



LIVING HOPE
BIBLE CHURCH

What We Teach

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What we teach

Statement of Faith of the Bible Church 'Living Hope' Florida state

Compiled based on 'Confession of Faith of Evangelical Christian Baptists' edited by N.V. Odintsov, 1928.

I. About the Word of God.

We believe that the Bible is the only, unchangeable, clear, infallible, complete, and sufficient standard for determining faith and practical conduct (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:15-17).

We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, namely the five books of Moses, the book of Joshua, the book of Judges, the book of Ruth, the four books of Kings, the two books of Chronicles, the book of Ezra, the book of Nehemiah, the book of Esther, the book of Job, the Psalms, the book of Proverbs, the book of Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, the prophetic books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, as well as the books of the New Testament, namely the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle of James, the two Epistles of Peter, the three Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, the Epistles of the Apostle Paul to the Romans, the two Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, the two Thessalonians, the two Timothy, the Epistles to Titus and Philemon, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Revelation of John, collectively constitute the only true written revelation to humankind, being the complete Word of God (2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Corinthians 2:7-14).

We believe that the Bible, in its original form, is the completely error-free and infallible Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit in all its parts (2 Timothy 3:16). In the Holy Scripture, God spoke through dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so guided the authors that, despite their individual characteristics and differences in writing style, every word written by them is the Word of God both as a whole and in its individual parts (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Galatians 1:11-12; 2 Peter 1:19-21).

We believe that the Word of God is an objective revelation from God. Through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, its meaning is accessible to every believer through a literal historical-grammatical interpretation of each word of Scripture within its context. This confirms that the initial chapters of the book of Genesis speak of the creation of the world in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).

We believe that although there may be multiple practical applications of each Scripture text, there is only one true meaning. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every believer to diligently study and apply the meaning of Scripture in practical life.

II. About God

We believe that there is only one living, true, and eternal God (Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 2:5), perfect in all His attributes, united in essence, eternally existing in three Persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – each of whom equally deserves worship and obedience. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; Genesis 1:26, 3:22; Matthew 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:13) are perfect, eternally equal, and indivisible in their nature and attributes (1 John 2:23; John 10:30, 14:7-10; Acts 5:3-4), so that the Father is the true, eternal God (Ephesians 4:6), the Son is the true, eternal God (Romans 9:5; John 1:1-14, 20:28; Isaiah 9:6; John 5:23, 8:58-59), and the Holy Spirit is the true, eternal God (Matthew 12:32; Acts 5:3-4; Genesis 1:2; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Peter 4:14)

God the Father

We believe that God the Father is the first Person of the Divine Trinity, who governs all events according to His will and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Romans 11:33-36; Daniel 4:34-35). He is the Creator of all things visible and invisible, movable and immovable (Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 3:9), and is the sole absolute Ruler of the Universe. He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 102:19; Romans 11:36).

We believe that His fatherhood is defined by His position in the Trinity and His relationship to humanity. As the Creator, He is the Father of all humanity (Ephesians 4:6), but for believers, He is also their spiritual Father (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18).

We believe that everything that exists, He created for His own glory (Ephesians 1:11). He continually sustains, directs, and governs all creation and events (1 Kings 29:11). In His sovereignty and omnipotence, He is never the source of evil and sin, consistently manifesting His hatred towards sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47). He also does not remove the responsibility for sin from rational creatures endowed with morality (1 Peter 1:17). He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ and is the Father of all forgiven sinners (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

God the Son

We believe that Jesus Christ is the second Person of the Divine Trinity. He possesses all the characteristics of God, being equal to God the Father, and shares the same divine and eternal nature with Him (John 10:30, 14:9).

We believe that God the Father created the heavens, the earth, and everything in them, according to His will, through Jesus Christ, His Son, by whom all things continue to exist and operate (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

We believe that in the Incarnation, Christ voluntarily set aside His divine privileges but in no way lost His divine essence. In His incarnation, the second Person of the Trinity became fully human and became the God-man (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9).

We believe that Jesus Christ combines in Himself the qualities inherent in humanity and the nature of God without division (Micah 5:2; John 5:23; Colossians 2:9).

We believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35); that He was God in the flesh (John 1:1, 14); that the purpose of His incarnation was to reveal God to humanity, redeem mankind, and restore the Kingdom of God on earth (Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:29; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 7:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

We believe that Jesus Christ accomplished our salvation through the shedding of His sacrificial blood, dying on the cross voluntarily, becoming the substitutionary and atoning sacrifice (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25, 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24). Based on the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, the sinner who believes in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior is freed from the punishment and power of sin and in the future, even from the presence of sin, declared righteous, and becomes part of the family of God (Romans 3:25, 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18).

We believe that our assurance of justification became possible through His literal physical resurrection from the dead, and that He is now seated at the right hand of the Father, being our Advocate, Intercessor, and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25, 8:34; Hebrews 7:25, 9:14; 1 John 2:1).

We believe in the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:4). By raising Jesus Christ from the dead, God the Father affirmed the divinity of Jesus Christ and that God the Father accepted the atoning sacrifice of His Son on the cross. Furthermore, the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is a guarantee of future life through resurrection for all believers (John 5:26-29, 14:19; Romans 1:4, 4:25, 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

We believe that Jesus Christ will return to rapture His Church, which is His Body. Afterward, He will come again in glory to establish the Millennial Kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13, Revelation 20).

We believe that Jesus Christ is the only one through whom God the Father will judge all of humanity (John 5:22, 23). As the Mediator between God and mankind (1 Timothy 2:5), the Head of the Church (Ephesians 1:22, 5:23; Colossians 1:18), the coming King of the entire universe, who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), Jesus Christ will be a formidable Judge for those who have rejected Him and have not believed in Him as their Lord and personal Savior (Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31).

God the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, possessing all the attributes of God, including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), and will (1 Corinthians 12:11). He is infinite (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscient (Isaiah 40:13-14), omnipotent (Romans 15:13), and true (John 16:13). In all divine attributes, the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4, 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 10:15-17).

We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is primarily manifested in the revelation of God's will to all humanity. The Holy Spirit participated in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation of Christ (Matthew 1:18), the inspiration of Scripture (2 Peter 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

We believe that on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit began His unique ministry of building the Church. On that day, the Holy Spirit descended from the Father, as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17, 15:26), to initiate and ultimately complete the construction of the Body of Jesus Christ, which is His Church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The ministry of the Holy Spirit includes convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ, and transforming believers into the image of Jesus Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5, 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent who performs the miraculous act of regeneration and baptism (immersion) of every believer into the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit dwells in believers and also sanctifies, instructs, empowers for ministry, and seals them until the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Teacher who guided the apostles and prophets in recording God's revelation, the Bible. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer at the moment of salvation (being born again), and therefore, it is the

responsibility of all who are born of the Spirit to be led by the Holy Spirit, submitting every area of their lives to His presence and guidance (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We believe that the Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts in the Church. The Holy Spirit does not glorify Himself or His gifts; He glorifies Christ, fulfilling His work of redemption for the perishing and equipping believers in faith and truth, preparing saints for the work of ministry for the building up of the Body of Christ (John 16:13, 14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:7-12).

We believe that the gift of speaking in other tongues, as well as the gift of miracles, was given to the apostles and prophets in the early Church for the purpose of confirming the divine authority of the truth they proclaimed. As the New Testament books were written and compiled, the necessity for these gifts diminished. Speaking in tongues and performing miracles were never a required sign to testify to the presence of the Holy Spirit in an individual (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:1-4).

III. About Man

We believe that man was created directly by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free from sin, endowed with true wisdom, intellect, will, self-determination, and moral responsibility before God (Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9).

We believe that God's purpose for man and the goal of his creation was to glorify God, enjoy communion with Him, and have dominion over His creation (Genesis 1:26-28; Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

We believe that as a result of Adam's disobedience to God's revealed will and His Word, man lost his sinlessness, became subject to punishment in the form of spiritual and physical death, became the object of God's wrath, and became entirely incapable of choosing or performing what is pleasing to God without God's grace. Without the renewing power that helps man restore himself, man is hopelessly lost. The salvation of man depends solely on God's grace through the redemptive work accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16-17, 3:1-19; John 3:36; 1 John 1:8; Romans 3:23, 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14).

