



**GLENVISTA**  
BAPTIST CHURCH

# STATEMENT OF FAITH

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## STATEMENT OF FAITH

1.	SCRIPTURE .....	1
2.	THE DOCTRINE OF GOD.....	2
2.1	GOD THE FATHER .....	3
2.2	GOD THE SON .....	4
2.3	GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT .....	5
3.	THE DOCTRINE OF MAN .....	6
3.1	THE CREATION, THE FALL AND SIN .....	7
3.2	REDEMPTION .....	8
3.2.1	THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST .....	8
3.2.2	THE APPLICATION OF REDEMPTION .....	10
3.2.3	THE HOLY SPIRIT IN REDEMPTION .....	12
4.	THE CHURCH .....	14
4.1	BAPTISM .....	16
4.2	THE LORD'S SUPPER .....	16
5.	CHRISTIAN ETHOS .....	17
6.	THE STATE AND MARRIAGE .....	18
7.	DEATH, RESURRECTION, JUDGEMENT AND THE FINAL STATE .....	19
	CONCLUSION.....	21

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

### 1. SCRIPTURE

We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God.<sup>1</sup> We believe that the Word of God is an objective, propositional ordered revelation,<sup>2</sup> verbally inspired in every word,<sup>3</sup> absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed. We believe the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture, which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [I Cor. 2:7-14](#); [II Pet. 1:20,21](#)

<sup>2</sup> [I Cor 2:13](#); [I Thes. 2:13](#);

<sup>3</sup> [II Tim. 3:16](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Gen. 1:31](#); [Ex. 31:17](#)

God has revealed Himself and His Gospel fully and finally in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup> This revelation is preserved for us in the Holy Scriptures.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> [John 1:14](#), [18](#); [Heb. 1:1-3](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Luke 24:25-27](#); [46-47](#) [Rom. 1:1-2](#); [II Pet. 1:12-21](#)

The Bible in its original autographs is a supernatural, verbal revelation, given by the plenary inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God is its author, and it is therefore infallible, inerrant, and authoritative.<sup>7</sup> By God's singular care and providence, His Word to us has been faithfully preserved through the centuries.

<sup>7</sup> [Ex. 20:1](#); [II Sam. 23:1-2](#); [II Kings 17:13](#); [II Chron 34:21](#), [36:21](#); [Neh. 9:30](#); [Isa. 8:20](#); [Jer. 1:9](#); [36:1-2](#); [Ez. 1:3](#); [Zech. 7:12](#); [Mal 4:4](#); [Matt. 21:42](#); [22:31-32](#), [43](#), [26:54](#), [56](#); [Mark 12:24-36](#); [Luke 1:70](#); [24:44](#); [John 1:23](#); [5:39](#); [10:34-35](#); [14:26](#); [16:13](#); [19:36-37](#); [20:9](#); [Acts 1:16](#); [3:18](#); [7:38](#); [13:34](#); [28:25](#); [Rom 1:2](#); [3:2](#); [4:23](#); [9:17](#); [15:4](#); [I Cor. 2:12-13](#); [6:16](#); [9:10](#); [14:37](#); [Gal 1:11-12](#); [3:8](#); [16:22](#); [4:30](#); [I Thes. 1:5](#); [2:13](#); [II Tim 3:15-17](#); [Heb. 1:1-2](#); [3:7](#); [4:12](#); [9:8](#); [10:15](#); [II Pet. 1:18-21](#); [3:16](#); [I John 4:6](#); [Rev. 14:13](#); [22:19](#)

All of God's special Revelation to man in the present day is found in the Bible. (This statement is supported by the biblical theology of Revelation; the following references should be read in relation to one another.)<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> [Heb. 1:1-2](#); [Acts 1:21-22](#); [I Cor. 15:7-8](#); [Eph. 2:20](#)

The Bible is sufficient, revealing all we need to know for salvation and godly living.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> [Isa. 8:20](#); [Luke 16:29-31](#); [Eph. 2:20](#); [II Tim. 3:16](#)

Nothing must be taken away from Scripture and nothing added to it. The Bible alone is our authority in all matters of faith and practice; our consciences are bound by it alone, not by any council, creed, individual or supposed new revelation. All other authority is derived from the Scriptures.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> [Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Isa. 8:20; Matt. 15:1-9; 22:29, 31-32; Acts 17:11; 28:23-25; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 13:1; Gen. 1:1](#)

We recognise that our interpretation of Scripture is not infallible; nevertheless, we may gain a true and valid understanding of God's mind revealed in the Scripture.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> [Ps. 19:7-11; Prov. 2:1-11](#)

To this end, our interpretation must be governed by the author's original intention and the context of the Scripture itself. Therefore, in seeking to understand a text, we depend on the illumination of the Holy Spirit, using the normal grammatical-historical rules of interpretation, and are assisted by the understanding of the true church throughout the ages.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> [I Cor. 2:6-16; Eph. 4:11-13; II Pet. 3:15-16](#)

It is the responsibility of believers to carefully ascertain the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognising that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgement of man; never does mankind stand in judgement of Scripture.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> [II Pet. 1:19-21](#)

We believe that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man<sup>14</sup> without error in the whole or in the part.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> [II Pet. 1:20-21](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Matt. 5:18; II Tim 3:16](#)

**BASED ON THE ABOVE AND IN FULL SUBMISSION TO THE SCRIPTURES, WHAT FOLLOWS IN THIS DOCUMENT, WE THE MEMBERS OF GLENVISTA BAPTIST CHURCH BELIEVE:**

## 2. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

We believe there is One Living and True God<sup>16</sup> who exists in three distinct persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>17</sup> Each Person is fully God, yet the Godhead is one and indivisible —each equally deserving worship and obedience.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> [Ex. 3:14; John 14:11; I Cor. 8:6; Acts 5:3-4; I Cor. 3:16-17](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Deut. 6:4; Jer. 10:10; I Cor. 8:4-6; I Thes. 1:9](#)

