

ADVENT CHRISTIAN CATECHISM



ADVENT CHRISTIAN CATECHISM



ADVENT CHRISTIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE
PO 690848
14601 Albemarle Road
Charlotte, North Carolina 28227
www.acgc.us

Third Printing 2012

Copyright © 1987 – 2012 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, PO Box 690848, 14601 Albemarle Road, Charlotte, North Carolina 28227. All Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible: New International Version.

Copyright ©1973, 1978, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

Preface

The Advent Christian Catechism has been prepared as a statement of Advent Christian beliefs. It's designed as a resource for use in many ways including preparation for baptism and church membership, topical Bible study, and classes on doctrine.

Part One is arranged in the catechetical form of question and answer. It is planned for children and young people ages 10 – 17 in vocabulary and style. Part Two is a series of more comprehensive articles, which present young people and adults a guide to the study of great Bible doctrines.

The writers have attempted to arrange topics in order of logical progression and to provide scriptural authority for all statements. It is our desire and hope that this catechism will be useful in leading you to a better understanding of the Scripture and its teaching.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16, 17

Contents

Part One — Catechism	1
God Our Heavenly Father	3
God's Son Our Savior Jesus Christ	5
God's Holy Spirit Our Helper	7
The Scriptures	9
Creation and Providence	11
Man	13
Man's Fall and Sin	15
Redemption and The Savior	17
The Coming of The Holy Spirit	21
The Christian Life and Growth	25
The Gospel	29
Prayer	31
Christian Stewardship	33
The Church	35
The Sacraments	37
Conditional Immortality or Life Only in Christ	41
Death and Resurrection	43
The Second Coming of Christ	45
The New Earth	47
Part Two — Discussion	49
God Our Heavenly Father	51
God's Son Our Savior Jesus Christ	52
God's Holy Spirit Our Helper	53
The Scriptures	54
Creation and Providence	56
Man	57
Redemption and The Savior	58
The Christian Life	60
The Gospel	62
Prayer	63
Christian Stewardship	64
The Church	65
The Sacraments	67
Conditional Immortality or Life Only in Christ	69
Death and Resurrection	70
The Second Coming	71
The Declaration of Principles	73

Part One
Catechism

God Our Heavenly Father

1. Who made us?

God made us.

It is he who made us, and we are his. Psalm 100:3

2. Who is God?

God is our heavenly Father.

This is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven." Matthew 6:9

3. What kind of a father is God?

God is a good and loving Father.

God is love. 1 John 4:16

4. Can we see God?

No, but God always sees us.

No one has ever seen God. John 1:18

The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good. Proverbs 15:3

5. Why can we not see God?

Because God is holy, and sinful humanity cannot see God and live.

You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live. Exodus 33:20b

Without holiness no one will see the Lord. Hebrews 12:14b

6. Where is God?

God is in heaven, but by his Spirit he is everywhere.

Do not I fill heaven and earth? declares the Lord. Jeremiah 23:24

Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool ... Isaiah 66:1

7. What does God know?

God knows all things.

Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Hebrews 4:13

Continued on next page

8. What does God know about us?

God knows everything we think, say or do.

O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. Psalm 139:1

For the Lord searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. 1 Chronicles 28:9b

9. What can God do?

God can do all that he wishes to do.

With God all things are possible. Matthew 19:26

God's Son Our Savior Jesus Christ

1. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Matthew 16:16

This is my Son, whom I love. Matthew 17:5

2. Why did Jesus come into the world?

He came into the world to save sinners and place them in a right relationship with God.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Timothy 1:15b

3. How should we think of Jesus?

We should think of Jesus as our Savior and Lord.

**Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you ...
Luke 2:11**

You are to give him the name of Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21b

4. How did the Lord Jesus become our Savior?

He became our Savior by entering into human life, by living in perfect obedience to the Father's will, and by dying for us upon the cross.

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross! Philippians 2:8

5. What should we do about the Lord Jesus?

We should repent of our sin, confess him as our Savior, love him and keep his commandments.

**That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
Romans 10:9**

Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love. John 15:9–10

God's Holy Spirit Our Helper

1. What is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit (also called the Holy Ghost) is the Spirit of God.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Ephesians 4:30.

2. What does the Holy Spirit do for us?

The Holy Spirit helps us to become Christians, enables us to live the Christian life, and gives us spiritual gifts so we can serve God.

The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. John 6:63

**Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.
Galatians 5:25**

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:7

3. How does the Holy Spirit help us to become Christians?

The Holy Spirit (a) makes us sorry for our sin; (b) urges us to accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord; and (c) helps us to understand and remember what the Lord Jesus has taught.

(a) When he (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment. John 16:8

(b) And the Spirit (says) ... Come. Revelation 22:17

(c) But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:26.

The Scriptures

1. What book tells us about God?

The Bible tells us about God.

All Scripture is God-breathed ... 2 Timothy 3:16a

2. Who wrote the Bible?

The Bible was written by men. God, working through the Holy Spirit, used their writing to communicate his truth to us.