IV. About sin

We believe that the sin of Adam's disobedience was his rebellion against the absolute authority of God. Man sinned, being deceived by Satan, and as a result, he fell away from God. He immediately entered into a state of spiritual and physical death (Genesis 2:17; Ephesians 2:1; Romans 8:6; Romans 6:23; Colossians 2:13). By succumbing to the temptation to try to become like God (Genesis 3:4-5), man rejected the rule of the Creator, became guilty before Him, subjected himself to the wrath of God, and forever became a slave to sin, unable to choose or do anything that pleases God (Romans 3:9-23).

We believe that since all people are descended from Adam, they have become partakers of the same fallen and corrupted nature (John 3:6, Romans 5:12-18), so that they are conceived and born in sin (Psalm 51:7), inherently being children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3), completely unable and unwilling to do anything good, but highly receptive and inclined toward all evil (Romans 8:7; Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:21-22; Romans 3:10-18).

V. About Salvation

We believe that salvation comes exclusively from God through His grace and is based on the redemption of Jesus Christ through His shed blood. It cannot be achieved by man himself, and it cannot be earned through works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

Election

We believe that election is an action of God whereby, before the foundation of the world, He graciously chooses those whom He will regenerate, save, and sanctify (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2).

We believe that the redemption of sinners (John 3:16) is an eternal, free, and unchangeable act of God's favor (Ephesians 1:11, Romans 11:34). Therefore, the undeserved favor that God bestows upon utterly corrupt sinners does not depend on their participation or their expected corresponding actions based on their will, but solely on His sovereign grace and mercy (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8). These individuals are granted eternal life in Jesus Christ (John 17:2, 10:28; 1 John 5:11). At the same time, all the means necessary to bring them to faith in Christ, holiness, and ultimately eternal blessedness are predetermined for them (Romans 8:29-30; 1 Peter 1:1-3; Ephesians 1:19; Isaiah 43:5-7). Such divine determination is unchangeable and confirmed forever (Romans 11:29; Philippians 1:6; Isaiah 54:10; Psalm 89:31-35), so the individuals it concerns are the elect. They

cannot be snatched out of Christ's hand (Romans 8:38-39; Matthew 24:24; John 6:39, 10:28, 29; Romans 7:23-25) and are preserved by God's power in faith and love for Christ until they become partakers of His glory (1 Corinthians 1:8, 9; 1 Peter 1:3-5).

We believe that God's authoritative election, clearly presented in the Bible, does not contradict the fact that humans bear responsibility in accepting the decision of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32, 33:11; John 3:18-19; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17).

We believe that election should not be viewed as an arbitrary action of God apart from the overall character of His divine personality. God's sovereign decisions regarding election are inseparable from His other characteristics and attributes, such as omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Romans 9:11-16). This sovereignty is always subject to God's will, fully consistent with His character revealed to us in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9).

Born-again

We believe that being born again is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit, in which a person is given new life and a divine nature (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). By the power of the Holy Spirit, it occurs instantaneously through hearing the Word of God (John 5:24) when a repentant sinner, enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the salvation offered by God. True born-again experience is confirmed by corresponding fruits of repentance and becomes evident through a biblical approach to life and practical deeds.

We believe that the good deeds performed by a born-again person in obedience to God are evidence and a result of their being born again (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10). These deeds will take place in the life of a believer based on their willingness to surrender to the Holy Spirit through obedience to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10). This obedience leads the believer to a continual process of growth in faith, truth, and conformity to Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). The believer's growth in sanctification and conformity to Christ will reach its completion when the believer is glorified at the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

Redemption

We believe that God could not redeem humanity from the dreadful consequences of its fall in any other way than through the complete satisfaction of His holy justice (Hebrews 9:22; Hebrews 10:5-7). Therefore, from eternity, He predestined His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, as the atoning sacrifice (1 Peter 1:20). As a result, Christ, the Son of the living God (Galatians 4:4), appeared on earth at the appointed time in the likeness of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3) to redeem the human race. He perfectly obeyed, fulfilling the entire divine law on our behalf (Matthew 5:17, Romans 5:19). The Son of God offered His life as a sacrifice for us (Isaiah 53:4; Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 9:28). He became a curse for us (Galatians 3:13), bearing God's wrath and punishment for our sins (2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:5-6).