## 2.1 GOD THE FATHER

God's existence derives from Himself,<sup>19</sup> and He is set apart from all His creatures.<sup>20</sup> He is pure spirit,<sup>21</sup> having no body or unstable emotions.<sup>22</sup> God is infinite in His being and perfections: changeless, eternal, almighty, most Holy, all-knowing, most wise and free.<sup>23</sup> He is most loving, gracious, merciful, compassionate and forgiving;<sup>24</sup> He rewards those who seek Him,<sup>25</sup> but hates sin and is perfectly just in the punishment thereof.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>19</sup> [Is. 48:12](#); [Acts 17:24–25](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Ps. 113:4–6](#); [I Tim. 6:16](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Deut. 4:15](#); [John 4:24](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Num. 23:19](#); [Ps. 33:11](#); [Mal. 3:6](#); [James 1:17](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Mal. 3:6](#); [James 1:17](#); [Ps. 90:2](#); [Rev. 1:4](#); [Is. 6:3](#), [5](#); [Rev. 4:8](#); [Ps. 139:1–6](#); [Rom. 11:33–36](#); [Dan. 4:35](#); [Eph. 1:11](#); [Rev. 1:8](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Ex. 34:6–7](#); [Ps. 103:8–10](#)

<sup>25</sup> [Jer. 29:13](#); [Heb. 11:6](#)

<sup>26</sup> [Neh. 9:32–33](#); [Ps. 5:4–6](#); [Hab. 1:13](#); [Rev. 16:5–6](#); [19:11](#)

As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption.<sup>27</sup> God is sovereign and works all things according to His own righteous will, for His own glory.<sup>28</sup> From all eternity God decreed everything that would ever happen in time;<sup>29</sup> He did this in perfect wisdom and holiness.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, God sustains and governs all His creatures by His supremely wise and holy providence. In so doing He fulfils the purpose for which they were created, in order that His own attributes and glory may be praised.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> [Ps. 103:19](#); [Rom. 11:36](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Rom. 11:33–36](#)

<sup>29</sup> [Prov. 16:4](#); [Is. 46:10](#); [Eph. 1:11](#); [Rom. 11:33–34](#); [Rev. 15:3–4](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Rev. 15:3–4](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Ps. 104](#); [Matt. 10:29–32](#); [Acts 17:25–28](#); [Ps. 145:7](#); [Is. 63:14](#); [Rom. 9:17](#); [Eph. 3:10](#)

In the providential outworking of His decree, God ordinarily works in an orderly, regular way, so that certain causes consistently produce the same effects.<sup>32</sup> (This we call ordinary providence.) However, God is also free to work differently so that the normal relationships of cause and effect are temporarily suspended.<sup>33</sup> (This we call extraordinary providence.) Recognising God's ordinary and extraordinary providence is essential to the proper exercise of human responsibility in humble dependence on God.

<sup>32</sup> [Ps. 104](#); [Is. 55:10–11](#); [Acts 27:22](#), [31](#), [44](#)

<sup>33</sup> [Ex. 3:2–3](#); [II Kings 6:6](#); [Dan. 3:27](#); [Luke 1:34–35](#); [Rom. 4:19–21](#)

God has revealed Himself generally to all people in creation, in providence, and in their inner consciousness and conscience. This revelation does not lead to a saving knowledge of God but does leave people without excuse for their failure to glorify Him as God and to give Him thanks.<sup>34</sup> God in grace has revealed Himself savingly in Christ and through the Scriptures.<sup>35</sup> His Fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men,<sup>36</sup> but He is Spiritual Father only to believers.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> [Ps. 19:1-6](#); [Rom. 1:19-21](#); [2:14-15](#)

<sup>35</sup> [Ps. 19:7-14](#) [John 1:14](#), [18](#); [Rom 1:16-17](#)

<sup>36</sup> [Eph. 4:6](#)

<sup>37</sup> [Rom 8:14](#); [II Cor. 6:18](#)

## 2.2 GOD THE SON

Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity, possessing all the divine excellencies, and in these He is co-equal, consubstantial, and co-eternal with the Father<sup>38</sup> and with the Holy Spirit.

<sup>38</sup> [John 10:30](#); [14:9](#)

That God the Father created "the heavens and the earth and all that is in them" according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> [John 1:3](#); [Col. 1:15-17](#); [Heb. 1:2](#)

In the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-Man.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> [Phil. 2:5-8](#); [Col. 2:9](#)

Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible (inseparable) oneness.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> [Mic. 5:2](#); [John 5:23](#); [14:9-10](#); [Col. 2:9](#)

That our Lord Jesus Christ was born of a virgin,<sup>42</sup> that He was God incarnate;<sup>43</sup> and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's Kingdom.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> [Is. 7:14](#); [Matt. 1:23](#), [25](#); [Luke 1:26-35](#)

<sup>43</sup> [John 1:1](#), [14](#)

<sup>44</sup> [Ps. 2:7-9](#); [Is. 9:6](#), [John 1:29](#); [Phil. 2:9-11](#); [Heb. 7:25-26](#); [1 Pet. 1:18-19](#)

In the incarnation, the Second Person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, and though He eternally shares the divine nature with the Father and Spirit, acted to assume a human nature, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> [Phil. 2:5-8](#)

Our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> [John 10:15](#); [Rom. 3:24-25](#); [5:8](#); [I Pet. 2:24](#)

## 2.3 GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit possesses attributes of personality and deity, including intellect,<sup>47</sup> emotions,<sup>48</sup> will,<sup>49</sup> eternity,<sup>50</sup> omnipresence,<sup>51</sup> omniscience,<sup>52</sup> omnipotence,<sup>53</sup> and truthfulness.<sup>54</sup> In all the divine attributes He is co-equal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>47</sup> [I Cor. 2:10-13](#)

<sup>48</sup> [Eph. 4:30](#)

<sup>49</sup> [I Cor. 12:11](#)

<sup>50</sup> [Heb. 9:14](#)

<sup>51</sup> [Ps. 139:7-10](#)

<sup>52</sup> [Is. 40:13-14](#)

<sup>53</sup> [Rom. 15:13](#)

<sup>54</sup> [John 16:13](#)

<sup>55</sup> [Matt. 28:19](#); [Acts 5:3-4](#); [28:25-26](#); [I Cor. 12:4-6](#), [II Cor. 13:14](#)

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the Divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognise His sovereign activity in the creation,<sup>56</sup> the incarnation,<sup>57</sup> the written revelation,<sup>58</sup> and the work of salvation.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> [Gen. 1:2](#)

<sup>57</sup> [Matt. 1:18](#)

<sup>58</sup> [II Pet. 1:20-21](#)

<sup>59</sup> [John 3:5-7](#)

That a unique work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father and the Son as promised by Christ,<sup>60</sup> to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ. His activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> [John 14:16-17](#); [15:26](#)

