

The Truth That We Believe¹

The Scriptures command us to take heed to ourselves and the doctrine, for in doing this we will save ourselves and those who hear us (1 Tim 4:16). There are many false teachers today disguised as angels of light who twist the words of God in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Because of the vast interpretations of Scripture, we find it necessary to explain the truths found in the 66 books of the Bible, which is the infallible word of God.

The Truth Concerning God

- God is One but made up of three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (1 Jn. 5:7 NKJV). Evidence of the plurality of God is seen in Gen 1:26 when God uses the words 'Us' and 'Our' in reference to Himself. He states "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness."

The Truth Concerning Christ

- Jesus is the Word; He existed as God and was with God from the beginning (John 1:1). His deity on earth is seen clearly in the 7 recorded instances where He accepted worship from others. (Matt 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; Mk. 5:6; Jn. 9:38)
- Although Jesus was fully God, He emptied Himself and became a humble Servant. Jesus was made like His brethren in every way and was tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin (Heb 2:17; 4:15). Jesus never sinned, consciously or unconsciously. If He had sinned unconsciously even one time, there would have had to be a sacrifice for this sin (Lev 4:27, 28).
- Jesus did not come in sinful flesh, but in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3). He did not have a sinful nature, as He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and had no earthly father. Jesus did, however, have His own will which He denied unto bloodshed in order to do His Father's will (Jn. 6:38; Lk 22:42,44). This shows that Jesus had a human will that was opposed to His Father's (Matt. 26: 39), but He never once yielded to His own will. Jesus resisted sin with loud cries and tears, and was heard because of His godly fear. Though He was a Son, He learned obedience by the things which he suffered (Heb 5: 7-8). "For in that He Himself suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted." (Heb 2: 18)

The Truth Concerning Man

- All men are born children of wrath, doing the will of their father. (Eph 2:3; Jn 8:44; 2Tim 2:26). The sinful nature that is in all men was inherited through Adam's one transgression from the beginning. (Rom 5:12,19). When we were born, as Adam's children, we were all born with an old man. The old man must be crucified with Christ through baptism into His death, that the body of sin might be done away with (Rom

6:6). We are then raised with Christ from the dead through faith and become a 'new man' in Christ, no longer slaves of sin (Rom 6:4). The new man is created in the likeness of God according to His divine nature (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10).

The Truth Concerning Salvation

- All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23) When the Lord looked down from heaven He saw the state of mankind. He saw that there was no man that could bring salvation, so He sent His own arm in the Man Jesus Christ to redeem those who would put their trust in Him (Isa. 59:16).

- In Revelation 5: 6 Jesus is described as the Lamb who was slain. Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the whole world and rose again on the third day. He defeated death and triumphed over every principality and power through His death on the cross. He ascended to heaven and was exalted to the right hand of the Father, where He received the promise of the Holy Spirit which He pours out on all who obey Him (Acts 2:33; 5:32). He will return again to the earth for the saints who have endured; who overcome the world through faith in Him.

- We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus. We are not saved by our own works lest we should boast (Eph 2:8-9). If we trust in ourselves and our own righteousness, our works are dead and we become a Pharisee in our hearts (Heb 9:14; Phil 3:9).

- Grace is not a license to sin, but grace teaches us to say no to sin, and live righteously and godly in this present age (Titus 2:12; Jude 1:4).

- We must repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). True repentance must produce in us the fruit of righteousness or the fruits of the Spirit. True repentance is accompanied by godly sorrow, or a broken heart and a contrite spirit (2 Cor 7:10).

- The one who believes and is baptized will be saved (Mark 16:16). Repentance and faith must be followed by baptism by immersion in water, where we publicly testify to God, to men, and to demons that our old man is indeed buried with Christ (Rom. 6: 4,6). Water baptism should only be done if one believes with all their heart (Acts 8:37).