We believe that the eternal and complete redemption (Hebrews 9:12) accomplished by the Son of God is the sole cause of our salvation (Hebrews 5:9). In salvation, we receive forgiveness of all our sins (Ephesians 1:7, 1 John 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Matthew 26:28; Acts 20:28), justification (Romans 3:24), eternal righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21), deliverance from God's wrath, death, the devil, and hell (Romans 5:9; 1 Corinthians 15:26, 54-55), eternal life (1 John 5:11-12; John 11:25-26, 3:36, 10:28; 2 Timothy 1:10), and through redemption, we receive the power to hate sin, die to it (Titus 2:14), desire what is good, and fulfill His will (Philippians 4:13, 2:13).

We believe that Christ, who accomplished redemption through His death (John 19:30), rose from the dead on the third day (Acts 2:32; Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20), ascended to heaven, and is seated at the right hand of majesty on high (Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 8:1). He has sent us His Holy Spirit, who enables us to apprehend by faith the blessings of our glorious redemption (Acts 16:14, Romans 5:5). As our High Priest, He intercedes for us before the Father (Hebrews 4:14; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1), abides with us all the days until the end of the age (Matthew 28:20), and will ultimately take us to heaven, where He has prepared a place for us (John 14:3, 17:24).

Justification

We believe that justification is the verdict of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous all those who are credited with God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21-24, 5:18).

We believe that justification is not dependent on human works or merits (Romans 3:21-26, 4:6-8), but is solely based on the imputation of our sins to Christ and the imputation of His righteousness to us (1 Peter 2:24-25; 2 Corinthians 5:21;

Colossians 2:11-15). Thus, God is "the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

Sanctification

We believe that every believer is sanctified, meaning set apart from the world as God's own possession through justification in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the believer is declared holy and regarded as holy. This sanctification is complete and instantaneous. It signifies the believer's position before God, not their walk with Him or their condition. This sanctification should not be confused with progressive sanctification, which is the ongoing process of spiritual growth that takes place throughout the believer's life (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30, 6:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:1, 10:10, 14, 13:12).

We believe that as a result of practical (progressive) sanctification, the believer's life will increasingly conform to the position of a holy person before God (Revelation 22:11). Through obedience to the Word of God (John 17:17, 19) with the help of the Holy Spirit, every believer learns to live a more holy life and become increasingly like our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 5:23).

We believe that the process of practical sanctification in the life of a Christian will never be completed on earth since the absolute eradication of sin is impossible. This sanctification of believers and the complete removal of sin from their lives will culminate in the glorification of the Church (2 Peter 1:4-11; 1 John 3:2-3; Romans 8:17; Philippians 3:21).

Assurance of Salvation

We believe that it is the privilege of a believer to rejoice in the assurance of salvation, which is obtained through the testimony of God's Word and the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:14-16). However, biblical assurance of salvation does not imply that a person can live in sin, hoping that their salvation is guaranteed by God. Those who live in such a manner only claim to be believers but have never truly experienced the new birth (Romans 6:15-22; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that all those who are redeemed and have received salvation are preserved by the power of God in Christ and, therefore, are eternally secure in Him (John 5:24, 6:37-40, 10:27-30; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24; Romans 5:9-10, 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8).

VI. About the Church

We believe that all who have believed in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit into one spiritual body, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), which is the Bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), with Christ as its head (Ephesians 1:22, 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We believe that the Church is a unique spiritual organism, created by Jesus Christ, consisting of those who are born again and exists on earth during the period between Pentecost and the Rapture (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:41-47; Ephesians 3:6).

We believe that the building of the Church, the Body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will continue on earth until its rapture by Jesus Christ. Then it will forever be with Christ (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

We believe that the Church is not a continuation of Israel and is distinct from it (1 Corinthians 10:32). It is a divine mystery that was not revealed to people during the Old Testament period of history (Ephesians 3:1-6, 5:32; Colossians 1:26, 4:3).

We believe that the New Testament clearly teaches and defines the establishment and priority role of local churches (Acts 14:23, 27, 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1), and that members of one spiritual body should have fellowship in local churches (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25). By the command of Jesus Christ and His apostles (Ephesians 4:15-16) and to fulfill all the ordinances of the New Testament according to the example of the apostolic era (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 11:18-20), it is the duty of every person who turns to the Lord not to remain alone but to join with other disciples of the Lord as members of one Body (1 Corinthians 12:27), as living stones of the same house of God (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5) for mutual edification, comfort, and support on the path of salvation (1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14), to continue in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42). Such unity among true disciples of Christ, organized according to the Word of God, is the Church of Jesus Christ.

