

DOCTRINES
for
Grace & Truth Fellowship of Missouri

Doctrines of Grace and Truth Fellowship of Missouri

Grace and Truth Fellowship of Missouri embraces the following statements concerning the truth. The Bible is our all-sufficient authority and rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing; I Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines. We do not presume to say the phraseology employed in this Statement of Fundamental Truths is inspired or that it is the final work on Bible truth. However, we are persuaded it is proper and consistent with the Holy Scriptures to “set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us” (Luke 1:1).

Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child in a mother’s womb is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject teachings that the abortions of pregnancies is an acceptable and godly practice. (Deuteronomy 18:9; Psalms 139:13; Jeremiah 1:5; Exodus 20: 13; Exodus 21:22; Hebrews 13:8)

Alcohol

The Scriptures speak often of the destructive power of alcohol. Noah’s drunkenness brought shame to his family (Gen. 9:20-27). Lot’s drunkenness resulted in an incestuous relationship with his two daughters (Gen. 19:30-38). An inebriated Xerxes sought to humiliate Queen Vashti publicly (Est. 1:9-22). The consumption of alcohol impairs judgment, inflames passions, and invites violence (Lev. 10:8-11; Prov. 20:1, 23:29-35, 31:4,5). Leaders in the church should not be given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3, 8; Titus 1:7,) – our understanding of ‘given to wine’ is drinking to drunkenness and excess.

Angels and Demons

God created the angels to be His servants and messengers (Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 103:20-22; Psalm 148:2; Hebrews 1:14). Satan is a fallen angel who led a group of angels in rebellion against God (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:12-15). He is the great enemy of God and man, and the demons are his servants in evil. He and his demons will be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10). Jesus has give true believers authority over all power of the enemy Luke 10:18-20 – including the authority to cast demons out of possessed/oppressed people.

Anointing Oil is Administered for Healing

The anointing oil is administered for both physical and spiritual restoration with the laying on of hands when required (Mark 16:18; James 5:14). Anointing with oil and laying on of hands is one of many ways the Lord brings divine healing in His body.

Assurance of Salvation

Assurance means that you, a believer in Jesus Christ, have confidence that you are in the family of God and therefore have eternal life. Assurance looks at our eternal salvation from man's viewpoint. 1 John 5:13 and John 10:25-30 are 2 passages that clearly describe the security a believer in Jesus has concerning salvation. Each clear verse about eternal salvation, such as John 3:16, stresses the basis for assurance because God keeps His Word.

Baptism

We believe the New Testament teaches at least three baptisms.

- First, there is the baptism whereby the repentant sinner, upon trusting Jesus Christ as his Savior, is baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13).
- Secondly, there is water baptism by immersion for believers only. This we believe to be an ordinance of the church, whereby the believer experiences the reality of co-crucifixion and co-resurrection with the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-6).
- Thirdly, there is the filling or baptism in the Holy Spirit by the Lord Jesus Christ, which may occur at or subsequent to conversion. We believe that speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance is the normative evidence of this baptism. Further, we believe that by the believer's continued submission to the Holy Spirit, his very weakness is transformed into strength to witness for Jesus Christ in power, and to live according to the will of God (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5-6; 2:2-4; 9:17; 10:45-46; 19:6).

Baptism - Ordinance

Baptism by immersion shall be observed as commanded in the Scriptures by all who have repented of their sins and have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12). Those who have become partakers of Christ by faith in His shed blood are commanded to be water baptized (by immersion) into Christ. In this act of faith we participate in Christ's burial and resurrection and receive a circumcision of the heart (John 3:1-6; Romans 2:28-29; I Peter 3:18-22; I John 5:8).

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a necessary and vital experience for every believer and is evidenced by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. Those who seek the fullness of the Spirit shall receive prayer for the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 8:15-17; 19:2-6).

Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together

with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and the blessed hope of the church (Romans 8:23; I Corinthians 15:51; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Titus 2:13).

Carnality

Carnal (sarkikos) comes from the word for flesh (sarx), and by extension often refers to man living apart from God's power and Word, whether a believer or unbeliever. Carnality simply means operating according to the natural realm (what you see, hear, feel, taste and smell). Living by your 5 senses and not by faith is being carnal.

The believer who lives by his physical senses instead of by the Holy Spirit is said to be carnal. The central passage is 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 where believers are living like unbelievers and are called carnal. Galatians 5:16-21 states the conflict between the flesh and the Holy Spirit, and gives some works of the flesh that are sins.