<sup>61</sup> [John 16:7-9](#); [Acts 1:5](#); [2:4](#); [Rom. 8:29](#); [II Cor. 3:18](#); [Eph. 2:22](#)

The Holy Spirit is the Supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration, baptising all believers into the body of Christ.<sup>62</sup> The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> [I Cor. 12:13](#)

<sup>63</sup> [Rom. 8:9-11](#); [II Cor. 3:6](#), [Eph. 1:13](#)

The Holy Spirit is the Divine Teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's Revelation, the Bible.<sup>64</sup> Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>64</sup> [II Pet. 1:19-21](#)

<sup>65</sup> [Rom. 8:9-11](#); [Eph. 5:18](#); [I John 2:20](#), [27](#)

### 3. THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

We believe man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God.<sup>66</sup> We believe that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup> [Gen. 2:7](#), [15-25](#); [James 3:9](#)

<sup>67</sup> [Is. 43:7](#); [Col. 1:16](#); [Rev. 4:11](#)

We believe that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence; incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death; became subject to the wrath of God; and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>68</sup> We believe that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> [Gen. 2:16-17](#); [3:1-19](#); [John 3:36](#); [Rom. 3:23](#), [6:23](#); [I Cor. 2:14](#); [Eph. 2:1-3](#); [I Tim. 2:13-14](#); [I John 1:8](#)

<sup>69</sup> [Ps. 14:1-3](#); [Jer. 17:9](#); [Rom. 3:9](#) [18](#), [23](#); [5:10-12](#)



### 3.1 THE CREATION, THE FALL AND SIN

In the beginning the Triune God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing, by the power of His Word, in six days according to Scripture.<sup>70</sup> God created everything good and perfect for the glory of His own name.<sup>71</sup> God created mankind, male and female, in His own image.<sup>72</sup> The whole human race is descended from Adam and Eve, the first man and woman.<sup>73</sup> We believe that human life is sacred to God and begins at conception, and should not be unlawfully (in accordance with the Law of God) terminated at any stage.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>70</sup> [Gen. 1:1–2](#) [Heb. 11:3](#)

<sup>71</sup> [Gen. 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31](#); [Ps. 104:31](#); [Rom. 11:36](#)

<sup>72</sup> [Gen. 1:26–27](#)

<sup>73</sup> [Gen. 1:28](#); [Acts 17:26](#)

<sup>74</sup> [Gen 9:6](#); [Ps 119:73](#); [Ps 139:13-16](#); [Jer. 1:5](#); [Isa 42:5](#); [Zech. 12:1](#); [Luke 1:4](#)

God also created angels as moral, personal, and spiritual beings.<sup>75</sup> Some of the angels rebelled against God and were cast out of heaven, thus becoming evil spirits called devils or demons; the chief among them is Satan.<sup>76</sup> Within the limits of God's permission, these creatures have a certain capacity to influence the world and oppose the work of God.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> [Col. 1:16](#)

<sup>76</sup> [Rev. 12:7–9](#)

<sup>77</sup> [Job 1:12, 2:6](#); [Rev. 12:10–17](#)

Adam and Eve wilfully and freely broke God's commandment.<sup>78</sup> By so doing they lost their original righteousness and communion with God.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>78</sup> [Gen. 3:1–19](#); [Rom. 5:14](#)

<sup>79</sup> [Gen. 3:10–11](#), [22–24](#)

Since Adam was appointed to stand in the place of all mankind, each of his descendants inherits the guilt of his sin,<sup>80</sup> to which is added guilt for sins personally committed.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, all people inherit a corrupt nature from their original ancestors; Adam and Eve. Thus, all people are by nature subject to God's wrath, to death, and to temporal and eternal misery unless the Lord Jesus sets them free. The corrupt nature inclines them away from all good and is the cause of all sin actually committed.<sup>82</sup> Apart from the regenerating work of the Spirit, man is dead in sin and therefore unable to turn himself towards God, or to exercise saving faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>80</sup> [Rom. 5:12–19](#)

<sup>81</sup> [Rom. 3:10–20](#)

<sup>82</sup> [Ps. 51:5](#); [Rom. 3:10–19](#); [Eph. 2:1–3](#)

<sup>83</sup> [Matt. 11:27](#); [16:17](#); [Rom. 8:7](#); [1 John 5:1](#)

Sin is rebellion against God and His law.<sup>84</sup> It expresses itself in acts of disobedience by doing what He prohibits and failing to do what He requires.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup> [Rom. 1:21](#); [Eph. 2:1–3](#); [I John 3:4](#)

<sup>85</sup> [Eph. 2:1](#)

## 3.2 REDEMPTION

### 3.2.1 THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

Although mankind, through Adam's fall, became dead in sin and unable to save himself, God was pleased to provide a way of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ alone.<sup>86</sup> In order to inherit eternal life, it is essential for a person, by the sovereign intervention of God, to be taken out of Adam and be united with Christ.<sup>87</sup> Salvation is in Christ and in Him alone. God's work of redemption proceeds from God's grace alone, on the basis of Christ's mediatory work alone, through faith alone.<sup>88</sup> In the deepest sense, all the initiative in salvation lies with God, and the glory for salvation belongs to God alone.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>86</sup> [John 5:39](#); [14:6](#); [Acts 4:12](#)

<sup>87</sup> [Rom. 5:12–19](#)

<sup>88</sup> [Rom. 1:2–4](#), [16–17](#); [Eph. 2:8–9](#)

<sup>89</sup> [Rom. 11:33–36](#); [Eph. 3:1–14](#); [Rev. 5:9–10](#); [7:10](#)

God's salvation is revealed in the Gospel, which forms the central focus of both Old and New Testaments.<sup>90</sup> In the Old Testament, the Gospel was proclaimed through the promises, types and prophecies, which predicted the "sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow"<sup>91</sup>; the New Testament proclaims the fulfilment of God's redemptive purposes through the life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.<sup>92</sup> Thus, believers of all ages receive salvation through their union with Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>90</sup> [Luke 24:26–27](#), [44](#); [John 20:30–31](#); [Rom. 1:1–4](#)

<sup>91</sup> [Heb. 10:1–12](#); [I Pet. 1:10–12](#)

<sup>92</sup> [Acts 13:38–39](#); [Gal. 3:16–22](#)

<sup>93</sup> [Rom. 4:16](#), [23–25](#)