We believe that the unchanging rule and guidance of the Church is the Word of God – the Bible (John 10:27, 8:31).

Church Servants

We believe that Jesus Christ is the sole supreme authority and head of the Church (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18), and that local leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship in the Church are established by His will as stated in Scripture (Ephesians 4:11-16).

We believe that God has entrusted the care of local churches to elders, who are also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Ephesians 4:11), and deacons - brothers, submitted to Christ and appointed to serve according to Scripture (1 Peter 5:1-5). Both elders and deacons are to meet the biblical requirements (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

We believe that the council of elders in a local church is responsible for determining the development of the church and providing spiritual leadership in all matters of growth and functioning of the church. They are called to lead, feed, protect, guide, and manage the local church as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22). The primary task of deacons is to provide all possible assistance to the elders in the execution of their ministry. The church is to submit to its leaders (1 Peter 5:5; Hebrews 13:7,17).

We believe in the autonomy of the local church, its freedom from any manifestations of external power or control, its right to self-governance, and freedom from interference and control by any individuals or organizations, both secular and spiritual (Acts 15:6; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Titus 1:5). The evidence of this right is the refusal of the local church from a sinful lifestyle and its adherence to the revealed will of God in Scripture (Ephesians 4:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:1).

We believe that the cooperation of local churches for the preaching of the Gospel, as well as for mutual support, aligns with Scripture. However, each local church independently makes decisions regarding the methods and extent of such cooperation. These decisions, as well as decisions on all other matters related to membership, rules, discipline, charity, and governance, are made by the council of elders of the local church based on Scripture (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

Church discipline

We believe that the spiritual growth of believers in the church occurs through their spiritual nourishment from the Word of God (1 Peter 2:2) and fellowship with one another, which is presented in the Bible as discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2). Life in the church involves interaction among believers and their mutual responsibility toward one another (Matthew 18:5-14).

We believe that the church should exercise church discipline (rebuke and exclusion) toward members who sin, do not repent, and do not forsake their sin. Church discipline is applied based on biblical standards (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16). The purpose of church discipline is sincere repentance of the offender, restoration to right conduct, the restoration of relationships with the Heavenly Father and fellow believers, and the protection of other believers from temptation and the effects of sin.

Spiritual gifts

We believe that the primary purpose of the church is to confess and glorify God (Ephesians 3:21), edify and strengthen one another in faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), and proclaim the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15, 3:16-17, 4:2). Additionally, the church exists for Christians to fellowship with one another (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), fulfill biblical commandments and ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42), and spread the Gospel worldwide (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8, 2:42).

We believe that for the edification of the church, mutual service, and the glorification of God, every born-again Christian is endowed by God with specific spiritual gifts (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11). These gifts are distributed among believers by the Holy Spirit according to His sovereign will (1 Corinthians 12:11). One of the primary tasks of church ministers is to equip believers for ministry, helping them discover their spiritual gifts and properly utilize them for the common edification of the church (Ephesians 4:11-12).

We believe that the gifts of miracles, speaking in tongues, direct divine revelation, and healing were given to the early church for a limited period during the formation of the New Testament. These gifts were given to the apostles and New Testament prophets to confirm the divine authority of the revelation they proclaimed (2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:2-4). As the New Testament books were written and compiled, the need for such spiritual gifts ceased (1 Corinthians 13:8-12). The only gifts that operate in our present day are those intended for the instruction of believers (Romans 12:6-8).

We believe that today the sole means of testing the truthfulness of any preaching is the Bible, and there is no longer a need for its confirmation through miracles or supernatural actions (Galatians 1:6-9; 1 Corinthians 13:8-12). Furthermore, the Bible states that in the last days, miraculous gifts will be used by Satan to deceive the world (1 Corinthians 14:12-33; Revelation 13:1-14). All spiritual gifts operating today are given by God for the edification and strengthening of the church (1 Corinthians 14:12; Romans 12:6-8).

We believe that although no one possesses the gift of healing in our present day, God hears the prayers of His children for the sick, afflicted, and sorrowful and responds according to His perfect will (James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10).

