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> [8] For ye are saved by grace, through faith; and this not of yourselves; it is God's gift: [9] not on the principle of works, that no one might boast.
>
> EPHESIANS 2:8–9

> but to him who does not work, but believes on him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.
>
> ROMANS 4:5

> not on the principle of works which have been done in righteousness which *we* had done, but according to his own mercy he saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,
>
> TITUS 3:5

SEE ALSO John 3:16 · John 3:3 · John 1:12 · Rom 5:1 · Gal 2:16 · Acts 16:31 · Acts 20:21 · Acts 4:12 · John 14:6 · 1 Tim 2:5 · Ex 12:13 · Rom 10:9–10 · John 6:37

❧ *Therefore I boast in nothing but the cross — saved by grace, and by grace alone, from first to last.*

ARTICLE 9

Eternal Security and Assurance

I BELIEVE

I believe that every true believer is eternally secure. The sheep of Christ have life eternal, and they shall never perish; no one shall seize them out of His hand or out of His Father's hand. Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Whom God has justified, He has also glorified. The believer is sealed by the Spirit for the day of redemption and kept guarded by the power of God.

I believe that the believer may and should know that he has eternal life — not by feelings, but on the authority of the Word of God. Assurance rests on what God has said about the work of His Son, not on the believer's attainments. Yet grace is never licence: a believer who sins does not lose his salvation, but he loses his communion and his joy, and the Father in love restores him through the advocacy of Christ.

I DENY

— I deny that a true child of God can ever be lost.

— I deny that assurance of salvation is presumption. It is the birthright of every believer.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> [27] My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; [28] and I give them life eternal; and they shall never perish, and no one shall seize them out of my hand. [29] My Father who has given them to me is greater than all, and no one can seize out of the hand of my Father.
>
> JOHN 10:27–29

> [38] For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
>
> ROMANS 8:38–39

SEE ALSO John 5:24 · Rom 8:1 · Rom 8:30 · Eph 4:30 · 1 Pet 1:5 · Phil 1:6 · Heb 10:14 · Heb 13:5 · 1 John 5:13 · Jude 1:24 · 1 John 2:1

❧ *Therefore I do not hope to be saved. I know it — because He has said it.*

PART V

The Assembly of God

The body of Christ, gathered to His name

ARTICLES 10–14



ILLUSTRATION *The Lord's Supper*

The Lord's supper (1 Cor 11:20), not the Lord's table (1 Cor 10:21), which is "the sum total of all God's provision for His people." The table pictured "is simply a piece of furniture which conveniently holds the elements." — A. P. Gibbs,

THE LORD'S SUPPER

(1963), pp. 25, 28

And they persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers.

ACTS 2:42

ARTICLE 10

The Assembly, the Body of Christ

I BELIEVE

I believe that the assembly — the Church — is the body of Christ and His bride, composed of every true believer from the day of Pentecost until the Lord comes for her. It was a mystery hidden throughout the ages in God, and revealed to His holy apostles and prophets: that Jew and Gentile should be joint heirs and a joint body in Christ. It began at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came and baptised believers into one body. It is not Israel, and it is not the continuation of Israel.

Christ is the only Head of the assembly. Her calling, her blessings and her citizenship are heavenly: she is blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, and she awaits her Lord from heaven. Christ loved the assembly and delivered Himself up for it, and He will present it to Himself glorious, having no spot or wrinkle.