Carnality is opposite to living by faith through the power of the Holy Spirit. Confession of sin to God restores the believer to walking in the light, to fellowship (1 John 1), and to walking by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5).

Christian Service

Christian service is serving God and believers through the power of the Holy Spirit, mainly in the area of one's spiritual gift, through godly love, when abiding in Christ, and to God's glory. This is the application and expression of the Christian life (John 15:1-5, 13; Romans 12:3-13; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Ephesians 4:12; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 John 16-18;).

Creation

1. Father, Son and Holy Spirit were active in creation. (Genesis 1:1-2, John 1:1-2, Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:2-3)
2. **Of the World:** God spoke into existence the world and all things that it contains, for His own pleasure, and the enjoyment of His creatures (Genesis 1:1-2; Revelation 4:11; I Timothy 6:17).
3. **Of Man:** God created man in His image according to Genesis 1:26 as a triune being consisting of spirit, soul and a body – 1 Thessalonians 5:23
 - a. Our definition of the soul is the mind, will, emotions and personality.

Death

As a result of original sin, all mankind is subject to the death of the body. (Genesis 1:16-17, Genesis 3; Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 42-45; Hebrews 9:27)

Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the body (James 2:26)

Spiritual death is our spirit being separated from God's Spirit – Spiritual life is our Spirit being joined with God's Spirit. (Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 6:17)

Eternal death is being separated from God for Eternity and is referred to as the 2nd death. (Revelation 20:14-15)

Dedication of Children

The dedication of children is the presentation of a child to God, and therefore establishes a covenant between God and parents. God promises blessing and protection to the child whose parents are faithful to rear him/her in the services of the Lord. Such a child is made holy and is part of the covenant family of God by the faith of his parents until he/she reaches the age of accountability, whereupon he/she becomes responsible as an individual before God and is commanded to repent (Psalms 34:11; Isaiah 54:13; Matthew 19:14; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-16; I Corinthians 7:14).

Deliverance

The need for deliverance is manifested by an inability to be free from bondage associated with demon activity: e.g. mental (emotional), physical, or spiritual. It is God's desire to bring deliverance to His people (Job 5:19; Psalms 91:3; II Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 2:15; II Peter 2:9). We have been granted the authority in the name of Jesus to bring deliverance to others (Mark 16:17; Luke 10:18-20; John 14:12, Acts 16:18). We must understand that our warfare is with the forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12), our weapon is the Word of God, our authority and power are from Jesus Himself (Mark 16:17; Acts 1:8) and that the battlefield is in the spiritual realms (Ephesians 6: 10-18; II Corinthians 10:3-5; Romans 8:9; Galatians 5:22-23).

Divine Healing

Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement and is the privilege of all believers.

- The ministration of the laying on of hands accompanied with the anointing of oil for the healing of the sick shall be granted as request is made and the need may require (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 16:17-18; James 5:14-15).
- Speaking life and commanding healing by faith also produces divine healing and (Acts 3:6, Acts 9:34)
- Raising people from the dead. The life of Jesus in us, His authority and the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit can raise a person from the dead. (John 14:12, Acts 9:40-41, Acts 20:9-12)
- (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 16:17-18; James 5:14-15).

Dress Code

We believe that modest dress honors the Lord and shows an obedient heart to Jesus. The world promotes sensuality through provocative dress and we are called to be separate.

The obedience of a child of God is not measured by what clothing we wear but by our walk in the Spirit. A believer is to dress modestly with the Christian simplicity that becomes holiness, not to indulge in the pride of life or lust of the flesh in dress or behavior (1 Timothy 2:8-10; 1 Peter 3:3-4; 1 John 2:15-17; Galatians 5:16).

Education

As Christians, one of our responsibilities is to make sure that our children and we are educated in the godliest manner possible. The most important aspect of teaching our children is teaching them the Word of God (Deuteronomy 6:4-7)

God has entrusted us with children, and He will require an accounting of what we did with them (2 Chr. 17:9; John 1:17; Rom. 1:20; Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Eternal Security

Eternal security means that when a person believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and continues to believe in Jesus, he can never lose his eternal life. The book of Hebrews exhorts us to hold firm and to stand fast so as to not drift into apostasy (Hebrews 2:1, 3:6, 4:14). The Bible clearly teaches that once we believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, our eternal destiny is fixed and secure in Him and by Him.

Hebrews 6:4-6 describes how a mature believer can drift away from and deny Jesus. This is a progressive, systematic and intentional walking away from truth and ultimate denial and rejection of Jesus. This apostasy that happens to a mature believer is the result of a person's choice, not God's choice.