Water baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ commanded the Church to observe two symbolic ordinances that testify to the spiritual processes taking place in the lives of believers: water baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42).

We believe that water baptism is a demonstration of faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Jesus Christ. Because baptism is an expression of the personal faith of the one being baptized, it is received at a conscious age through full immersion, symbolizing union with Christ in death to sin and resurrection to a new life of obedience to God (Romans 6:1-11). Baptism is also a visible sign of belonging to the body of Christ, the Church (Acts 2:41-42).

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a proclamation of the death of Jesus Christ as the cause of salvation for every believer. The Church will continue to observe the Lord's Supper until Jesus Christ comes again. Participation in the Lord's Supper is done in a spirit of humility, self-examination, and testing oneself, as every born-again believer reflects on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the essence of our salvation (1 Corinthians 11:28-32).

We also believe that the bread and wine taken during the Lord's Supper are only symbols of the body and blood of Christ. Practical participation in the Lord's Supper is a demonstration of our union with the resurrected Christ. The right to partake in the Lord's Supper is given to those who are born again, saved individuals who have affirmed this through water baptism and are living in peace with God and other members of the local church (1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:17-22).

VII. About Marriage

We believe that marriage was instituted by God as part of His universal grace and exists for no other purpose than the one originally ordained by God (Genesis 2:18-24). Marriage is the union between one man and one woman in a single, exclusive bond (Genesis 2:23-24).

We believe that marriage carries the consequences and curse of the Fall, but believers who live according to Scripture and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit can experience the peace and fulfillment that God intended in marriage, bearing good fruit (Genesis 3:16, 1 Peter 3:7). Christian marriage should illustrate the love between Christ and His Church, where the husband loves his wife as Christ loves the Church, and the wife submits to her husband as the Church responds to the love and leadership of Christ (Ephesians 5:18-33).

We believe that since Christian marriage illustrates the relationship between Christ and His Church, believers should marry and enter into marriage with those who share their faith and new life (2 Corinthians 6:14).

We believe that God hates divorce, allowing it only in cases where unrepentant sexual sin is present (Malachi 2:14-16, Matthew 5:32, 19:9) or when a believer is deserted by an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:12-15). Remarriage is permissible only in accordance with the provisions outlined in the Scriptures (Matthew 19:9, 1 Corinthians 7:12-15, 1 Timothy 5:14).

We believe that marriage, being both a divine and civil institution, should be legally recognized and formalized in accordance with the laws of the country, in addition to the commitment before God and the church.

VIII. About Civil Order

We believe that God established the institution of earthly authority to prevent fallen humanity from descending into complete chaos (Romans 13:1). Earthly governments have been given authority by God to protect the good and punish the evildoers (Romans 13:4).

We believe that Christians are obligated to show unconditional obedience to the civil laws of the country in which they reside (Romans 13:5, 7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14, 17), unless such laws contradict the principles of Scripture (Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; Acts 5:29, 42). By God's command, Christians are also required to pray for the government (1 Timothy 2:1-2) so that it, according to His will and under His merciful protection, may exercise the entrusted authority in order to maintain peace and justice.

We believe that the government, which Scripture states does not bear the sword in vain, has the right and duty, according to God's law, to punish evildoers (Romans 13:4) and to use the sword for the defense of its citizens. We also believe that the issue of military service is a matter of conscience for each individual Christian. No one can condemn those who are in military service, nor can anyone

compel those who, from deep convictions of conscience, request exemption from bearing arms.

IX. About the Spiritual Realm

Holy Angels

We believe that angels are created by God and are not objects of worship or saving faith, although in a certain sense they are more perfect than humans. They are created by God for the purpose of serving and worshipping Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-4,14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9).

Fallen Angels

We believe that Satan is a created angel and the instigator of sin. He incurred God's punishment by rebelling against the Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19). He led many angels to fall with him (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14) and brought sin upon humanity by deceiving Eve (Genesis 3:1-15).

We believe that Satan is an open and proclaimed enemy of God and humanity (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10), the ruler of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20). Satan and his angels (demons) will be subject to eternal punishment in the lake of fire at the appointed time determined by God (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

X. About the Last Events

Physical Death

We believe that physical death is the moment when a person's soul is separated from their body (Philippians 1:23; James 2:26). The human soul is immortal. The souls of the deceased remain conscious (Revelation 6:9-11). The souls of the saved are in the presence of Jesus Christ (Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), while the souls of the unbelievers are awaiting the great judgment and punishment (Revelation 20:13).

