

Statement of Faith

Cowboy Trail Church

The Holy Scriptures

The Holy Bible is the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. The Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, consists of the following books, which together make up the Old and New Testaments in their entirety.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis	Exodus	Leviticus	Numbers
Deuteronomy	Joshua	Judges	Ruth
1 Samuel	2 Samuel	1 Kings	2 Kings
1 Chronicles	2 Chronicles	Ezra	Nehemiah
Esther	Job	Psalms	Proverbs
Ecclesiastes	Song of Solomon	Isaiah	Jeremiah
Lamentations	Ezekiel	Daniel	Hosea
Joel	Amos	Obadiah	Jonah
Micah	Nahum	Habakkuk	Zephaniah
Haggai	Zechariah	Malachi	

The New Testament

Matthew	Mark	Luke
John	Acts of the Apostles	Romans
1 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	Galatians
Ephesians	Philippians	Colossians
1 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians	1 Timothy
2 Timothy	Titus	Philemon
Hebrews	James	1 Peter
2 Peter	1 John	2 John
3 John	Jude	Revelation

All controversies are to be settled by Holy Scripture, and by Holy Scripture alone. All decrees of Councils, opinions of ancient writers, and doctrines of men collectively or individually, are similarly to be accepted or rejected according to the verdict of the Holy Scriptures given to us by the Holy Spirit. In that verdict, faith finds its final rest.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16, 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Matt. 22: 29, 31-32; Acts 28:23; Eph. 2:20, Rev. 22:18

God

There is one and only one living and true God. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the entire universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all-powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being. They are perfect in harmony and are (in ways beyond our comprehension) perfectly One God.

God The Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His entire universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all-powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. His purpose for the world is eternal because there never was a time when he did not know what he was going to do. His purpose accords with the counsel of His will. All plans were made in order for the Glory of God. Nothing falls outside the decrees of God. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11. 20:1; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9. 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and was born of her. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1. Psalms 2:7. 110:1.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination, He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His Church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the Church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7. Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17, Num. 23: 19; Isaiah 46:10;; John 19:11; Acts 4: 27, 28; Romans 9: 15,18; Eph. 1:3-5, 11; Heb. 6:17; Jas. 1:13; 1 John 1:5.

Mankind

Mankind is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures, Mankind was the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning, man was innocent of sin and endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice, man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence. Therefore, all mankind has a sinful nature. Only the grace of God can bring mankind into his holy fellowship and enable mankind to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created mankind in His own image, and in that Christ died for mankind; therefore every person possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who believe and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

- A. Regeneration: Is the act of God alone, in which He renews the human heart, making it alive when it was dead. In regeneration, God acts at the origin and deepest point of the human person. This means that there is no preparation, no preceding disposition in a sinner that requests or contributes to the new life given by God. It is by God alone. Regeneration is the gift of God's grace. It is the immediate, supernatural work of the Holy Spirit wrought in us. Its effect is to quicken us to spiritual life from spiritual death. It changes the disposition of our souls, inclining our hearts to God. The fruit of regeneration is faith. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.
- B. Justification: God freely justifies the persons whom He calls. He does this, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins and by accounting them, and accepting them, as righteous. This He does for Christ's sake alone, and not for anything wrought in them or done by them. The righteousness, which is imputed to them, that is, reckoned to their account, is neither their faith nor the act of believing nor any other obedience to the gospel, which they have rendered, but Christ's obedience alone. Christ's one obedience is twofold: His active obedience rendered to the entire divine law, and His submissive obedience rendered in His death. Those thus justified receive

and rest by faith upon Christ's righteousness; and this faith they have, not of themselves, but as the gift of God. God continues to forgive the sins of all the justified. They can never lose their justification; but they may, by reason of sin, fall under God's fatherly displeasure; in which case, unless they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg God's pardon, and renew their faith and repentance, God will not usually restore to them 'the light of His countenance'.