Security looks at our eternal salvation from God's viewpoint (Ephesians 1:13-14; John 10:27-30).

Evangelism

Evangelism, the communication of the gospel message, includes a warning, an explanation, and a call. Evangelism includes warning people about sin and the consequences of sin (John 16:8; Acts 24:25; Revelation 20:11-15). It includes an explanation of God's remedy for sin—the gospel (Acts 8:29-35; Romans 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:21), and it includes the clear call to repent (to turn from sin and to turn toward God) and believe the gospel, by faith (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:1-5; Acts 17:29-31; Romans 1:17; Romans 10:9-13).

Fasting

Believers may fast as long as our motive and attitude are right before God: humility, recognition and expression of our dependence and need for God in our lives, intercessory prayer for others and ourselves, and focusing ourselves on God's will and our ministry for Him.

- a. To show genuine humility, repentance, confession of sin, and need of the Lord (1 Samuel 7:6; Jeremiah 36:9; Ezra 10:6; Nehemiah 9:1-2; Joel 2:12; Daniel 9:2-20; 10:2-3).
- b. To pray for others, especially those ill (Psalm 35:13; 2 Samuel 12:15-23).
- c. To pray for guidance and safety (Esther 4:3, 16; Ezra 8:21-31).
- d. At the hour of one's death (Judges 20:26; 1 Samuel 31:13; 2 Samuel 1:12; 3:35).
- e. To concentrate on service for the Lord (Acts 13:1-4; 14:23).

Family

The family is the 1st institution God created on the Earth (Genesis 2:24, 4:1-2). The Biblical Nuclear Family consists of one man and one woman in the covenant of marriage who are privileged to have and raise children. One man and one woman in the covenant of marriage also have the privilege to adopt children into the family.

The family is the first and most important classroom and training ground for society. The family provides the security, the heritage, and the perpetuation of morality without which no society can survive (Genesis 4:1-2; Ephesians 6:1-4).

Fellowship with God

Fellowship with God emphasizes intimacy with the Lord. Intimacy cultivated by spending time praying, meditating on God's Word, listening to the Lord, enjoying His presence. Fellowship in an obedient relationship produces a genuine friendship with God the Father and the Son. Sin in a believer's life will affect and can break the fellowship; confession of sin restores the fellowship by turning your heart back toward God. Sin doesn't not break the relationship between a true believer and God. When in fellowship with God, believers partner with God in service and enjoy a close friendship. The central passages are 1 John 1 and John 13. Since one is no longer walking in darkness (sin), the Holy Spirit also leads and controls the believer as Galatians 5 teaches. John 15:1-9 uses the term "abide" which also refers to fellowship with Jesus Christ.

Final Judgment and Eternal State

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body, when Jesus Christ comes for His own. Whereupon soul and body reunited shall be with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; II Thessalonians 1:7-8; Jude 6, 7; Revelation 20:11-15).

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged

according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

Five-Fold Ministry

The church is to be taught and led by the Christ called and appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the purpose of every believer seeing and exercising his/her priestly and kingly ministry as outlined in I Peter 2:5,9 and Revelation 16. The five-fold ministry is to teach and train its people to do the work of the ministry with maturity and unity in mind. Working with these ministries will be elders, deacons, and the gifted men and women of the church (Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:11-13; I Timothy 3:2-12; Titus 2:1-15).

Gifts of the Spirit

The nine gifts of the Spirit set forth in I Corinthians 12 should be and must be operative in the church to enjoy the fullness of God. These gifts are imparted by the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit and only work or are operated by this one and the self-same Spirit (I Corinthians 12:11). A believer must use their faith to operate in a spiritual gift.

Giving

Biblical giving is the giving of self and wealth to God and His work, and doing so voluntarily and out of love for God and His work – giving of time, talent and treasure.

Central passages of Scripture for giving: Matthew 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 6:6-8; Philippians 4:10-19, 1 Timothy 5:8, 17-18; 3 John 5-8.

God

We believe in a triune God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One God, expressed in three persons, all co-equal, co-eternal.

We believe that Scripture teaches there is one and only one true and living God, who is self-existent, and the eternal “I AM,” the creator of heaven and earth, and the redeemer of mankind. We believe that He has chosen to reveal Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the same in essence, though distinct in personality (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10-11; Matthew 28:18-19; Luke 3:22). These three are one God, having the same nature, attributes, and perfection and are worthy of the same homage and obedience (Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3, 4; II Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 1:4-6). The mode of His existence, however, is a subject far above the understanding of man. He is the fountain of all perfection and happiness. He is glorified by the whole of creation and is worthy to be loved and served by all intelligence. He, therefore, is the only proper object of worship (Jeremiah 10:10; Exodus 3:14; Psalms 90:2; Matthew 28:19, 20; Job 11:7; Psalms 19:1, 2; 145:10; 150:6; Exodus 34:14).