God calls all men to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and freely promises to all such people that they will be redeemed from sin and inherit eternal life.<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, God has promised to give His Holy Spirit to all of His elect, in order that they may be made willing and able to repent and believe.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>94</sup> [Is. 55:1](#); [John 3:16](#); [Rom. 9:33](#); [Rev. 22:17](#)

<sup>95</sup> [Ps. 110:3](#); [John 6:37](#), [44](#); [Acts 13:48](#); [16:14](#)

The elect constitute a great multitude of men and women whom God appointed to eternal life before the foundation of the world.<sup>96</sup> God's election was not based on anything seen or foreseen in the elect; it proceeded from His free and sovereign grace alone.<sup>97</sup> Furthermore, God the Father entrusted the elect to His Son, who undertook to redeem, call, justify, sanctify and glorify them.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>96</sup> [Eph. 1:4](#); [Rev. 5:9–10](#)

<sup>97</sup> [Deut. 7:7–8](#); [Rom. 9:11–16](#); [II Tim. 1:9](#)

<sup>98</sup> [Is. 53:10–11](#); [Matt. 20:28](#); [Luke 19:10](#); [John 6:37–40](#) [10:27–28](#)

In order to give effect to God's eternal purpose, the Eternal Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, took on human flesh. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and in this way two whole, perfect, distinct natures—divine and human—were inseparably joined together in One Person, the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>99</sup> Being thus true God and true man, unchangeably sinless,<sup>100</sup> the Lord Jesus Christ was appointed mediator between God and man, Prophet, Priest and King,<sup>101</sup>

<sup>99</sup> [Luke 1:35](#); [John 1:1, 14](#); [Rom. 1:3–4](#); [Phil. 2:6–11](#); [Col. 2:9](#)

<sup>100</sup> [Heb. 4:15](#); [I Pet. 2:22](#)

<sup>101</sup> [Luke 1:32](#); [John 1:45](#); [Deut. 18:18](#); [Heb. 7:21](#); [I Tim. 2:5](#)

Jesus Christ lived on this earth as a man under God's law, which He perfectly fulfilled.<sup>102</sup> On the cross, He acted as substitute for His elect, bearing their sins and suffering God's wrath in their place.<sup>103</sup> He died and rose bodily on the third day; forty days after that He ascended to the right hand of the Father, from where He poured out His Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost;<sup>104</sup> at God's appointed time, He will return personally to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>102</sup> [Gal. 4:4–5](#); [Heb. 5:8–9](#)

<sup>103</sup> [Is. 53:4–6](#); [Matt. 20:28](#); [II Cor. 5:21](#)

<sup>104</sup> [Acts 1:3](#); [2:33](#); [I Cor. 15:3–6](#)

<sup>105</sup> [I Thes. 4:16](#); [Heb. 9:28](#)

Jesus Christ is thus the last Adam, through whose sinless life and atoning death believers are reconciled to God.<sup>106</sup> Through Him, also, God is reconciling all things to Himself.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> [Rom. 3:22–25](#); [5:18–19](#)

<sup>107</sup> [Eph. 1:10](#); [Col. 1:20](#)

By His perfect obedience and the once-for-all sacrifice of Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ has brought about reconciliation and purchased an everlasting inheritance for all those given to Him by His Father.<sup>108</sup> His death and resurrection are thus the guarantee of their eternal salvation.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>108</sup> [John 17:2–5](#); [II Cor. 5:18–19](#) [I Pet. 1:3–4](#)

<sup>109</sup> [Rom. 5:9–10](#); [8:32](#); [Rev. 5:9–10](#)

By His present work of intercession, effectual calling, sanctification and sovereign rule, He certainly and effectually applies and communicates eternal redemption to all those for whom He obtained it.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>110</sup> [Rom. 8:34](#); [Heb. 7:25](#); [John 6:37](#), [39](#); [10:4](#), [16](#), [27](#); [17:19](#); [I Cor. 1:30](#); [Heb. 10:10](#), [14](#)

### 3.2.2 THE APPLICATION OF REDEMPTION

When the time is ripe, the Holy Spirit lays claim to each of the elect through regeneration, enabling them to believe in Christ and thus be united to him.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>111</sup> [John 1:12–13](#); [3:3–8](#); [I John 5:1](#)

Saving faith is ordinarily produced through the ministry of the Word.<sup>112</sup> It requires a knowledge of what God has revealed, about Himself, man and the Gospel including a conviction that these things are true, and comes to fulfilment as the believer accepts, receives and rests upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification and eternal life.<sup>113</sup> Any reliance which a person places in his own morality, good works or ceremonial faithfulness disqualifies him or her—whether that reliance is in place of or in addition to faith in Christ.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>112</sup> [Rom. 10:14–17](#)

<sup>113</sup> [John 20:20–31](#); [Rom. 10:9–11](#)

<sup>114</sup> [Gal. 1:9](#); [3:10](#); [5:2–6](#)

Evangelical repentance is a gift of God which is inseparable from saving faith. In repentance a person perceives that he or she has offended a holy God,<sup>115</sup> yet grasps that God in Christ is merciful to penitent sinners,<sup>116</sup> this leads to a turning from sin towards God, with the full purpose of and endeavour after obedience in all that God has commanded.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>115</sup> [Ps. 51:1–6](#); [Acts 2:37–38](#)

<sup>116</sup> [Is. 55:7](#); [Joel 2:12–13](#); [Mark 1:4–5](#); [Luke 15:17](#)

<sup>117</sup> [Luke 3:8–9](#); [15:18–20](#); [Acts 26:20](#); [I Thess. 1:9](#)

All who are united to Christ through saving faith are justified (declared righteous) by God.<sup>118</sup> This justification is an objective, legal declaration by

which Christ's active obedience to God's law (i.e. his obedience to all of God's commands) and his passive obedience in death (i.e. his submission to the penalty of death) are imputed to the believer.<sup>119</sup> Justification is thus founded only upon the righteous life and sacrificial death of Christ, having no dependence on the personal righteousness of the believer.<sup>120</sup> Faith is the instrument of justification because it (from the human side) unites the believer to Christ; it is in no way the basis of God's acceptance of the believer.<sup>121</sup> In Christ, believers are also adopted as God's children.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>118</sup> [Rom. 3:22](#), [24](#) [4:5](#)

<sup>119</sup> [Is. 53:4–6](#); [Rom. 4:5–6](#); [5:18–19](#); [II Cor 5:21](#)