We believe that for the saved individuals, this separation will continue until the moment of the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) when our soul and body will be reunited and glorified through our Lord (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54).

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all, both believers and unbelievers. Believers will be raised to eternal life with Christ (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14), while unbelievers will be raised for judgment and eternal punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15).

We believe that salvation is only possible during a person's earthly life. After death, there is no opportunity for individuals to change their destination (Luke 16:26). The souls of the unsaved will be under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15), when the soul and body will be reunited (John 5:28-29) and they will stand before the One seated on the great white throne for judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). They will then be cast into the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41-46) where they will endure torment, being forever separated from life with God (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Rapture of the Church

We believe and teach that the Lord Jesus Christ will come from Heaven before the seven-year period of tribulation (1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:16, 5:9) to take His Church from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11). At that time, the bodies of the believers who are still alive will be transformed. Those believers who have already departed to eternity before the day of the second coming will receive new bodies and will be united with Christ and their fellow brothers and sisters who are alive in the Lord in order to be with Him forever (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).

We believe and teach that between this event and the return of Christ with the saints to the earth, He will reward the believers according to their faithfulness to Him (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

The Period of Tribulation

We believe that immediately after the Church is taken from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 4), the righteous judgment of God and His punishment will be poured out on the unbelieving world (Daniel 9:27, 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16). These judgments will culminate at the moment of Christ's return to the earth (Matthew 24:27-31, 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12).

We believe that this period is the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15-31, 25:31-46).

Second Coming and the Millennial Kingdom

We believe in the literal bodily return of Jesus Christ to the earth in power and glory to judge the wicked and establish the Kingdom of God forever (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11, 2:29-30).

We believe that at His coming, Jesus Christ will establish the Messianic Kingdom on earth for a thousand years (Revelation 20:1-7). During this time, all resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and other nations of the earth (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Revelation 19:11-16).

We believe that just before the Millennial Kingdom, the Antichrist and the false prophet will be defeated and cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10), and the devil will be bound and sealed in the abyss for a thousand years (Daniel 7:17-27; Revelation 20:1-7).

We believe that the Millennial Kingdom will fulfill the promises given to Israel in the Old Testament, where God promised to restore them to the land they lost due to disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68; Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17). As a result of their disobedience, God has been dealing with the Gentiles for many years (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26). The Great Tribulation and the Millennial Kingdom will be the fulfillment of God's word regarding the revival of Israel through repentance to enter the land of blessing, the promised land (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Zechariah 12:10-14; Romans: 11:25-29).

Judgment of the Damned

We believe that after the Millennial Kingdom of the Messiah, Satan will be released for a short time (Revelation 20:7). During this period, Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them for battle against the saints and Jerusalem. At that moment, Satan and his entire army will be defeated by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9). Afterward, Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, burning with fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

We believe that all those who did not receive salvation will be literally and physically resurrected for judgment before the One seated on the great white throne. They will be condemned by God according to their deeds on earth (Revelation 20:12) and cast into the lake of fire for eternal punishment because their names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

Eternity

We believe that after the Millennial Kingdom, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of the unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15), the earth and everything in it will be destroyed by fire (2 Peter 3:10), and God will create a new earth for the habitation of the righteous (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15, 21:1-7). The new earth and new heavens will have the Heavenly City, descending from heaven (Revelation 21:2), which will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will abide in eternal joy and fellowship with one another and God (John 17:3; Revelation 21:1-7). After this, Jesus Christ will deliver the kingdom to the Heavenly Father, completing the mission of redeeming mankind (1 Corinthians 15:24-28), and God will dwell eternally (1 Corinthians 15:28).

We believe and firmly hold to the precise and clear teachings of the Holy Scriptures, stating that both the blessedness and torment of individuals after this life will be unchangeable, and we believe that both of these states are eternal (Matthew 25:46). Therefore, there is no transition from one state to another and no postmortem salvation is possible (Hebrews 9:27; Luke 16:26).

As we remember the words of our Lord, "Surely, I am coming soon," with the Spirit and the Bride, the true members of the Church, we proclaim, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"