Godly Love or Christian Love

This is God's kind of love in us for others, especially for believers. John 3:16 and Romans 5:8 demonstrate that God's love is sacrificial. Since this is true, godly love—Christian love—is also sacrificial. The Holy Spirit produces it in a believer who is controlled by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 5:5). Christian love is not dependent on the person who is loved. It depends on the source. Godly love pleases God (2 John 5-6). The basic idea in godly love is sacrifice for others—thinking of others first and doing for them that which is in accordance with God's will and God's good, and that which is needed. Furthermore, it includes responsibility, which is being accountable to God, to doctrinal principles, and to one's level of spiritual growth; protection of others by way of verbal protection (what we say), mental protection (our thoughts), and physical protection; self control which relates to sacrifice, responsibility, and protection; and thankfulness. First Corinthians 13:4-7 personifies love by saying what it is and does, and what it is not and does not do. Godly love contrasts with friendship love which is for certain people.

Helping the Poor

We believe that it is the intent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to feed the hungry (Matthew 25:34-40; Isaiah 58:7-8); to care for the poor (Matthew 19:21; Psalm 112:9; II Corinthians 9:6-9); and to care for the widows and orphans (James 1:27). We further believe that such ministry should be toward His name to both saints and unbelievers (Hebrews 6:10).

Homosexuality

This organization is opposed to homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle. Additionally, this organization holds that a homosexual lifestyle is contrary to God's Word and purpose for humanity (I Timothy 1:10). The Bible instructs that it is a sin also described as an abomination to God. Moreover, this organization is instructed to love those living such lifestyles, while abhorring their sin. 1 Cor. 6:9-10 says the following: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. Members of the church are forbidden to practice such sin. Any member found to be in such sin and unrepentant shall be subject to dismissal.

Infallible Word of God

We believe that the Holy Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, were written by holy men inspired by the Holy Spirit and are God's revealed word to man. God's Word is inerrant, all sufficient, infallible and authoritative and the guide to salvation and all Christian worship and service (II Peter 1:20-21; II Timothy 3:15-17; I Thessalonians 2:13). The Bible is the inspired Word of God, equally in all parts and in the whole; it is totally inerrant in the original manuscripts. It is the supreme revelation from God and of God, superior to conscience and reason, though not contrary to them; and it is therefore our

infallible rule in all manners. All the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ and hence, no portion is properly read nor understood until it leads to Him.

Israel

We believe Israel was a nation formed by the Lord as God's first-born son (Exodus 4:22) through which he would bring our Messiah. We believe the Lord made an everlasting covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob promising them the land of Israel as outlined in Scripture as a perpetually promised possession. We believe that the Lord still has a plan for Israel and that Israel will see Jesus as Messiah and be saved (Romans 9-11). The church has not replaced Israel. We believe replacement theology that teaches that the church is the New Israel is false teaching and has caused a tremendous amount of persecution to our Jewish brothers and sisters.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Man

Jesus was born miraculously of the Virgin Mary (Matthew 1: 23; Luke 1:31, 35).

He lived a sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; I Peter 2:22).

He came into the world to save men from the guilt and condemnation of sin (John 3:16), offering His blood as atonement (I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21) and making it available to all who exercise faith in Him.

He resurrected from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; I Corinthians 15:4).

He is exalted to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1-3).

His divinity (Godship) is proved from His titles, His attributes, and His works (John 1:14; Luke 1:26-35; Acts 4:12; Acts 16:31).

He is presently seated at the right hand of God the Father, interceding for His redeemed.

We also acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord over all things in Heaven, and in Earth, and under the Earth (John 1:12-14; I Timothy 3:16; Acts 7:37-38; Philippians 2:9-10; Hebrews 7:25).

Justification

Justification is the legal act whereby God declares the sinner to be innocent of his or her sins. It is not that the person is now sinless, but that he/she is "declared" innocent – "declared" righteous. This declaration of righteousness means the person is justified before God. This justification is based on the shed blood of Jesus, "...having now been justified by His blood..." (Rom. 5:9) where Jesus was crucified, died, buried, and rose again (1 Cor. 15:1-4). God imputed (reckoned to our account) the righteousness of Christ at the same time our sins were imputed to Christ when He was on the cross. That is why it says in 1 Pet. 2:24, "And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." Also, 2 Cor. 5:21 says, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the

righteousness of God in Him." Additionally, we are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1) apart from works of the Law (Rom. 3:28).