- There is a baptism of repentance and a baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire. The baptism of the Spirit is necessary in order to be clothed with power from on high that

we may be His witnesses through our lives and by our words (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49). Sanctification (being set apart) is the work of the Holy Spirit who refines and purifies us as a blazing fire refines silver and purifies gold (Mal 3:2-3; Matt 3:12; 1 Thess. 5:23). Sanctification is a process that begins with the new birth and must continue throughout our earthly life. Although it is God who does the work in us, we have a part in putting to death the deeds of the body by His Spirit and working out our salvation with fear and trembling (Rom 8:13; Phil 2:12,13). Everyone who has the hope of seeing Jesus and being like Him, purifies himself, just as He is pure. (1 Jn 3:2-3)

- The scriptures teach that the filling of the Holy Spirit is something that one should continually seek. Some of the disciples who were filled with the Spirit at Pentecost were filled again with the Spirit as recorded in Acts 4:31. In Eph. 5:18, the scriptures also state “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be (continually/ repeatedly) filled with the Spirit.”

- One must enter the narrow gate and walk the narrow way in order to be saved. The narrow gate is when one enters the Kingdom of God through counting the cost of being a disciple, and repenting of their sins. They are justified (declared righteous) by faith and then must begin to walk the narrow way. The narrow way is the way of sanctification. Those who do not pursue the way of sanctification (or holiness) will never see the Lord (Heb 12:14). The scriptures state that there are few who are able to enter the narrow gate and walk this narrow path to eternal life (Matt. 7:13-14; Lk 13:24).

- The righteous requirements of the law can be fulfilled in those who walk according to the Spirit as the scripture says (Rom 8:4). These requirements are summed up in loving God with all the heart and loving our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:36-40). It is the royal law of love that God seeks to write in our hearts. The outward manifestation of this will be a life of victory over all conscious sin and obedience to all of Jesus’ commandments (John 14:15).

- There are two types of sin: unintentional or unconscious sin, and willful or conscious sin (Num 15:22-31; Ps 19:12-13; 1 Jn 5:16-17). It is possible to be perfect in our conscience now (Heb 9:14, 1 Cor 4:4), but it is not possible to be sinlessly perfect now (1 Jn 1:8). As long as we have this corruptible body, unconscious sin will be found in it. We can, however, be perfect in our conscience (Acts 24:16) and be free from conscious sin (1Jn 2:1; 3:6,9).

- It is possible to depart from the living God through an evil heart of unbelief (Heb 3:12). The scripture says, in the latter times many will depart from the faith, following lying

spirits and doctrines of demons (1Tim 4:1). In Jesus' response to His disciples about what the signs of His coming would be, He warned, to take heed that no one deceives them. He continued to say that many will fall away, and most people's love will grow cold. But he who endures to the end (of these tests and tribulations) shall be saved (Matt 24:10-13).

The Truth Concerning the Church

- The church is the body of Christ, built up as living stones into a spiritual house. The church has only one head, Jesus Christ. The church is not a building, as God does not dwell in temples made with hands (Act 7:48). The church is not a denomination, but a remnant of genuine wholehearted believers scattered abroad just as there was a remnant of overcomers in the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3. It is a remnant as likened in the scriptures to the seven thousand who did not bow the knee to Baal in Elijah's day (Rom 11:4).

- The leadership of the local church should be in the hands of elders as taught in the New Testament (Tit. 1:5, Acts 14:23) 'Elders', being plural, implies that there must be at least two in every church. Elders must meet the qualifications defined in the scriptures (1 Tim 3, Tit 1:5-9)

- Women are permitted to pray and prophesy with their heads covered in the meetings. They are not permitted to exercise authority or teach men (1Cor 11:5; 1 Tim. 2:12).

- God has appointed various gifts in the church for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, and for the edification of the body (Eph 4:11-12; 1Cor 12:4-10, 28; 14:12). These are to be administered with order in the assembly as described in the scriptures (1Cor 14). The church is encouraged to desire spiritual gifts, and to earnestly desire the best gifts, especially prophesy. Even so, there is yet a more excellent way, love (1Cor 12:31; 1Cor 13; 1Cor 14:1).

- The greatest evidence of the disciples of Jesus is the love that they have for one another (Jn 13:35).