I DENY

- I deny that the assembly existed in the Old Testament, or that Israel and the assembly are one people under one programme.
- I deny that any man, council or denomination is the head of the Church.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> [22] and has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the assembly, [23] which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all:
>
> EPHESIANS 1:22–23

> [5] which in other generations has not been made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the power of the Spirit, [6] that they who are of the nations should be joint heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of his promise in Christ Jesus by the glad tidings;
>
> EPHESIANS 3:5–6

SEE ALSO Matt 16:18 · Acts 2:1–4 · Acts 2:47 · 1 Cor 12:13 · Eph 2:15–16 · Eph 3:9 · Col 1:18 · Col 1:25–26 · Eph 5:25–27 · Eph 5:32 · 2 Cor 11:2 · Phil 3:20 · Eph 1:3 · 1 Cor 10:32

❧ *Therefore I love every one who loves our Lord Jesus Christ, for we are members of one body — and I live here as a stranger, whose home is above.*

ARTICLE 11

Gathered to His Name

I BELIEVE

I believe that a local assembly is a company of baptised believers gathered together unto the name of the Lord Jesus Christ alone — owning no name but His, no head but Christ, no authority but the Word, and no president but the Holy Spirit. The pattern for the assembly has not been left to human wisdom: it is written in the New Testament, and

it is sufficient for every age. Like the first believers, we persevere in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers.

I believe in the priesthood of all believers: every child of God is a priest, with direct access to God through Christ, to offer spiritual sacrifices. There is therefore no clergy and no laity, no ordained or salaried ministry, and no one-man ministry. When the assembly comes together, gifted brothers take part as the Holy Spirit leads, in order and for edification. The assembly is cared for by a plurality of elders — overseers raised up and set by the Holy Spirit and recognised by the saints — who shepherd the flock of God willingly, as models to the flock. Those who labour in the gospel and in teaching are commended by their assembly to the grace of God, and look to the Lord alone for their support. Each assembly answers to the Lord alone.

I DENY

- I deny that any denomination, sectarian name or human organisation over the assemblies is warranted by Scripture.
- I deny that the ministry of the Word belongs to an ordained clerical class.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> For where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them.
>
> MATTHEW 18:20

> And they persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers.
>
> ACTS 2:42

> yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.
>
> 1 PETER 2:5

SEE ALSO 1 Pet 2:9 · Heb 13:15 · 1 Cor 14:26 · 1 Cor 14:29–31 · 1 Cor 14:33 · 1 Cor 14:40 · 1 Cor 1:10–13 · 1 Cor 3:4–5 · Acts 20:28 · Acts 14:23 · Phil 1:1 · 1 Tim 3:1 · Titus 1:5 · 1 Pet 5:1–4 · Heb 13:17 · Acts 13:2–4 · Acts 14:26 · 3 John 1:7 · Eph 4:11–12

❧ *Therefore when I gather with the saints, I come to Him. He is in the midst — and that is enough.*

ARTICLE 12

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

I BELIEVE

I believe that the Lord has given His people two ordinances — not sacraments that convey grace, but acts of obedience rich in meaning. Baptism is for believers only, by immersion in water, to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. It is the believer's public identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection: buried with Him, to walk in newness of life. It follows faith; it does not produce it.

The Lord's Supper — the breaking of bread — is the remembrance of the Lord Himself. As the first disciples did, the assembly gathers on the first day of the week to break bread and to announce the death of the Lord until He come, worshipping the Father and the Son in spirit and in truth, with no fixed liturgy and no presiding minister. The one loaf is

the expression of the one body. Believers sound in the faith and godly in their walk are received to the Lord's supper, each first proving himself.

I DENY

— I deny that infants are proper subjects of baptism, or that baptism regenerates or saves.

— I deny that the bread and the cup become the body and blood of Christ, or that the Supper is a sacrifice.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> 3 Are you ignorant that we, as many as have been baptised unto Christ Jesus, have been baptised unto his death? 4 We have been buried therefore with him by baptism unto death, in order that, even as Christ has been raised up from among the dead by the glory of the Father, so *we* also should walk in newness of life.
>
> ROMANS 6:3–4

> 23 For *I* received from the Lord, that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, in the night in which he was delivered up, took bread, 24 and having given thanks broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 In like manner also the cup, after having supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye shall eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye announce the death of the Lord, until he come.
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26

SEE ALSO Matt 28:19 · Acts 2:41 · Acts 8:36–38 · Col 2:12 · Luke 22:19–20 · Acts 20:7 · 1 Cor 10:16–17 · 1 Cor 11:27–29

❧ *Therefore the first day of the week holds the sweetest hour I know — to sit at His Table and remember Him.*

ARTICLE 13

Headship and Divine Order

I BELIEVE

I believe that God has established an order of headship: the Christ is the head of every man, the man is the head of the woman, and God is the head of the Christ. This order is rooted in creation, not in culture — for man is not of woman, but woman of man — and it is displayed in the gatherings of the assembly, before the angels.