Ps. 32:5; Ps. 51; Ps. 89:31-33; Matt. 6:12; 26:75; John 10:28; 1John 1:7,k9; John 1:12; Rom. 3:24; 4:5-8; 5: 17-19; 8:30; 1Cor. 1:30-31; Eph. 1:7; 2: 8-10; Phil. 3: 8,10; Rom. 3: 9-10.

C. Sanctification: Is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress towards moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. It is the work of God's free grace by which we are renewed in the whole person after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life. Those who are united in Christ, and regenerated, have a new heart and a new spirit created in them; and by His Word and Spirit dwelling within them, this personal work of sanctification is indeed carried further. All these blessings accrue to them by reason of the merits of Christ's death and resurrection. Sin's mastery over them is completely broken; the evil desires to which it gives birth are increasingly weakened and dealt their deathblow; and saving graces in them are increasingly enlivened and strengthened. The practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, is thus promoted.

John 17:17; Acts 20:32; Rom. 6:5,6,14; 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 5:24; Eph. 3:16-19; Col. 1:11; 1 Thess. 5:21-23; Heb. 12:14.; Rom. 3:9-10.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3. 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1. 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies select sinners according to His good pleasure and for the praise of His glorious grace. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has chosen in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace. They have the assurances of God's love, peace of conscience, fellowship with Christ, joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of grace, the privilege of prayer, and perseverance therein to the end.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31. Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

The Church

A New Testament Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of believers,

associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ. In such a congregation, each person is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. The New Testament speaks also of the Church as the Body of Christ, which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.

Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to no other. Baptism is an expression of faith.

The Lord's Supper is a holy ordinance of the Church. It is a symbolic act of obedience. By eating bread and drinking the cup according to Christ's appointment, we show forth his death. Those who eat and drink in a worthy manner partake of Christ's body and blood, not physically, but spiritually in that by faith they are nourished with the benefits, he purchased and grow in grace.

It is required of those who would worthily (that is, suitably) partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge, that they discern the Lord's body; their faith, that they feed upon him; and their repentance, love, and new obedience; lest, partaking unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; 36:10; 41-42; 47-48; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 5:8; 10:16,21; 11:23-31 2 Corinthians. 13:5; Colossians 2:12.

The Lord's Day

From the creation of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

One day in seven should be especially devoted to corporate worship and other spiritual exercises that restore the soul's rest in God and zeal for His name. It should provide physical refreshment and fit one for a week of devoted service to Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Leviticus 23:3; Isaiah 58: 13-14; Matthew 12:1-14; 28:1. Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His sovereignty over the entire universe and His kingship over men. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to

Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1. 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7. 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every Church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all, rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the responsibility of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness under girded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

Education

In Jesus Christ, abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is to co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the Churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19;7,119:11; Proverbs 3:13; 4:1-10; 8:1-;11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5: 12- 6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully,

regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3,10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

The Family

Human society originated with the family unit.

God ordained marriage an exclusive relationship to which one man and one woman commit themselves to each other in covenant for life, and on the basis of this solemn vow become "one flesh"

(Gen. 2:24; Mal. 2:13; Matt. 19: 4-6).

It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

Marriage is for Christians and non-Christians, but it is God's desire that His people should marry only fellow believers (*1Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14; Ezra 9:10; Neh. 13:12-17*). Intimacy in its deepest Christian dimension is impossible when the partners are not united in faith.

Christ's relationship to His Church is used to explain what Christian marriage is, so as to highlight the husband's special responsibility as the wife's leader and protector, and the wife's calling to accept her husband in that role (*Eph. 5:21-33*). The distinction of roles does not imply that the wife is an inferior person. As God's image bearers, both man and wife have equal dignity and value, and they must fulfill their roles with a mutual respect grounded in recognition of this fact.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Christian parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents in the Lord.

God's ideal for marriage is one man and one woman for life (*Mark 10:6-12*). All means should be taken to preserve the marriage bond. However, Jesus did recognize that divorce may be permitted in the case of

marital infidelity which includes abuse (Matthew 5:32). The Biblical principles of repentance and forgiveness should guide in any consideration of divorce and remarriage.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

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