But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21

3. Why was the Bible written?

The Bible was written to tell us the good news of salvation.

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:31

4. What does the Bible teach us?

The Bible teaches us (a) how God wishes us to live in this world; (b) what God is planning for the world to come, and (c) how we may be sure of a place in the world to come.

(a) To teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Deuteronomy 8:3

(b) But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13

(c) So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. 2 Peter 3:14

5. Do we need to use the Bible for our everyday lives?

Yes, because:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Creation and Providence

1. What besides the Bible teaches us about God?

All God's works teach us about him.

The heavens declare the glory of God. Psalm 19:1

How many are your works, Oh Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. Psalm 104:24; Also Job 12:7-9

2. What are God's works?

The world and everything in it: the sun, moon and stars.

You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you. Nehemiah 9:6

3. What do these wonderful works tell us about God?

They tell us of his wisdom, his power and his love.

He made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding. Jeremiah 51:15

Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. You show love to thousands. Jeremiah 32:17-18

4. What does God do for everything that he has made?

God watches over all his works and provides for the wants of every living thing.

You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. Psalm 145:16

5. What does God do for us?

God takes care of us and gives us all the good things of life.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing. Psalm 23:1

No good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. Psalm 84:11

Man

1. Who were the first man and the first woman?

Adam was the first man and Eve was the first woman.

The first man Adam was a living being. 1 Corinthians 15:45

Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living. Genesis 3:20

2. In what way did God make people different from the animals?

God made people in his own image, so that they can think and feel and choose between right and wrong.

So God created man in his own image. Genesis 1:27

As (a man) thinketh in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7

For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. Matthew 12:34–35

Then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve. Joshua 24:15

3. What kind of persons were Adam and Eve when God made them?

God made Adam and Eve (a) without sin, and (b) with the privilege of living forever if they did not sin.

(a) So God created man in his own image ... God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. Genesis 1:27, 31

(b) And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever. Genesis 3:22, 24

4. Where did God place Adam and Eve?

God placed Adam and Eve in a beautiful garden in Eden.

Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. Genesis 2:8

Continued on next page

5. Why did God make people?

God made people to love and serve him and to be happy with him forever.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind. Luke 10:27

Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Revelation 21:3-4

Man's Fall and Sin

1. What did God say to Adam and Eve when he placed them in the Garden of Eden?

God told Adam and Eve that they might eat of every tree in the garden except one.

The Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

Genesis 2:16-17

2. Did Adam and Eve obey God?

No, they ate the fruit God told them not to eat.

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Genesis 3:6

3. What happened to Adam and Eve when they disobeyed God?

(a) They were afraid of God; (b) they were no longer without sin; and (c) they lost the privilege of living forever.

(a) **He (Adam) answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." Genesis 3:10**

(b) **To Adam he (God) said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' Cursed is the ground because of you, ..." Genesis 3:17**

(c) **And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. Genesis 3:22, 24**

4. What name is given in the Bible to Adam's disobedience?

It is called sin.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. Romans 5:12

Continued on next page

5. What is sin?

Sin is disobeying God, or not being and doing what God wants. Sin breaks our relationship with God.

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. 1 John 3:4

Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins. James 4:17

6. How were Adam and Eve punished for their sin?

(a) They were driven out of the Garden of Eden; (b) denied the right to the tree of life; and (c) had to suffer pain, sorrow and death.

(a) So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. Genesis 3:23–24

(b) By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return. Genesis 3:19

7. What evil did Adam's sin bring upon all of us?

We are all born sinful.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? Jeremiah 17:9

8. What will happen if we love sin and allow it to remain in our lives?

If we love sin we cannot be the friends of God, nor live with him in his everlasting kingdom.

Your sins have hidden his face from you. Isaiah 59:2

... those who live like this (loving sin) will not inherit the kingdom of God. Galatians 5:21

Redemption and the Savior

1. What has God done to save us from sin?

God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to save us from sin.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6

2. How did Jesus Christ, God's Son, come into the world?

Jesus Christ came into the world by being born of the Virgin Mary.

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" — which means, "God with us."

Matthew 1:22-23

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11

3. How was Jesus Christ different from us?

Jesus Christ was absolutely without sin.

... but we have one (Christ) who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Hebrews 4:15

He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

1 Peter 2:22

4. What do we know of the early life of Jesus?

As a child, Jesus lived with his parents, whom he loved and obeyed.

Then he went down to Nazareth with them (Mary and Joseph) and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. Luke 2:51-52

Continued on next page

5. How old was Jesus when He was baptized and started preaching?

He was about thirty years old.

Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. Luke 3:23

6. How did Jesus spend the remaining three years of his life on earth?

Jesus spent the last three years of his life doing good, healing the sick and teaching people about God.

... how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. Acts 10:38

He (Nicodemus) came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God.” John 3:2

7. Whom did Jesus claim to be?

Jesus said that he was the Son of God.