<sup>120</sup> [Luke 18:9–14](#); [Rom. 4:4–6](#); [I Cor 1:30](#); [Eph. 2:8–9](#); [I John 5:12](#)

<sup>121</sup> [Rom. 6:3–10](#); [Gal. 2:20–21](#)

<sup>122</sup> [Eph. 1:5](#)

Saving faith and justification will, however, always result in a life of good works characterised by supreme love for God and for one's neighbour.<sup>123</sup> According to Scripture, good works proceed from true faith, conform to the law of God, and are motivated by a desire for God's glory.<sup>124</sup> Whereas unbelievers are unable to perform such works, believers have been and are increasingly sanctified by God's Word and Spirit to their performance.<sup>125</sup> Though the war with remaining sin continues as long as life in this world, the power of Christ enables believers increasingly to mortify sin and to grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.<sup>126</sup> Therefore, while good works are not the root of true faith or the ground of justification, they are the necessary fruit—and evidence of the genuineness—of saving faith and justification.<sup>127</sup> Sanctification is so inseparable from justification that a person who fails to produce good works (as defined above) as a habit of life has no grounds for considering himself a believer.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>123</sup> [Rom. 6:4](#), [14](#); [Eph. 2:10](#); [I John 5:1–5](#)

<sup>124</sup> [Ps. 112:1](#); [Rom. 2:7](#); [14:23](#); [I Cor 10:31](#); [I Tim. 1:5](#)

<sup>125</sup> [Rom. 8:3–11](#)

<sup>126</sup> [John 15:5](#); [Rom. 7:14–15](#); [8:4](#); [I Cor 9:24–27](#)

<sup>127</sup> [James 2:17](#), [26](#)

<sup>128</sup> [Matt. 7:21–23](#); [I John 2:4](#)

Those whom God has regenerated, enabled to believe, justified, adopted and sanctified will certainly persevere in the state of grace to the end and be eternally saved.<sup>129</sup> Believers may be severely tested by the world, the flesh and the devil, and may even, for a time, fall into grievous sins whereby they incur God's Fatherly displeasure and grieve the Holy Spirit.<sup>130</sup> Yet they will certainly be kept by the power of God, who continues to nourish in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope and all the graces of the Spirit.<sup>131</sup> This wonderful

assurance is no encouragement to sin, for the Lord clearly warns that those who persist steadfastly in apostasy prove themselves never to have been true believers.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>129</sup> [Rom. 8:28–39](#); [Phil. 1:6](#)

<sup>130</sup> [Ps. 51:3–12](#); [Matt. 26:70–74](#)

<sup>131</sup> [John 10:28–29](#); [I Thess. 5:23–24](#); [I Pet. 1:5](#)

<sup>132</sup> [Col. 1:22–23](#); [Heb. 10:26–27](#)

While the Word of God places a strong emphasis on God’s initiative in the salvation of a sinner, it has an equally strong emphasis on human responsibility in the outworking of certain elements of the process of salvation: faith, repentance, sanctification and perseverance.<sup>133</sup> This requires from the believer absolute commitment to the end of life.<sup>134</sup> It is of the utmost importance to maintain the biblical tension between the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man in the process of salvation.

<sup>133</sup> [Matt. 23:37–38](#); [Phil. 2:12–13](#)

<sup>134</sup> [Matt. 10:22](#); [24:12–13](#)

### 3.2.3. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN REDEMPTION

The Holy Spirit is from eternity truly God, the Third Person of the Divine Trinity.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>135</sup> [Acts 5:3–4](#); [II Cor. 13:14](#)

The foundation on which the Church is established is God’s revelation in Jesus Christ.<sup>136</sup> This foundation was laid as the Holy Spirit made the truth regarding Jesus Christ known to the apostles, thus enabling them to bear witness to Him.<sup>137</sup> In this way, the apostles and their intimate co-workers were inspired by the Spirit to put the New Testament message into writing, and so to complete the Scripture.<sup>138</sup> Since the work of the apostles was unique and unrepeatable, the Office of Apostle ended when the last of the New Testament apostles passed from the scene.<sup>139</sup> Ever since the completion of the canon, the Spirit’s means of communicating God’s truth has been to illuminate the Scriptures which He inspired.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>136</sup> [John 1:18](#); [I Cor. 3:11](#)

<sup>137</sup> [John 15:26–27](#); [16:13–15](#); [Acts 1:21–25](#); [Eph. 2:20](#); [3:4–5](#)

<sup>138</sup> [I Thess. 2:13](#); [II Pet. 1:12–21](#); [3:15–16](#)

<sup>139</sup> [I Cor 15:6–8](#)

<sup>140</sup> [II Tim. 3:16–17](#)

Although the Holy Spirit was already active in the Old Testament period, He was, according to the promises of the prophets, poured out in matchless abundance on the Church after the ascension of Christ.<sup>141</sup> This happened on the Day of Pentecost, the Old Testament's Harvest Festival. The Holy Spirit is therefore, in a special way, the Spirit of the New Testament harvest, which consists of the elect from the entire human race. His work is largely concerned with their calling and preservation in this life and is accomplished by mediating Christ to His people.<sup>142</sup> Thus the work of the Holy Spirit in believers is absolutely essential for their salvation.

<sup>141</sup> [Neh. 9:20](#); [Is. 63:11](#); [Acts 2:1–39](#)

<sup>142</sup> [John 14:16–18](#); [16:8–11](#); [Eph. 1:13–14](#)

The Holy Spirit is the central gift of the new covenant.<sup>143</sup> Ever since Christ poured out the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, believers have received the gift of His indwelling presence immediately upon the exercise of saving faith.<sup>144</sup> Thus, all true believers have been baptised in (or by) the Spirit<sup>145</sup> and possess the gift of the Spirit immediately upon conversion.