Accordingly, when the assembly comes together, the brothers pray and minister with heads uncovered, and the sisters cover their heads and keep silence, neither teaching nor exercising authority over man. The apostle writes that these things are the Lord's commandment. This is a matter of divine order, never of worth: in Christ there is no male and female, and husband and wife are fellow-heirs of the grace of life. The service of godly sisters — in prayer, in hospitality, in the home, in teaching the younger women and the children, and in the gospel — is precious to the Lord and to His people.

I DENY

— I deny that the head covering was only a custom of Corinth. The apostle grounds it in creation, in the angels, and in the practice of all the assemblies of God.

— I deny that headship makes a sister inferior, or that it permits any harshness toward her.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> But I wish you to know that the Christ is the head of every man, but woman's head is the man, and the Christ's head God.
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 11:3

> 34 Let your women be silent in the assemblies, for it is not permitted to them to speak; but to be in subjection, as the law also says. 35 But if they wish to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is a shame for a woman to speak in assembly. 37 If any one thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him recognise the things that I write to you, that it is the Lord's commandment.
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 14:34–35, 37

> 11 Let a woman learn in quietness in all subjection; 12 but I do not suffer a woman to teach nor to exercise authority over man, but to be in quietness; 13 for Adam was formed first, then Eve:
>
> 1 TIMOTHY 2:11–13

SEE ALSO 1 Cor 11:4–6 · 1 Cor 11:7–10 · 1 Cor 11:13–16 · 1 Tim 2:8 · Gal 3:28 · 1 Pet 3:7 · Titus 2:3–5 · Rom 16:1–2 · Eph 5:22–25

❧ *Therefore I receive God's order not as a burden but as a picture of Christ and the assembly — and I would honour it gladly.*

ARTICLE 14

Separation and Holiness

I BELIEVE

I believe that the believer is called to be holy, as He who has called him is holy. Set apart to God by the blood of Christ, he is to present his body a living sacrifice, and not to be conformed to this world but transformed. He is not to be yoked with unbelievers — in marriage, in business, or in religious fellowship — and he is to withdraw from iniquity, whether in conduct or in doctrine, purifying himself to be a vessel to honour, serviceable to the Master.

Separation is not isolation and it is not pride. It is going forth to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach, so that the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. I believe that marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman, instituted by God at creation and to be held every way in honour; and that every human life, from the womb, bears the stamp of the God who made it.

I DENY

— I deny that the grace of God permits a careless walk. Grace teaches us to deny impiety and worldly lusts.

— I deny that God recognises as marriage any union but that of one man and one woman.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> [1] I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the compassions of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your intelligent service. [2] And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
>
> ROMANS 12:1–2

> [14] Be not diversely yoked with unbelievers; for what participation is there between righteousness and lawlessness? or what fellowship of light with darkness? [17] Wherefore come out from the midst of them, and be separated, saith the Lord, and touch not what is unclean, and *I* will receive you; [18] and I will be to you for a Father, and ye shall be to me for sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 6:14, 17–18

SEE ALSO 2 Cor 7:1 · 1 John 2:15–17 · 2 Tim 2:19–22 · Titus 2:11–14 · 1 Pet 1:15–16 · Heb 13:13 · Gal 6:14 · John 17:14–16 · Gen 2:24 · Matt 19:4–6 · Heb 13:4 · Ps 139:13–14

❧ *Therefore I would rather be outside the camp with Him than at home in a world that rejected Him.*