I am God’s Son. John 10:36

8. How did Jesus show that he was the Son of God?

Jesus showed that he was the Son of God by his godly life, his heavenly teaching and his wonderful works.

Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. ... Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. John 14:9–11

9. What were these miracles?

... The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Luke 7:22

He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him. Luke 8:25

10. What did Jesus do to save us from our sins?

Jesus obeyed God's law perfectly and died for us.

Christ suffered for you ... He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth ... He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree. 1 Peter 2: 21–22, 24

11. What would have happened to us if Jesus had not died for us?

If Jesus had not died for us, we would all be lost.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

12. What is it to be lost?

To be lost is to be without Christ in this world, and to be destroyed forever in the fires of the last day when Jesus comes again.

Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ ... without hope and without God in the world. Ephesians 2:12

This (destruction) will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction.

2 Thessalonians 1:7–9

13. How did Jesus die for us?

Jesus was nailed on the cross by wicked men.

You, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. Acts 2:23

14. What was done with the body of Jesus after his death on the cross?

The body of Jesus was taken by his friends and laid in a tomb or grave.

Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock.

Matthew 27:59–60

Continued on next page

15. What happened on the third day after Jesus died and was buried?

On the third day Jesus rose from the dead.

That he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:4

Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Luke 24:5–6

16. How long did Jesus remain on earth after he rose from the dead?

Jesus remained on earth forty days after his resurrection.

He appeared to them over a period of forty days. Acts 1:3

17. What did Jesus do during the forty days after his resurrection?

He came to his disciples at different times to comfort and teach them.

After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive ... and spoke about the kingdom of God. Acts 1:3

18. What happened at the end of forty days?

After forty days Jesus ascended into heaven.

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. Acts 1:9

19. What is Jesus now doing for us in heaven?

He intercedes for us, and he rules over all things for our good.

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church. Ephesians 1:22

Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Hebrews 7:25

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

1. **What promise did Jesus make to his disciples when he was going away?**

Jesus promised to send them another Counselor or Helper, who would be with them forever.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. John 14:16

2. **What name did Jesus give to this promised Counselor?**

Jesus called the promised Counselor the Holy Spirit.

The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name. John 14:26

3. **What did Jesus tell his disciples the Holy Spirit would do for them?**

Jesus said the Holy Spirit would help them to remember and to understand what he had taught them.

Jesus said the Holy Spirit would help them to remember and to understand what he had taught them. John 14:26

But when he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. John 16:13

4. **When did the Holy Spirit come?**

The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, ten days after Jesus went to heaven.

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place ... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:1, 4

5. **What did the Holy Spirit do on the day of Pentecost?**

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled the disciples with power and caused three thousand to accept Christ as Savior.

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart ... Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. Acts 2:37, 41

Continued on next page

6. Do we have the Holy Spirit now?

Yes, if we have accepted Christ as Savior and Lord.

**Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts.
Galatians 4:6**

7. What does the Holy Spirit do for us?

The Holy Spirit lives in us, and as we yield to his leading, cleanses us from sin, and helps us to live as God would have us.

**Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.
1 Corinthians 6:19**

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. 1 Peter 1:22

8. What is the source of all our good thoughts and desires?

The Holy Spirit puts good thoughts and desires into our hearts.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23

9. In what other ways is the Holy Spirit our helper?

The Holy Spirit helps us in our study of the Bible and in prayer.

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. Ephesians 6:17-18

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. Romans 8:26

10. What warning is given us in the Bible concerning the Holy Spirit?

The Bible tells us neither to grieve nor quench the Holy Spirit.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Ephesians 4:30

Do not put out the Spirit's fire. 1 Thessalonians 5:19

11. How may we grieve God's Holy Spirit?

All sinful thoughts, words or actions grieve the Holy Spirit.

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. Romans 8:5, 8

12. How may we please God's Holy Spirit?

We please God's Holy Spirit when we surrender to God and do his will, when we demonstrate kindness and compassion for others.

Submit yourselves, then, to God. James 4:7

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

The Christian Life and Growth

1. Can boys and girls be Christians?

Yes, Jesus said they could.

Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Mark 10:14

2. Who is a Christian?

A Christian is one who accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and determines to live for him.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Matthew 16:24

3. What is our aim as Christians?

God wants us to become mature followers of Jesus Christ who are able to apply our Christian faith to daily living.

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18

... until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13

4. Why should we form the habit of regular Bible study?

We should form the habit of regular and systematic Bible study because God's book tells us what to believe and what to do.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

5. Why should we be regular in our prayer life?

We should be regular in our prayer life because prayer brings us closer to God and gives daily strength and guidance.

Continued on next page

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7

6. Why should we be active in Christian service?

We should be active in Christian service because this keeps us close to God, helps us to walk with Jesus day by day, and teaches us to depend upon him for strength.