Kingdom Citizenship

God is sovereign (preeminent in power and authority). God sovereignly chose to give mankind freewill and the authority to have dominion over the Earth. Dominion and authority were lost in the garden when Adam sinned. Jesus restored kingdom authority and dominion giving believers His name with power and authority to have dominion in the earth.

We now reign in life through Jesus. Believers are born into His kingdom by grace through faith (1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalms 2; Jeremiah 50:17-20; Daniel 4:17, 25, 32; Haggai 2:21-22; Luke 8:22-36).

All believers are citizens of God's kingdom and commanded to be patriotic toward His Kingdom (Philippians 1:27; 3:20).

Laying on of Hands

We adhere to a simple belief that power, anointing, or gifting can be transmitted from one person to another by physically laying hands on them. The Levitical priesthood first practiced this (Numbers 8:10-11, 27:22-23). Jesus practiced it as a blessing, (Mark 10:13-16) and He, as well as others, used it for healing (Mark 5:22-23; 16:18; Acts 14:3; 19:11-12; 28:8; Luke 4:40), conferring office (Acts 8:16-18), receiving anointing (I Timothy 4:14) and for ordination (I Timothy 4:14).

We believe in the doctrine of the laying on of hands for:

1. The confirming of believers to commitment and ministry in the local church.
2. The confirming of one's call by God to special ministry in the local church (Acts 13:1-3).
3. The imparting of spiritual gifts (I Timothy 4:14; II Timothy 1:6).
4. The experiencing of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17-18).
5. The ministry of healing of the sick through the Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 16:16).
6. The blessing and dedicating of children to the Lord (Mark 10:16).

We further believe that, in obedience to the Holy Scriptures, we should lay hands on no man suddenly, but that the laying on of hands confirms a ministry, which is already observable and has been proven (I Timothy 5:22).

Law and the Gospel

The Law is the do's and don'ts of moral behavior. God gave the Law to the nation of Israel so they would have a guide to live by and a standard by which they might recognize God's

purity and their sinfulness. There are 613 commandments in the Old Testament. They oversee moral, judicial, and religious behavior.

The Law was given to Moses to govern the nation of Israel outlining God's righteous standard for living – moral, judicial and religious and to describe the Mosaic Covenant order of worship. There are 613 Old Covenant commandments given to Israel. Jesus fulfilled the law and all of its righteous requirements – nailing them to the cross.

The Law is a reflection of the character of God, because the Law comes forth from the very heart of God. Since it is not possible for us to keep the Law perfectly and therefore earn our position with God, we then need the holiness of God given to us ---- because there simply isn't any way for us to attain to the standard of God. Therefore, "...The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith," (Gal. 3:24).

Liberty or Freedom

Liberty or freedom includes privacy and personal responsibility and is the direct application of God's sovereignty and human volition. The Bible teaches both spiritual freedom and human freedom (John 8:31-36). God created man in His image and man therefore received moral freedom and volition, with the result that he was created to live in freedom—to live with free choice or freedom (Genesis 1:26-31). The exercise of freedom requires free people to grant freedom and privacy to others. Personal responsibility, therefore, goes hand in hand with freedom. Tyranny and slavery often occurred due to the sin nature of man, but God willed for human freedom to predominate. For example, when an Israelite was enslaved, "Every Israelite (man or woman) who had become a slave might not only be redeemed at any time by his relatives but, if this did not take place, was bound to receive his freedom without payment in the seventh year, with a present of cattle and fruits (Exodus 21:2; Deuteronomy 15:12–15). Indeed all slaves of Hebrew descent, with their children, obtained freedom without ransom in the Jubilee year (Leviticus 25:39–41)." (The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, 1988. 444) The very fact of volition and authority argue for human freedom. The Law of Moses outlines human freedom for Israel, God's priest nation (Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 146:7; 119:45; Isaiah 61:1; 1 Peter 2:16).

Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the New Covenant through the blood of Christ. The elements of bread and fruit of the vine are observed in remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and as a reminder that we partake of His Divine Nature. This ordinance is to be observed by all believers until Jesus returns. Those who have entered into the New Covenant with God through the blood of Christ and have been water baptized are instructed to participate in the Lord's Supper. (Exodus 11, 12; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:19-20; I Corinthians 10:16; 11:23-26).