<sup>143</sup> [Ez. 36:27](#); [Acts 2:16–21](#)

<sup>144</sup> [Acts 2:39](#); [Rom. 8:9](#)

<sup>145</sup> [I Cor 12:13](#)

The initial work of the Spirit in illumination and regeneration leads to repentance and saving faith.<sup>146</sup> By the gift of the Spirit, God assures His children of their sonship and eternal life;<sup>147</sup> gives to them a foretaste of what is yet to come;<sup>148</sup> restores in them the image of God, conforming them to the likeness of Christ;<sup>149</sup> instructs them in the words and ways of Christ;<sup>150</sup> liberates them from the bondage of sin and enables them to obey God from the heart;<sup>151</sup> assists them in their prayers;<sup>152</sup> mediates Christ's presence;<sup>153</sup> and unites them to one another.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>146</sup> [John 1:12–13](#); [I Cor 2:6–16](#); [I John 5:1](#)

<sup>147</sup> [Rom. 8:14–17](#)

<sup>148</sup> [Rom. 8:23](#); [Eph. 1:14](#)

<sup>149</sup> [II Cor 3:18](#); [Col. 3:10](#)

<sup>150</sup> [John 14:26](#)

<sup>151</sup> [Gal. 5:16–26](#)

<sup>152</sup> [Rom. 8:26](#)

<sup>153</sup> [John 14:16–18](#)

<sup>154</sup> [I Cor 12:13](#)

The Holy Spirit resides irrevocably in the hearts of all true Christians from the moment of their conversion, being received once and for all;<sup>155</sup> nevertheless, the same Spirit continues to be supplied to them throughout their lives. Thus, it is the duty of those already indwelt by God's Spirit both to request further

supplies and larger measures of the Holy Spirit, and to be filled continually with (i.e., controlled by) the Holy Spirit.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>155</sup> [Eph. 1:13](#)

<sup>156</sup> [Luke 11:13](#); [Eph. 5:18](#)

It is crucial to recognise the Holy Spirit's work in the individual believer; nevertheless, since believers are baptised by the Spirit into the body, the corporate nature of the Holy Spirit's work should not be ignored.<sup>157</sup> The Holy Spirit works within the individual in the context of the community of believers: both the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit assume the corporate nature of the Holy Spirit's work.<sup>158</sup>

<sup>157</sup> [I Cor 12:12–13](#)

<sup>158</sup> [I Cor 12:4–11](#); [Eph. 5:18–21](#)

The gift of the Holy Spirit is never completely taken away from true Christians, but He can be so grieved by their rebellions and backslidings, that for a season His presence is greatly withdrawn, and His influences largely withheld.<sup>159</sup> Therefore, it is the duty of all believers neither to grieve nor to quench the Holy Spirit.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>159</sup> [Eph. 4:30](#); [I Sam 16:14](#); [Psalm 51:11](#); [Isa 59:2](#)

<sup>160</sup> [I Thess. 5:19](#)

Each true congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ is charismatic by nature—in the sense that every believer receives a gift (or gifts) and is responsible to exercise it (or them) in practicing the priesthood of the believer.<sup>161</sup> This does not mean, however, that the equipping work of the Holy Spirit is limited to the gifts that are explicitly mentioned in the New Testament. Neither does it mean that all the gifts which are mentioned still appear today. Clearly, the gifts associated with the work of the apostles in the time before the New Testament was completed, (especially the revelatory gifts) disappeared with the finalisation of the Canon, since they were no longer needed.

<sup>161</sup> [Rom. 12:3–8](#); [I Cor 12:4–11](#); [I Pet. 4:10–11](#)

#### 4. THE CHURCH

We believe all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the Church,<sup>162</sup> the bride of Christ,<sup>163</sup> of which Christ is the head.<sup>164</sup>

<sup>162</sup> [I Cor 12:12–13](#)

<sup>163</sup> [II Cor 11:2](#); [Eph. 5:23–32](#); [Rev. 19:7–8](#)



<sup>164</sup> [Eph. 1:22](#); [4:15](#); [Col. 1:18](#)

The Universal Church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>165</sup> [Eph. 2:11-3:6](#)

The establishment and continuity of local churches are clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures<sup>166</sup> and the members of the one scriptural body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies.<sup>167</sup> In light of this we believe that any and all professing believer(s) should be a member of a local church or actively pursuing membership in a local church, which is the Body of Christ.

<sup>166</sup> [Acts 14:23, 27](#); [20:17, 28](#); [Gal. 1:2](#); [Phil. 1:1](#); [I Thess. 1:1](#); [II Thess. 1:1](#)

<sup>167</sup> [I Cor 11:18-20](#); [Heb. 10:25](#)

The Universal Church consists of all the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ, its Head.<sup>168</sup> This Universal Church is the bride and body of Christ, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way, and the agency which forms the focus of God's work of reconciling all things to Himself.<sup>169</sup> The Universal Church may be called invisible with respect to the internal work of the Spirit.

<sup>168</sup> [Heb. 12:23](#)

<sup>169</sup> [Eph. 1:9-10](#); [23](#); [3:6-11](#); [5:25-32](#)

The Local Church is thus a part of the Universal Church.

All those who profess faith in Christ and obedience to the Gospel, and who do not destroy their profession by unholiness of conduct, are to be regarded as visible saints. A Local Church ought to be constituted only of visible saints.<sup>170</sup> In addition to this fundamental principle, true churches are recognised by their faithful preaching of the Gospel,<sup>171</sup> pure observance of the ordinances in the fear of God,<sup>172</sup> practice of Church discipline<sup>173</sup> and mutual love.<sup>174</sup>

<sup>170</sup> [Matt. 18:15-20](#); [Acts 2:37-42](#); [I Cor 5:1-9](#)

<sup>171</sup> [Gal. 1:6](#), [9](#)

<sup>172</sup> [Matt. 28:18-20](#); [I Cor 11:23-25](#)

<sup>173</sup> [Matt. 18:15-20](#); [I Cor 5:1-9](#)

<sup>174</sup> [John 13:34-35](#)

Christ is the head of every Local Church, and He has given to each Local Church all the power and authority which is necessary for the exercise of worship and discipline.<sup>175</sup>

<sup>175</sup> [Matt. 18:17-20](#); [I Cor 5:4-5](#)

Although officers are not essential to the existence of a Local Church, they are necessary for its well-being.<sup>176</sup> In the present age (i.e. the age after the founding and establishment of Christ's Church on earth), Christ has appointed two offices for the government of the Local Church: elders (also known as pastors, bishops or overseers) and deacons.<sup>177</sup> It is the particular responsibility of elders to keep watch over the flock as men who must give an account, to provide sound teaching for the edification and strengthening of the saints, and to prepare God's people for works of service.<sup>178</sup> Deacons are appointed to attend to ministries of mercy and other practical service, in order to free the elders for prayer and the ministry of the Word.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>176</sup> [Acts 14:23](#); [Titus 1:5](#)

<sup>177</sup> [I Tim. 3:1–13](#)

<sup>178</sup> [Acts 20:28](#); [Titus 1:9](#); [Heb. 13:17](#)