For we are God's fellow workers. 1 Corinthians 3:9

**I can do everything through him who gives me strength.
Philippians 4:13**

7. Why should we attend church services regularly?

We should attend church services regularly for worship, for instruction, for fellowship and as an example to others.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another. Hebrews 10:25

8. Why should we attend Sunday school?

We should attend and bring others, for the Sunday school teaches the Bible and trains us for Christian service.

**Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
2 Timothy 3:14-15**

9. Why should we dedicate our bodies, minds and hearts to God?

We should dedicate them to God in order to find and to do God's will.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind. Luke 10:27

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — which is your spiritual worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you

will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1-2

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

10. What should be our ideal in all things?

We should try to be like Jesus in character and conduct.

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

The Gospel

1. What is meant by the gospel?

The gospel is the good news that Jesus died for our sins, was buried and rose again.

I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you ... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:1, 3-4

2. What command did Jesus give about the gospel before he left the world?

Jesus told his followers to make disciples of all people by baptizing them and teaching them to obey what he has commanded.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28:19-20

3. Has this command of Jesus been completely fulfilled as yet?

No, for Jesus has not returned, and there are still many people in the world who have never heard of him.

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24:14

4. What part should we take in giving the gospel to people who have never heard of the Savior?

If we cannot go ourselves to tell them about Jesus, we should pray for them, and give of our money to send Bibles and missionaries to them.

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? Romans 10:14-15

Continued on next page

5. Are all the unsaved people across the seas?

No, there are people all around us who have not accepted Christ as Lord and Savior. It is our responsibility to win them for Christ.

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors. 2 Corinthians 5:20

You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit (saved people) — fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. John 15:16

Prayer

1. What is prayer?

Prayer is talking with God.

O Lord ... I would speak with you. Jeremiah 12:1

2. What do we pray about?

We pray about everything we want to talk over with God.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Philippians 4:6

3. To whom should we pray?

We should pray to God, our heavenly Father.

When you pray ... pray to your Father. Matthew 6:6

4. In whose name do we ask God to hear and answer our prayers?

We ask God to hear and answer our prayers only in the name of Jesus Christ, his Son.

I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. John 16:23

5. What help are we promised in prayer?

We are promised the help of the Holy Spirit.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. Romans 8:26

6. For whom should we pray besides ourselves?

God's Word teaches us that we should pray for all people, even our enemies.

I urge ... that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

1 Timothy 2:1-2

Continued on next page

But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. Matthew 5:44

7. What form has Jesus given to guide us in prayer?

Jesus has given us the following form commonly called the Lord's Prayer.

This is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. Matthew 6:9-13

Christian Stewardship

1. According to the Bible, who owns the earth?

God does, since he made the earth and all that is in it.

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1

2. Does this include our personal possessions?

The silver is mine and the gold is mine, declares the Lord Almighty. Haggai 2:8

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. Acts 4:32

3. Does God hold us accountable for the proper use of our wealth, time, abilities?

So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. Romans 14:12

4. Is God's promise to supply all our needs a conditional promise?

Yes, God has not promised to honor a life that will not honor him.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

5. What does God promise to those who are generous?

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." Malachi 3:10

6. What is money for?

To provide for personal and family needs, to help others, to support the government and the church, to spread the gospel.

... work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Ephesians 4:28

2 Thessalonians 3:12; Matthew 22:21; Matthew 10:10

Continued on next page

7. When we give to the church, is everyone supposed to give the same or equal amounts?

The gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have. 2 Corinthians 8:12

On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income ... 1 Corinthians 16:2

The Church

1. What name is given to the household or family of God?

God's family is called the Church.

**The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
Acts 2:47**

2. Who are members of the Church?

Those who have repented of their sins, believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and are willing to do what he teaches.

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12

If you love me, you will obey what I command. John 14:15

3. For what purpose does the Church exist?

The church provides for worship of God, fellowship among Christians, spiritual growth of Christians through the study of Christ's teachings, and evangelism of lost men, women, boys and girls.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:19-20

Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Mark 16:15

4. Why should we be members of the Church?

We should be members of the Church because Jesus founded the Church to carry on his work, and because we belong to him and therefore the work is ours to do.

Continued on next page

On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. Matthew 16:18

**Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.
Mark 16:15**

**You are not your own; you were bought with a price.
1 Corinthians 6:19–20**

5. How should we support the Church?

We should support the Church by regular attendance at the meetings of the Church, by systematic giving of our money beginning with the tithe, and by urging others to give themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Church.

Let us not give up meeting together. Hebrews 10:25

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, says the Lord. Malachi 3:10

You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last. John 15:16

The Sacraments

1. **What two ordinances or sacraments did the Lord Jesus give his disciples?**

The two ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

**Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them.
Matthew 28:19**

**Do this, in remembrance of me. For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
1 Corinthians 11:25-26**

2. **What is baptism?**

Baptism is an immersion in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Jesus ... was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. Mark 1:9-10

Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19

3. **Why does our Church baptize by immersion instead of sprinkling or pouring as some other churches do?**

We baptize by immersion because the New Testament teaches us that immersion was the way in which Jesus himself and all his followers were baptized.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. Matthew 3:16

And he ordered the chariot to stop. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. Acts 8:38

4. **What does baptism by immersion symbolize?**

Baptism by immersion symbolizes our death to sin and cleansing from sin as we are buried in the water, and our resurrection to the new life of righteousness with our Lord Jesus Christ as we are raised up again from the water.