PART VI

Things to Come

Until the day dawn

ARTICLES 15–18

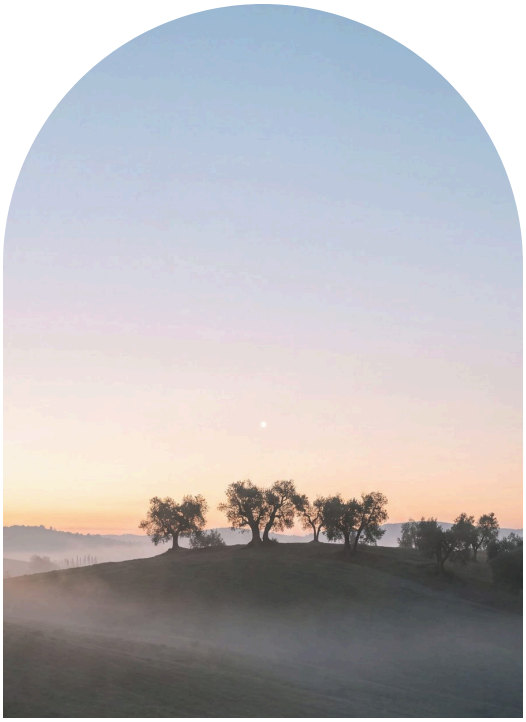


ILLUSTRATION *The morning star*

And we have the prophetic word made surer, to which ye do well taking heed (as to a lamp shining in an obscure place) until the day dawn and the morning star arise in your hearts;

2 PETER 1:19

ARTICLE 15

The Dispensations, Israel and the Assembly

I BELIEVE

I believe that God has ordered the ages in successive dispensations — distinct administrations in which He has tested man under differing conditions and revealed Himself ever more fully. In each, man has failed, and God has proved Himself faithful. The Word, rightly divided, sets them before us: Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, Promise, Law, Grace, and the Kingdom.

In every dispensation salvation has been by grace through faith, on the ground of the blood of Christ, whether looked forward to or looked back upon. I believe that God's unconditional covenants with Israel — the covenant with Abraham, the covenant with David, and the new covenant — will be literally fulfilled to the nation of Israel. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew: blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fulness of the nations be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved. Israel is God's earthly people, with earthly promises; the assembly is His heavenly people, with heavenly blessings; and the two must never be confused.

I DENY

— I deny that the assembly has replaced Israel, or that the promises made to Israel are fulfilled only spiritually in the Church.

— I deny that the dispensations teach different ways of salvation. They are different administrations of one God, who has always saved by grace.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> for the administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth; in him,
>
> EPHESIANS 1:10

> 25 For I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, of this mystery, that ye may not be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the nations be come in; 26 and so all Israel shall be saved. According as it is written, The deliverer shall come out of Zion; he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. 27 And this is the covenant from me to them, when I shall have taken away their sins. 28 As regards the glad tidings, they are enemies on your account; but as regards election, beloved on account of the fathers. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are not subject to repentance.
>
> ROMANS 11:25–29

SEE ALSO Eph 3:2 · Col 1:25–26 · John 1:17 · Rom 3:25–26 · Heb 11:6 · Gen 12:1–3 · Gen 15:18 · Gen 17:7–8 · 2 Sam 7:12–16 · Jer 31:31–34 · Jer 31:35–37 · Rom 9:4–5 · Rom 11:1–2 · Amos 9:14–15 · Acts 15:14–17 · 1 Cor 10:32