Marriage

God created marriage (Gen. 2:22). It is a covenant made between a man (born biological male) and a woman (born biological female) that makes them one (Gen 2:24). The marriage covenant requires the married parties to be faithful, loving, and helpful to each

other as long as they both shall live (Mark 10:3-10). Christians are not to marry unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14-18). Those whom God has directed to be joined together shall, after counseling with the pastor concerning what God requires of them, be joined in Christian marriage (Malachi 2:13-16; Matthew 5:32; 19:5-6,9; Romans 7:2-3; I Corinthians 7:10-11, 15; II Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:22-23).

This church observes the wedding ceremony as holy and unto God. It is a religious ceremony and cannot be conducted in this church without pastoral consideration. Any couple wishing to conduct their wedding ceremony in this church must first submit to pastoral counseling that is approved by this church. The couple must also live a lifestyle that is consistent with this church's doctrinal views.

Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture (catching away) of the saints, which is our blessed hope, and is followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27, 30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of the national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21-22; Zephaniah 3:19-20; Romans 11:26-27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-7; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3-4).

Ministry and Distribution

The Bible relates that covenant partners of the Levitical order were to be paid from the tithes and offerings presented (Numbers 18:21-24; Deuteronomy 12:19; 18:1-2) by the people to the men/women of God at the church. The church believes that the Word of God sets forth that the sacerdotal functions to be performed by the Levites are: (a) The care of the sanctuary (Numbers 1:49-53; 18:2-4; I Chronicles 6:48; 23:27-32); (b) The ushers in the temple (I Chronicles 9:17-27, 26:12-19); (c) Treasurers (I Chronicles 26:26-28); (d) Singers (I Chronicles 9:33-34); (e) Instructors in the law (Leviticus 10:10; Ezekiel 44:24); (f) Assistants to the priests (Numbers 3:9; I Chronicles 23:28-32); (g) Secretaries (I Chronicles 2:55; II Chronicles 34:13); (h) Overseers of building and repairing the temple (I Chronicles 23:2-4; Ezra 3:8-9); (i) Inquirers of God (Exodus 28:30, Numbers 27:21, Ezra 2:63, Nehemiah 7:65); (j) Ministers before the ark (I Chronicles 16:4); (k) Musicians (I Chronicles 15:16, 16:42); (l) Protectors of the tabernacle (Numbers 1:53); (m) Ministers of God (Numbers 3:12, 39-49); (n) Prayers (II Chronicles 30:27; I Chronicles 23:30); (o) Teachers (II Chronicles 35:3, Nehemiah 8:9); (p) Praisers (II Chronicles 8:14); and (q) Providers of music for worship (II Chronicles 5:12; 7:6; 29:30; 30:15-27).

Therefore all persons participating in the above functions of the Levites (servants) in the church shall be candidates for commissioning into the ministry and shall be eligible for receipt of the Levitical distribution from the church. The senior pastor with the counsel of the board of directors shall determine the amount of such distribution.

Missions

Missions are the whole task, endeavor, and program of the Church of Jesus Christ to reach out across geographical and/or cultural boundaries by sending missionaries to evangelize people who have never heard or who have little opportunity to hear the saving gospel.

Music

Music and song are a product of, reflection of, and appreciation of God's word, works, and person inside a believer. Biblical music honors God, teaches and recalls Bible doctrine, and encourages people. Biblical music expresses the thinking, free will, emotion, conscience, and self-consciousness, though it especially joins the learned doctrine in the soul and human spirit with the emotion of the soul and human spirit. In church assembly, the ministry of music prepares the congregation for the ministry of God's Word (Psalm 30:4, Psalm 57:9, Colossians 3:16, 1 Chronicles 15:16; 25:1, Exodus 15:1-18, 1 Samuel 16:23, Acts 16:25, James 5:13).

Nationalism

God planned that people would live in groups called nations. These nations would have similar culture including language, geography, and heritage. Each of these national distinctions provides for a balance of power among nations and protects against a monolithic power over many groups. We can look at Genesis 10 and 11 for the beginnings of human government in the post-flood civilization (Genesis 10:32-11:9; Acts 17:26-27).

New Covenant

This is the new covenant of the Messianic age where the law of God is written upon the hearts of men (Jer. 31:31,33); it was promised in Eden (Gen. 3:15); it was proclaimed to Abraham (Gen. 12:3), and it was fulfilled in Christ (Luke 1:68-79). The New Covenant through the Blood of Jesus is an everlasting Covenant maintained by and through Jesus. We enter the New Covenant by placing our faith in the finished work of Jesus through His death, burial and resurrection.