Continued on next page

Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Romans 6:3-4

5. Who should be baptized?

All who have truly repented of their sins, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and are willing to do what he teaches.

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38

6. What kind of life should all live who have been baptized?

They should live a life of uprightness, purity and obedience to the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. Colossians 3:2-3

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Romans 6:11

7. What is the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper is the supper given by the Lord Jesus on the night of his betrayal. It is to be observed in memory of him.

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." 1 Corinthians 11:23-24

8. For what purpose did the Lord Jesus give us this supper?

He gave us this supper to picture his love and death for us and to be a pledge of his coming again.

Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

This is my body, which is for you. 1 Corinthians 11:24

This is my blood, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Matthew 26:28

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Corinthians 11:26

9. Why do we call it the Lord's Supper?

Because the Lord himself gave us this Supper, and commanded his disciples to eat the bread and drink the cup in remembrance of him.

The Lord Jesus took bread ... also he took the cup ... saying ... this do ... in remembrance of me. 1 Corinthians 11:23, 25

10. What does the Lord's Supper symbolize?

It symbolizes our union with the Lord Jesus Christ and our fellowship with each other.

Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

11. What are baptism and the Lord's Supper called?

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are called sacraments or ordinances.

Sacrament — by definition, a holy symbol.

Ordinance — by definition, a rule, law, or commandment to be followed.

12. Are there any sacraments besides baptism and the Lord's Supper?

No, Jesus gave only these two.

Conditional Immortality or Life Only in Christ

1. What is “immortality?”

Immortality, by definition, means life that never ends.

2. Does any man have immortality now?

No, only God has immortality.

The King of kings, and Lord of lords; who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light. 1 Timothy 6:15–16

3. May human beings ever receive immortality?

Yes, God is willing to give it to us.

The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

4. Do “immortality” and “eternal life” mean the same thing?

Yes, they mean the same thing when they describe God’s gift of unending life to Christians at Christ’s return.

God will give to each person according to what he has done. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. Romans 2:6–7

5. What must we do to receive the gift of eternal life?

We must believe in Jesus Christ to receive eternal life.

So must the Son of man be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. John 3:14–15

6. When will God give us immortality?

God will give us immortality when Christ returns and the dead are raised.

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 1 Thessalonians 4:16

For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 1 Corinthians 15:52–53

Continued on next page

7. What will happen to the unbelievers at the judgment day?

Since they have not accepted God's gift of immortality through Christ, unbelievers will be completely destroyed in the judgment fires.

All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire. Not a root or a branch will be left to them. Malachi 4:1

... be as if they had never been. Obadiah 16

This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

Death and Resurrection

1. What happens to a person at death?

The body returns to the dust of the earth, and the spirit returns to God.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Ecclesiastes 12:7

2. What is death?

Death is a “sleep” at the end of this life.

Give light to my eyes or I will sleep in death. Psalm 13:3

3. Is there any consciousness in death?

No, the dead do not know anything.

The dead know nothing. Ecclesiastes 9:5

4. Is death the end of a person?

No, there will be a resurrection of all people from the dead.

There will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. Acts 25:15

5. When will the dead be raised?

The dead will be raised when Christ comes back again.

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 1 Thessalonians 4:16

6. What will happen to the righteous at the resurrection?

They will be given pure and immortal bodies.

The dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 1 Corinthians 15:52–53

7. What will happen to the wicked?

They will be destroyed by fire.

Continued on next page

He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

The Second Coming of Christ

1. **What promise did Jesus give to his disciples before he went away?**

Jesus promised that he would come back again.

I will come back and take you to be with me. John 14:3

2. **How will Jesus come back to earth?**

He will come back in the clouds with angels and all people will see him.

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him. Matthew 25:31

Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him. Revelation 1:7a

This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven. Acts 1:11

3. **Do we know when Jesus will come back to earth?**

We do not know the exact time, but there are signs that it will be soon.

No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Matthew 24:36

Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. Matthew 24:33

4. **What will Jesus do when he comes back?**

Jesus will raise the dead, judge the world, punish sin and reward the righteous, and make the earth new.

A time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out. John 5:28-29

Christ Jesus ... will judge the living and the dead. 2 Timothy 4:1

This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8

Continued on next page

Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. Revelation 22:12

But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13

The New Earth

1. What happened to the perfect earth that God created?

Man's sin spoiled the perfect world God had made.

Cursed is the ground because of you ... it will produce thorns and thistles for you. Genesis 3:17-18

2. What is God going to do with this sinful earth?

God will cleanse it by fire and make it new after Jesus comes back.

The elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 2 Peter 3:10, 13

3. What has God planned for this new earth?

God will dwell with his people forever on the new earth, which will be free from sin and trouble.

God himself will be with them and be their God. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. Revelation 21:3, 4

4. What will this new earth be called?

It will be called the kingdom of God.

Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Luke 21:31

5. Who will live on this new earth?

Those who love God and keep his commandments.

Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Revelation 22:14

Part Two
Discussion

God Our Heavenly Father

The Scriptures, in speaking of God, use several different titles. He is Creator,¹ Father,² The Most High,³ Jehovah,⁴ Lord.⁵ His self-revelation through the Scriptures, though limited, is nevertheless extensive and adequate, reaching its highest point in his revelation of himself in the person of his Son.⁶

As to his nature — God is Spirit,⁷ invisible,⁸ personal,⁹ a being who comes and goes,¹⁰ converses with people,¹¹ enters into their experiences,¹² sustains them in their adversities,¹³ desires their trust,¹⁴ love,¹⁵ worship¹⁶ and obedience.¹⁷ He is immutable,¹⁸ infinite,¹⁹ perfect and without limitation in his being,²⁰ virtues²¹ and motives of action.²² He is independent in his thoughts,²³ his will,²⁴ his power²⁵ and his counsel.²⁶ He transcends all space,²⁷ is immanent in his entire creation,²⁸ yet is in no way bounded by it.²⁹

As to his attributes — he is infinite and perfect in all: in knowledge,³⁰ for he knows all things as they are, since all things are present to him; in wisdom,³¹ for he makes all things subservient to his eternal purposes; in holiness,³² for in him alone exists the perfection of moral excellence; in righteousness,³³ for he extends grace and mercy to people under judgment of condemnation; and in power,³⁴ for he is sovereign over the universe of his creation.

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Ecclesiastes 12:1 | 13. 2 Corinthians 1:8–14 | 25. Psalm 115:3 |
| 2. Ephesians 4:6 | 14. 2 Corinthians 1:9 | 26. Psalm 33:11 |
| 3. Deuteronomy 32:8 | 15. Luke 10:27 | 27. 1 Kings 8:27 |
| 4. Exodus 6:3 | 16. Matthew 4:10 | 28. Psalm 139:8 |
| 5. Deuteronomy 3:24 | 17. Matthew 7:21 | 29. Acts 17:25–27 |
| 6. John 14:9 | 18. Malachi 3:6 | 30. Hebrews 4:13 |
| 7. John 4:24 | 19. Ecclesiastes 3:14 | 31. Ephesians 1:11 |
| 8. Colossians 1:15 | 20. Job 11:7 | 32. Exodus 15:11 |
| 9. Romans 11:33–34 | 21. Isaiah 40:25 | 33. Psalm 145:17 |
| 10. Deuteronomy 20:4 | 22. Hebrews 1:3 | 34. Revelation 19:6 |
| 11. Numbers 12:8 | 23. Romans 11:33 | |
| 12. 1 John 1:3 | 24. Ephesians 1:11 | |

God's Son Our Savior Jesus Christ

The Bible describes the nature and work of Jesus Christ. As to nature — Christ is the incarnate Son of God.¹ He has a special closeness to his Father,² has authority to forgive sins³ and to answer prayer,⁴ and is the sole judge of mankind.⁵ He is able to give life to his church,⁶ over which he has supreme authority⁷ and by which he is worshipped.⁸ He has all wisdom⁹ and all power,¹⁰ and is always with his disciples.¹¹

Jesus Christ is also the Son of Man by nature. He was born of woman,¹² matured,¹³ and shared the common human experiences such as hunger,¹⁴ thirst,¹⁵ weariness,¹⁶ temptation,¹⁷ sorrow¹⁸ and death.¹⁹ As man, Jesus is unique in his virgin birth,²⁰ sinlessness,²¹ total obedience to the Father,²² resurrection²³ and ascension.²⁴

As to work — Jesus Christ ministers as prophet, priest and king. As the predicted prophet,²⁵ he revealed God,²⁶ delivered God's message²⁷ and predicted the future.²⁸ As priest, Jesus offered himself a sacrifice for sins,²⁹ sent the Holy Spirit³⁰ and intercedes for his people.³¹ As king, Jesus reigns now over the church and its members.³² He will fully overcome all enemies and reign over the world³³ as "king of kings."³⁴ His kingdom will be everlasting.³⁵