<sup>179</sup> [Acts 6:1–7](#); [I Tim. 3:8–13](#)

All believers are one, under the headship of Christ, and it is His desire that they be perfected in unity.<sup>180</sup> Therefore, when God's providence provides the opportunity, local churches ought to promote fellowship and co-operation among themselves.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>180</sup> [John 17:23](#)

<sup>181</sup> [Acts 15:1–4](#); [II Cor 8:18–24](#); [Gal. 2:10](#); [Phil. 1:4–5](#)

#### 4.1 BAPTISM

Baptism is one of the two New Testament ordinances (sometimes called sacraments). It is the formal expression of a believer's entry into a saving relationship with God through Christ,<sup>182</sup> and as such is a visible word: from the side of the person baptised, baptism is a visible and decisive expression of his or her repentance and faith in Christ;<sup>183</sup> from God's side, baptism is a sign of the baptised person's union with Christ and remission of sins.<sup>184</sup> It follows, therefore, that the only proper subjects of baptism are those who profess repentance and faith in Christ.<sup>185</sup> The due administration of this ordinance involves immersion in water.

<sup>182</sup> [Acts 2:38–41](#); [I Pet. 3:21](#)

<sup>183</sup> [Acts 2:38–41](#); [Rom. 6:3–4](#)

<sup>184</sup> [Rom. 6:3–4](#); [Heb. 10:22](#)

<sup>185</sup> [Matt. 28:19–20](#); [Acts 2:37–41](#); [8:12–13](#), [36–38](#); [9:18](#); [10:47–48](#); [11:16](#); [15:9](#); [16:14–15](#), [31–34](#); [18:8](#); [19:3–5](#); [22:16](#); [Rom. 6:3–4](#); [Gal. 3:27](#); [Col. 2:12](#); [I Pet. 3:21](#)

#### 4.2 THE LORD'S SUPPER

The second New Testament ordinance is the Lord's Supper, which the Lord Jesus Himself instituted on the night that He was betrayed. The Lord's Supper is observed

by eating the bread and drinking the cup which symbolise the body and blood of the Lord, which bread and cup are a visible proclamation of the death of Christ and its benefits for all who are united to Christ.<sup>186</sup>

<sup>186</sup> [1 Cor 11:23–29](#)

The Lord's Supper is to be observed regularly by all believers in good standing with their local church who, receiving the elements in faith, spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified and all the benefits of His death.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>187</sup> [John 6:29, 35, 47–58](#)

## 5. CHRISTIAN ETHOS

We believe it is the fundamental responsibility of all human beings to worship and serve their Creator.<sup>188</sup> Although unbelievers fail in this responsibility,<sup>189</sup> Christians, whose lives are being transformed and renewed by the Gospel, are called to live lives of worship by offering themselves as living sacrifices to God.<sup>190</sup>

<sup>188</sup> [Rom. 1:19–21](#)

<sup>189</sup> [Rom. 1:18–23, 25, 28](#)

<sup>190</sup> [Rom. 12:1–2](#)

In addition to this worship, which embraces all of life, God's people are called to specific acts of public<sup>191</sup> and private<sup>192</sup> worship. These specific acts of worship—including such elements as the preaching of the Word, prayer,<sup>193</sup> observance of the ordinances<sup>194</sup> and the singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs<sup>195</sup>— are to be offered through Christ,<sup>196</sup> in spirit and in truth,<sup>197</sup> and according to the teachings of Scripture rather than in ways devised by man.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>191</sup> [Acts 2:42–47; 20:7](#)

<sup>192</sup> [Ps. 119:148; Matt. 6:6](#)

<sup>193</sup> [1 Tim. 4:13; 2:8](#)

<sup>194</sup> [Matt. 28:19–20; 1 Cor 11:18, 23–25](#)

<sup>195</sup> [Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19](#)

<sup>196</sup> [1 Pet. 2:5](#)

<sup>197</sup> [John 4:23](#)

<sup>198</sup> [Lev. 10:1–3; Deut. 12:30–31; Matt. 15:3](#)

Christian ethics is controlled by God's law, which is expressed in the two great commandments (to love God and our neighbour), summarised in the Ten Commandments, and applied to the New Testament believer by Christ and the apostles.<sup>199</sup>

<sup>199</sup> [Matt. 5:17–20; Mark 12:29–31; Rom. 13:8–10](#)

Christians are members of one another by virtue of their union with Christ;<sup>200</sup> therefore, participation in the fellowship of the body of Christ through the Local Church is one of the believer's greatest privileges and responsibilities.<sup>201</sup> This fellowship is one of the most

important means of proclaiming Christ to the world,<sup>202</sup> as well as one of the believer's primary sources of preservation, comfort and edification.<sup>203</sup>

<sup>200</sup> [I Cor 12:12–27](#)

<sup>201</sup> [Ps. 84](#); [Heb. 10:25](#)

<sup>202</sup> [John 17:21](#)

<sup>203</sup> [Heb. 3:13](#); [I John 4:12](#)

Christ has commanded His disciples to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.<sup>204</sup> Believers, therefore, have a responsibility to the world around them—without distinctions of race, language, or class—to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ by their actions, lifestyle, and words.<sup>205</sup> In this way they are to make disciples of all nations.

<sup>204</sup> [Matt. 5:13–16](#)

<sup>205</sup> [Matt. 28:18–20](#); [Rom. 1:14](#); [Titus 2:11–14](#)

## 6. THE STATE AND MARRIAGE

We believe being partakers of God's saving grace, believers are the firstfruits of God's new creation.<sup>206</sup> In the Church, they begin to experience the fellowship that will characterise the new humanity.<sup>207</sup> Yet believers continue to live in the present world and in human society, which is maintained and upheld by God's common grace.<sup>208</sup> In this human society, God has appointed civil rulers to maintain order and justice, if necessary, by the use of the sword.<sup>209</sup>

<sup>206</sup> [II Cor 5:17](#); [Eph. 3:10–11](#); [James 1:18](#)

<sup>207</sup> [Heb. 12:22–23](#)

<sup>208</sup> [Ps. 145:9](#); [Rom. 2:15](#); [I Pet. 1:1](#)

<sup>209</sup> [Rom. 13:1–4](#); [I Pet. 2:14](#)