New Heavens and New Earth

We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1). The New Heavens and the New Earth will be ushered in after the current Heaven and Earth have passed away with fervent heat.

Ordination

The Bible relates that those who are chosen by God to a specific work should be recognized by appointment and ordination to the work (Mark 3:13-15; I Chronicles 9:22; II Chronicles 11:15; 23:18; I Corinthians 7:17; Titus 1:5; I Timothy 2:7). Ordination is for those called by Jesus to hold a ministry office in the church – Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher. We also believe Elders and Deacons are to be ordained for the work of the ministry by the laying on of hands by the Presbytery.

Man, Original Sin, and His Fall

Our first parents, Adam and Eve, in their original state, were upright. They naturally preferred and desired to obey their creator, and had no preference or desire to transgress His will until they were influenced and inclined by Satan to disobey God's commands. Previous to this, the only tendency of their nature was to do righteousness. In consequence of their first transgression, eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, sin entered the world through Adam and since then mankind does not have innate righteousness and purity which Adam had before the fall; they are not willing to obey God but are inclined to do evil. Hence, none, by virtue of any natural goodness and mere work of their own, can become the children of God (Genesis 1:26-31; 3: 1-7; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Psalms 51:5; John 6: 44; Romans 5:12-21; I Corinthians 2:14).

Promise of the Father

All believers are entitled to, and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the Promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience in the early Christian church. With it come the endowment of power for life and service, and the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5; I Corinthians 12:1-31). This wonderful experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 2:38; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-8).

Repentance

Repentance is the change of mind that changes one's thinking and changes what they believe that will ultimately change one's life. Repentance is the birth canal one must pass through to be born into God's Kingdom. One must change their thinking and belief in order to believe on Jesus for salvation. Repentance is a gift and a work of Grace on a person's heart. Faith in Christ can only come if genuine repentance has occurred. Acts 20:21 – God commands all men everywhere to repent.

Responsibility of the Believer

We believe that it is essential that each believer lay a foundation of Biblical truth and experience upon which he/she builds his/her life. These foundation stones are: repentance from dead works, faith toward God, doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, all of which are prerequisites to going on to perfection (spiritual maturity) (Hebrews 6:1-2).

All believers are responsible to participate in the work of the ministry for the edification of the body of Christ (Eph 4: 11-12).

Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being

justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life. The inward evidence of salvation is direct witness of the Spirit and the outward evidence to all men of a life of righteousness and true holiness (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

Salvation is an inclusive word, which gathers into itself all the redemptive acts and processes, i.e., justification, redemption, deliverance, imputation, sanctification, glorification, etc. The Hebrew and Greek words for salvation imply the ideas of deliverance, safety, preservation, healing, and soundness. Salvation is by grace through faith, is a free gift, and wholly without human works (Romans 3:27-28, 4:1-8, 6:23, Ephesians 2:8). Salvation is in these three tenses:

1. Condition of Salvation - The grace of God, which brings salvation, hath appeared to all men, through the preaching of repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ; man is saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, and, being justified by grace through faith, he becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Romans 10:13-15; Luke 24:47; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7; Ephesians 2:8-9).
2. Evidences of Salvation - The inward evidence to the believer, of his salvation, is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of unconditional love, righteousness, and true holiness, demonstrated by the fruit of the Spirit (John 13:35; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:24).
3. Final Result of Salvation - The spirit of the believer who dies in Christ immediately goes to be with the Lord (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Luke 23:42-43; II Corinthians 5:8).

Sanctification

Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we become partakers of His holiness; that it is begun at regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the continual use of the appointed means, especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer (I Thessalonians 4:3; I John 2:29; Romans 8:5; Philippians 2:12-13). Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and a dedication unto God (Romans 12:1-2; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: "Be ye Holy, for I am Holy" (I Peter 1:15, 16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6: 1-11, 13; 8: 1-2, 13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 12:12-13; I Peter 15).

Scientific Accuracies in the Bible

Science is merely that branch of discovery that categorizes, discovers, and utilizes the knowledge woven into the fabric of the universe by a Sovereign, All Powerful, and

Omniscient, Creator. Science is not the end of all things, but merely one of the means by which man may glorify God. This is because God is the creator of all that is. He has hidden the treasures of his glorious glory in the very universe in which we exist. The power in the atom, momentum, energy, mass, time, etc. are all creations of God and, therefore, under his authority. The more the Christian learns of these things, the more he can glorify God. Science must be subservient to Him, not the other way around. Science is not God's replacement. This is not to say that the Bible is vindicated by science; rather, it is science that is vindicated by the Bible (Genesis 7:11, 15:5, , 8:22, 28; Isaiah 40:22; Job 26:7--8; 2 Samuel 22:16; Psalm 8:1,3,6,8, 102:25--26; Ecclesiastes 1:6--7).