1. 1 John 4:2

2. John 10:30

3. Matthew 9:6

4. John 14:14

5. John 5:22, 27

6. John 5:24–29

7. Colossians 1:18

8. Matthew 28:9

9. Colossians 2:2–3

10. Matthew 28:18

11. Matthew 28:20

12. Luke 2:7

13. Luke 2:52

14. Matthew 4:2

15. John 4:7

16. John 4:6

17. Hebrews 2:18

18. Mark 14:34

19. Mark 15:37

20. Matthew 1:23

21. 1 John 3:5

22. John 8:28–29

23. Matthew 28:6

24. Acts 1:9

25. Deuteronomy 18:15

26. John 14:9

27. John 14:24

28. Matthew 24;
Luke 19:41ff

29. Hebrews 9:26

30. John 16:7

31. Romans 8:34

32. Colossians 1:18;
Ephesians 1:22

33. 1 Corinthians 15:25

34. Revelation 17:14

35. 2 Peter 1:11

God's Holy Spirit Our Helper

The nature and work of the Holy Spirit concerns the manifestation of God at work in and for his creation. Known partially in the Old Testament as directing holy men¹ and prophets,² the Holy Spirit becomes fully known in the New Testament with the out-pouring on the day of Pentecost.³ As to nature — Advent Christians have varied shadings of understanding as to what the Bible teaches, but all concur in the biblical revelation of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God,⁴ the believer's Advocate,⁵ the promised Counselor,⁶ sent by and proceeding from the Father,⁷ in the name and for the sake of the ongoing ministry of the Son.⁸

As to work — the office of the Holy Spirit is three-fold: being a ministry in the world,⁹ the church¹⁰ and the life of believers.¹¹ In the world, the Holy Spirit convicts of sin,¹² righteousness,¹³ and judgment,¹⁴ moving upon individuals,¹⁵ and nations¹⁶ alike. In the church, the Holy Spirit empowers,¹⁷ administers,¹⁸ directs,¹⁹ restrains²⁰ and revives²¹ — bringing renewal of life whenever the church is penitent,²² humble²³ and expectantly seeking and believing.²⁴ In the life of the believer, the Holy Spirit gives assurance of salvation,²⁵ abides,²⁶ guides,²⁷ teaches,²⁸ comforts,²⁹ sanctifies,³⁰ reproves³¹ and empowers³² — both for service³³ and for witness.³⁴

Nothing brings us any closer to the deep things of God, nor to the practical and victorious aspects of the Christian life. Therefore, we are exhorted to make complete surrender,³⁵ being warned neither to quench³⁶ nor grieve³⁷ the Holy Spirit.

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Exodus 31:3ff | 14. John 16:8, 11 | 26. John 14:16 |
| 2. Amos 3:7 | 15. Revelation 22:17 | 27. John 16:13 |
| 3. Acts 2 | 16. Habakkuk 1:5–11 | 28. John 14:26 |
| 4. Romans 8:14 | 17. Acts 1:8; Acts 2 | 29. John 14:16, 18 |
| 5. Romans 8:26–27 | 18. 1 Corinthians 12:11 | 30. 2 Thessalonians 2:13 |
| 6. John 16:7 | 19. Acts 13:2 | 31. Revelation 3:19 |
| 7. John 14:16; 15:26 | 20. Acts 16:6–7 | 32. Acts 1:8 |
| 8. John 14:26; 16:7ff | 21. Habakkuk 3:2 | 33. 1 Corinthians 12:7 |
| 9. John 16:8 | 22. Revelation 2:5 | 34. Acts 4:31 |
| 10. Acts 1:8 | 23. 2 Chronicles 7:14 | 35. Romans 12:1 |
| 11. Galatians 5:16, 25 | 24. Luke 11:9; | 36. 1 Thessalonians 5:19 |
| 12. John 16:8–9 | Matthew 21:22 | 37. Ephesians 4:30 |
| 13. John 16:8, 10 | 25. Romans 8:16 | |

The Scriptures

The Scripture, or the Word of God, known also as the Bible, is the history of God's relationship with mankind;¹ his revelation to man of the whole complex of redemption truths² in progressive historical development. It consists of two distinct parts — the Old Testament of thirty-nine books, historical, devotional, prophetic; and the New Testament of twenty-seven books, evangelical, apostolic, revelatory — but it is, at the same time, a complete organic unity, the bond of its perfectness being Christ and his kingdom.³ It is cosmic in scope, but it lays greatest emphasis upon the Holy Land as the sphere of sacred history.

As to authorship — diversification and individuality mark the style of its forty or more writers, over a time expanse of more than sixteen centuries, under widely differing circumstances; but always the Holy Spirit acted in power upon prophet,⁴ law-giver,⁵ psalmist,⁶ apostle⁷ or teacher,⁸ directing,⁹ shaping life in preparation,¹⁰ illuminating the mind,¹¹ prompting the writing,¹² excluding the influence of sin and error,¹³ and guiding in the choice of word and expression of thought.¹⁴

As to reliability — the Scripture claims divine authority,¹⁵ a contention which is verified by the corroboration of secular history, the witness of human experience and the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit. The Bible does not claim to reveal all truth, but is in harmony with all truth.¹⁶ Though not primarily science, it is nevertheless harmonious with true science.¹⁷ It is not the exclusive revelation of God,¹⁸ but presents God's highest revelation of himself in the person of Jesus Christ.¹⁹