FIGURE The seven dispensations

	DISPENSATION	THE TEST	THE FAILURE	THE END
1	Innocence Gen 1:28 — 3:6	One command in a perfect garden.	Man disobeyed.	Driven out of Eden.
2	Conscience Gen 3:7 — 8:14	Man left to the knowledge of good and evil.	The earth filled with violence.	The flood.
3	Human Government Gen 8:15 — 11:9	Authority to rule given to man.	Pride and rebellion at Babel.	Tongues confounded, peoples scattered.
4	Promise Gen 11:10 — Ex 19:2	Unconditional promises to Abraham and his seed.	The fathers went down into Egypt.	Bondage in Egypt.
5	Law Ex 19:3 — Acts 1	Israel under the law given at Sinai.	The law broken; Messiah rejected and crucified.	Israel set aside, Jerusalem destroyed.
6	Grace Acts 2 — the Rapture	The assembly called out to a heavenly Christ.	Christendom's drift into apostasy.	The assembly caught up; Christendom judged.
7	Kingdom Rev 20:1-6	Christ reigning in righteousness for a thousand years.	Rebellion when Satan is loosed.	Fire from heaven; the eternal state.

❧ *Therefore I read my Bible as God wrote it — and I marvel at a God who keeps every promise to the letter.*

ARTICLE 16

The Blessed Hope

I BELIEVE

I believe in the personal, bodily and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to the air for His assembly. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with an assembling shout, with archangel's voice and with trump of God; the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we, the living who remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall be always with the Lord. In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, we shall be changed, and our body of humiliation will be transformed into conformity to His body of glory.

This coming is before the tribulation — before the seventieth week of Daniel. No sign must come first; it may be to-day. God has not set us for wrath, and the Lord has promised to keep us out of the hour of trial which is about to come upon the whole habitable world. After the rapture, every believer will be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ — not to be judged for sins, which were judged at the cross, but to have his service weighed and rewarded — and the marriage of the Lamb will come.

I DENY

— I deny that the assembly will pass through any part of the tribulation.

— I deny that any prophetic event must be fulfilled before the Lord can come for His own, and I reject all setting of dates.

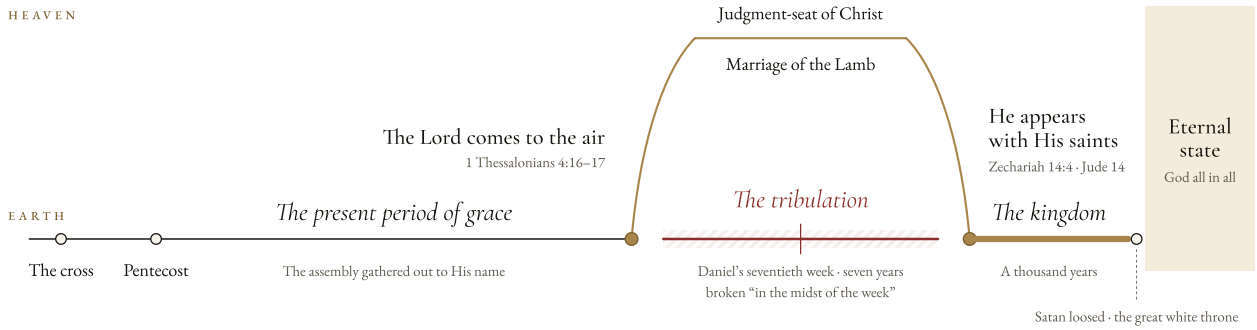
FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> [16] for the Lord himself, with an assembling shout, with archangel's voice and with trump of God, shall descend from heaven; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; [17] then *we*, the living who remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall be always with the Lord.
>
> 1 THESSALONIANS 4:16–17

> [2] In my Father's house there are many abodes; were it not so, I had told you: for I go to prepare you a place; [3] and if I go and shall prepare you a place, I am coming again and shall receive you to myself, that where I am ye also may be.
>
> JOHN 14:2–3

SEE ALSO 1 Thess 4:13–18 · 1 Cor 15:51–53 · Phil 3:20–21 · 1 Thess 1:9–10 · 1 Thess 5:9 · Rev 3:10 · Titus 2:13 · 1 John 3:2–3 · 2 Cor 5:10 · 1 Cor 3:11–15 · Rom 14:10 · Rev 19:7–9 · Rev 22:12 · Rev 22:20

FIGURE From the cross to the eternal state



Therefore I look up. I am not waiting for the Antichrist, but for the Son of God from heaven — and I would be found ready.