Civil government is an institution separate from the Church; it has no mandate to prescribe the doctrines and practices of any Church, or to coerce its citizens into following one religion or another, or to prevent its citizens from practising religion.<sup>210</sup> Although the Church has no institutional connection with the civil government, believers have a prophetic responsibility to remind the government of its accountability to God and of those principles of justice which accord with the will of God revealed in Scripture and in the human conscience.<sup>211</sup>

<sup>210</sup> [Matt. 5:43–47](#); [18:15–17](#); [Acts 4:19](#); [I Cor 5:9–13](#); [Rom. 13:3–4](#)

<sup>211</sup> [Ps. 2](#); [146:7–9](#); [Prov. 31:8–9](#); [Rev. 18](#)

God has commanded Christians, within the limits of obedience to God, to submit to their rulers, to participate in the life of their society, and to promote the well-being of their fellow-citizens.<sup>212</sup>

<sup>212</sup> [Jer. 29:4–7](#); [Matt. 5:38–47](#); [Acts 4:19](#); [I Thess. 4:11–12](#); [I Pet. 2:13–25](#)

God has sanctioned marriage between a man and a woman; therefore, we believe in a heterosexual relationship between a natural man and a natural woman within the confines of

lawful matrimony. Adherence to this stated principle of sexual behaviour is an inherent requirement for membership.

Marriage must thus be entered into publicly and formally. It was ordained by God at creation for the mutual help of husband and wife, and for the propagation of the human race.<sup>213</sup> Marriage is thus the basis of the family, which is the essential building block of any stable society.<sup>214</sup>

<sup>213</sup> [Gen. 1:27–28](#); [2:20–24](#); [Matt. 19:4–6](#)

<sup>214</sup> [Ex. 20:12](#); [Deut. 6:7](#); [Mal. 2:15](#); [Eph. 6:1–3](#)

Since marriage is a creation ordinance, its privileges and commitments apply to both believers and unbelievers. However, it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord.<sup>215</sup>

<sup>215</sup> [I Cor 7:39](#); [II Cor 6:14–15](#)

## 7. DEATH, RESURRECTION, JUDGEMENT AND THE FINAL STATE

We believe:

- i. In the bodily resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.
- ii. That all people will appear before God's judgement seat to receive their due for the things done while in the body.
- iii. That those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life will enter into eternal life, but the unrighteous into eternal condemnation. That according to God's promise we look forward to a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells, when we will forever be with the Lord, and He with us.
- iv. After death, the human body returns to dust; the spirit, however, is immortal and neither dies nor sleeps.<sup>216</sup> The spirits of the righteous are received into the presence of the Lord, at the point of death, in anticipation of their final resurrection, (when their souls will be joined to glorified bodies) and full eternal inheritance.<sup>217</sup> The spirits of the wicked are cast into hell, where they await their final judgement.<sup>218</sup> A time is coming when all the dead shall be raised, and their souls united to their imperishable, resurrected bodies forever.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>216</sup> [Gen. 3:19](#); [Matt. 10:28](#); [Luke 16:23](#); [23:43](#); [II Cor 5:6–8](#); [Heb. 9:27](#)

<sup>217</sup> [Luke 16:23](#); [II Cor 5:6–8](#); [I Thes 4:13–18](#); [Phil. 1:21–23](#); [Rev. 6:9](#)  
<sup>218</sup> [Luke 16:23–28](#); [Acts 1:25](#); [II Pet. 2:9](#)  
<sup>219</sup> [John 5:28–29](#)

After the general resurrection there will be a day on which God will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ.<sup>220</sup> All people who have ever lived upon earth will be judged in perfect righteousness, according to what they have done.<sup>221</sup> The righteous will receive the reward of eternal joy, everlasting life and imperishable glory in the presence of the Lord; the wicked, who do not know God and do not obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be cast aside into everlasting torment, punished with everlasting destruction, and shut out from the gracious presence of the Lord and the glory of His power.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>220</sup> [John 5:26–30](#); [Acts 17:31](#)  
<sup>221</sup> [Rom. 2:5–10](#); [Rev. 20:12–13](#)  
<sup>222</sup> [Matt. 25:31–46](#); [Rom. 2:6–10](#); [II Thess. 1:9–10](#)

Although the final judgement is according to works, it is not as though the righteous earn or deserve the eternal life which they will receive.<sup>223</sup> Their good works are merely the evidence of God's gifts of regeneration, faith, justification and union with Christ, for whose sake alone they are given their eternal inheritance.<sup>224</sup> On the other hand, those who will be condemned will be fully deserving of their punishment, since their works arise from a heart at enmity with God and find expression in the rejection of God's kindness, righteous claims and holy law.<sup>225</sup> Thus, the Day of Judgement will glorify God: by the display of His mercy and grace in the salvation of believers, and by the manifestation of His justice in the condemnation of unbelievers.<sup>226</sup>

<sup>223</sup> [Rom. 6:23](#); [Eph. 2:9–10](#)  
<sup>224</sup> [Rom. 5:1–2](#), [9–10](#); [6:23](#)  
<sup>225</sup> [Rom. 1:18–21](#); [2:1–5](#); [3:9–20](#)  
<sup>226</sup> [Rom. 9:22–23](#); [II Thess. 1:10](#); [Rev. 15:3–4](#)

God has clearly revealed that the day and hour of Christ's coming are unknown to men.<sup>227</sup> His purpose is that they should shake off carnal security, reject the distraction of date-setting, and keep watch at all times, since they do not know the day or hour.<sup>228</sup> Thus prepared for the glorious appearing of their Lord and Saviour, they will always be ready to say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen".<sup>229</sup>

<sup>227</sup> [Matt. 24:36–41](#); [I Thess. 5:1–3](#)  
<sup>228</sup> [Matt. 24:42–25:30](#); [I Thess. 5:4–11](#)  
<sup>229</sup> [Rev. 22:20](#)

## CONCLUSION

Scripture texts are given to support the statements in this Confession. The aim in doing this is to give expression to the Confession's own conviction that the Bible alone is our authority in all matters of faith and practice, and to encourage readers to ground their own convictions directly on the Scripture. This Confession is not based on a superficial approach to theology whereby texts are used in isolation from their contexts to support statements by means of superficial verbal parallels. Rather, it is built on a responsible exegesis of the relevant texts in their literary and historical contexts, with due regard for the theological unity of Scripture.

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## **Adoption of the Statement of Faith**

This *Statement of Faith* was formally adopted by a unanimous vote of the Members of the Glenvista Baptist Church present, at a properly constituted Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 19 July 2023.

This document replaces any previous *Statement of Faith*.