Spirituality

The ministry of the Holy Spirit emphasizes function in our lives. One needs the Holy Spirit to live correctly. A believer is either spiritual or carnal. Personal sin takes one out of spirituality and into carnality. Confession of sin changes one from living by the flesh and puts one into living by the Holy Spirit. We continue on living by the Holy Spirit by faith. Spirituality is attained through a believer's walk with the Spirit, by not grieving the Spirit, and by quenching not the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19; Ephesians 4:30; Galatians 5:16-6:1, 1 John 1).

Spiritual Growth

Spiritual growth refers to the progressive advancement in the biblical faith. This depends on the ministry of the Holy Spirit, fellowship with God and other believers, learning God's Word, faith, testing, and application of the Word (Ephesians 4:12, 14, 15; 2 Peter 3:14-18, 1 Peter 2:2, Hebrews 5:11-6:6).

The Church & The Body of Christ

The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general church, which is written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:22, Hebrews 12:23).

The Church and the Ministry

We believe that all who are united by the new birth to Jesus Christ are covenant partners of the Church, the Body of Christ. We also believe that the local congregation of Christian believers is divinely instituted and is the chosen instrument of God for the furtherance of God's work here on Earth. While appreciating the work of para church groups, we believe that the local church is God's chosen vehicle for world evangelization and the nurture of Christians. We further believe in the spiritual unity of all believers and in working together with others who believe in salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ for the causes of evangelism, missions, and benevolence (Matthew 16:16-18; John 17:21; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15). The church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission and purpose. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the Church of the Firstborn, whose name is written in heaven in the Lamb's Book of Life. As such, the Bible

reveals that we are covenant partners one of another and the basis of our fellowship is in Christ in the power of the Spirit (Ephesians 1:22; 2:19-22; Hebrews 12:23). A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the three-fold purpose of leading the church in: (1) Evangelization of the world, (2) Worship of God, and (3) Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (I Chronicles 16:29; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 14:23; John 4:23-24; Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28).

The Holy Spirit

The Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Spirit the acts and attributes of God. He guides, knows, moves, gives information, commands, forbids, sends forth, reproves, as the instrumental segment of the God Head in the liberal dispersion of spiritual gifts, and can be sinned against (John 16:13; I Corinthians 2:11; Genesis 1:2; Acts 10:19; 13:2; 16:6; 13:4; John 16:8; Mark 3:29; Acts 7:51; Ephesians 4:30; I Corinthians 12). Jesus defined the unpardonable sin as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

The works of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; creation; inspiration, giving of life, and sanctification (Job 33:4; II Peter 1:21; I Peter 3:18; I Corinthians 6:11).

Tithing, Offerings, and Alms

Both the Old and New Testament Scriptures teach financial giving (including tithes and offerings) as God's financial plan for the support of His work. These are to be practiced continually by all believers and are outward expressions of faith in God's provision for the Church as it joins together in support of the work of the Lord (Malachi 3:8-10; I Corinthians 16:2; Genesis 28:22; Matthew 23:23; Deuteronomy 26; 14:28-29; 15:7-11; Numbers 18:8-11; Ezekiel 44; Proverbs 14:21; 29:7; Luke 11:41; 12:33).

Total Prosperity of God

We believe that the gospel of the kingdom is God's absolute answer to man's total need and total prosperity NOW:

1. **Spiritually:** John 3:3,11; II Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 10:9-10
2. **Mentally:** II Timothy 1:7; Romans 12:2; Isaiah 26:3
3. **Physically:** Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:17; I Peter 2:24
4. **Financially:** 3 John 2; Malachi 3:10-11; Luke 6:38; II Corinthians 9:6-10; Deuteronomy 28:1-14
5. **Socially:** Proverbs 3:4; I Samuel 2:26; Romans 14:18; II Corinthians 8:21

Volition

God gave mankind volition, the right and ability to make choices, good and bad (Genesis 2:16-17; Isaiah 1:16-20; Luke 6:27; John 17:17; Acts 17:27, 30).

Signed and certified, to be effective immediately.

Senior Pastor/President of Grace and Truth Fellowship of Missouri

Secretary of Grace and Truth Fellowship of Missouri

Treasurer of Grace and Truth Fellowship of Missouri