ARTICLE 17

The Tribulation, the Appearing and the Kingdom

I BELIEVE

I believe that after the assembly has been taken, the seventieth week of Daniel will run its course on the earth: seven years of tribulation such as has not been from the beginning of the world, the time of Jacob's trouble, when the man of sin will be revealed and God will pour out His judgments on a world that has rejected His Son. Through it God will preserve a believing remnant of Israel, and many from the nations will be brought to Him.

At its close the Lord Jesus Christ will appear in power and great glory, with all His saints, and His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives. He will consume the lawless one with the breath of His mouth, judge the living nations, and bind Satan in the abyss. Israel shall look on Him whom they pierced, and so all Israel shall be saved. Then He will reign over the earth for a literal thousand years — a kingdom of righteousness and peace in which every promise to Israel is fulfilled, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.

I DENY

— I deny that the thousand years are a figure of the present age, or that the world will be converted before Christ returns.

— I deny that the prophecies of Israel's restoration are merely spiritual. They will be fulfilled as they are written.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem toward the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, — a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.
>
> ZECHARIAH 14:4

> Blessed and holy he who has part in the first resurrection: over these the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of the Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.
>
> REVELATION 20:6

SEE ALSO Dan 9:24–27 · Jer 30:7 · Matt 24:21 · Matt 24:29–30 · 2 Thess 2:3–8 · Rev 19:11–16 · Col 3:4 · Jude 1:14–15 · 1 Thess 3:13 · Zech 12:10 · Rom 11:26 · Matt 25:31–32 · Rev 20:1–6 · Isa 2:2–4 · Isa 11:6–9 · Ezek 37:21–22 · Acts 1:6–7

❧ *Therefore I pray for the peace of the world with a sure hope — the Prince of Peace is coming to reign.*

ARTICLE 18

Resurrection, Judgment and the Eternal State

I BELIEVE

I believe in the bodily resurrection of all the dead — of the just to life, and of the unjust to judgment. The spirit of a believer who dies is at once absent from the body and present with the Lord, which is very much better. At the end of the thousand years the unsaved dead will stand before the great white throne and be judged according to their works; and if any one is not found written in the book of life, he is cast into the lake of fire — the second death — to suffer conscious and everlasting punishment.

The heavens and the earth that now are will be dissolved, and according to His promise God will make new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. There God shall tabernacle with men and wipe away every tear; there His servants shall serve Him and see His face; and God shall be all in all, to the ages of ages.

I DENY

— I deny that the lost will be annihilated, or that all men will at last be saved.

— I deny purgatory, soul-sleep, and any second opportunity after death.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

> 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled, and place was not found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is that of life. And the dead were judged out of the things written in the books according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged each according to their works: 14 and death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. 15 And if any one was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.
>
> REVELATION 20:11–15

> 3 And I heard a loud voice out of the heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall tabernacle with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, their God. 4 And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall not exist any more, nor grief, nor cry, nor distress shall exist any more, for the former things have passed away.
>
> REVELATION 21:3–4

SEE ALSO John 5:28–29 · Heb 9:27 · 2 Cor 5:8 · Phil 1:23 · Luke 23:43 · Luke 16:22–26 · Matt 25:46 · Mark 9:43, 48 · 2 Thess 1:7–9 · Rev 20:10 · 2 Pet 3:10–13 · Rev 21:1–5 · Rev 22:3–5 · 1 Cor 15:24–28

❧ *Therefore I plead with souls while it is yet the day of salvation — and I set my heart on the morning when I shall see His face.*

IN CLOSING

Such is my confession.

I have not written it to add one word to the Scriptures, but to own before God and men what the Scriptures say — and in the hope that someone reading may come to know the Saviour I love.

I know whom I have believed. And I wait for Him.

He that testifies these things says, Yea, I come quickly. Amen; come, Lord Jesus.

REVELATION 22:20

Sathwik Sangeetham

IN FELLOWSHIP AT COLONIAL HILLS BIBLE CHAPEL

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