1. Hebrews 1:1
2. John 5:39
3. Luke 24:27
4. Ezekiel 27:1
5. Leviticus 6:1
6. Psalm 46:10
7. Acts 1:8

8. 1 Corinthians 2:13
9. Revelation 1:1
10. Galatians 1:16–17
11. Acts 10:9–16
12. Jeremiah 30:2
13. 2 Peter 1:20
14. 2 Peter 1:21

15. 2 Timothy 3:16
16. 1 John 5:6
17. 1 Timothy 6:20
18. Romans 1:20
19. John 14:9

As to purpose — the Scripture was written to show people the way of escape from sin,²⁰ the means of righteous living,²¹ and the hope of eternal life in Christ.²² It continues to be, as in past ages, the normative authority of the Church²³ and the infallible rule of faith and practice for mankind.²⁴

20. 1 John 1:7

22. John 20:31

24. 2 Peter 1:10

21. John 14:6

23. James 1:22

Creation and Providence

The terms “creation” and “providence” describe God’s relationship to all that exists. Creation is the voluntary act of God,¹ by which, in the beginning,² without use of pre-existing materials,³ he called into being⁴ all things⁵ — visible and invisible,⁶ — shaped them as he wished,⁷ and pronounced them good.⁸

Providence is God’s preserving and directing activity towards his creation, including the following elements: upholding⁹ and maintaining in existence all things — animate¹⁰ and inanimate,¹¹ governing all creation through “laws of nature”¹² and free acts of people¹³ and special acts called “miracles”¹⁴ overruling the evil acts of people according to his will,¹⁵ working within¹⁶ and for believers to their good,¹⁷ directing all history according to prophetic plan¹⁸ to glorious fulfillment in the eternal kingdom of God.¹⁹

Creation and providence reveal God’s holiness,²⁰ power,²¹ wisdom²² and love,²³ chief purpose being the glory of God.²⁴

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Revelation 4:11 | 9. Hebrews 1:3 | 18. Daniel 4:34–35 |
| 2. Genesis 1:1 | 10. Acts 17:28 | 19. Daniel 2:44 |
| 3. Hebrews 11:3;
Genesis 1:1 | 11. Matthew 5:45 | 20. Psalm 145:17 |
| 4. As in Genesis 1:3 | 12. Genesis 8:22 | 21. Romans 1:19–20 |
| 5. Nehemiah 9:6 | 13. Proverbs 16:9 | 22. Psalm 104:24, 27 |
| 6. Colossians 1:16 | 14. Exodus 14:21–22 | 23. Jeremiah 9:24 |
| 7. Genesis 2:7 | 15. Acts 2:22–24 | 24. Revelation 4:11 |
| 8. Genesis 1:31 | 16. Philippians 2:12–13 | |
| | 17. Romans 8:28 | |

Man

The Bible presents two orders of fact concerning man: facts concerning his **nature**, which show him to be mortal,¹ sinful² and morally accountable,³ and facts concerning his **destiny**, which show him to be salvable,⁴ and immortal,⁵ free⁶ to become an heir of salvation⁷ and inheritor of immortality⁸ as the recipient of God's grace.⁹

As to **nature** — man was created in the image of God with mental,¹⁰ moral¹¹ and spiritual capacity¹² for fellowship with the Father.¹³ By disobedience to God he fell from the state of uprightness in which he was created.¹⁴ In so sinning he became wholly mortal,¹⁵ involving himself and his posterity in all the evil consequences of sin,¹⁶ depravity¹⁷ and death¹⁸ — which death would be eternal without a Redeemer.¹⁹

As to **destiny** — man, even though fallen, is not beyond the love of God²⁰ who, desiring that all men should be saved,²¹ has provided a Savior for man's redemption²² that he might become the author of eternal salvation²³ to all who accept²⁴ and obey²⁵ him. Each individual faces two choices. He may continue in selfishness, depravity and sin, the final end of which is complete²⁶ and irretrievable loss of life²⁷ in the second death.²⁸ Or he may accept the salvation, so graciously offered in Christ,²⁹ inherit immortality at the resurrection,³⁰ and being a joint-heir with Christ,³¹ enjoy the fellowship and blessing of God for all eternity.³²

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Job 4:17 | 12. Mark 12:32–33 | 22. Romans 3:24 |
| 2. Romans 3:23 | 13. 1 John 1:3 | 23. Hebrews 5:9 |
| 3. Deuteronomy 30:19 | 14. Romans 5:12, 19 | 24. John 1:12 |
| 4. Luke 19:10 | 15. 1 Corinthians 15:21–22 | 25. Hebrews 5:9 |
| 5. John 3:16 | 16. Galatians 6:7–8 | 26. Malachi 4:1 |
| 6. Revelation 22:17 | 17. Jeremiah 17:9; | 27. 2 Thessalonians 1:8–9 |
| 7. Hebrews 1:14 | Romans 7:24 | 28. Revelation 21:8 |
| 8. Romans 2:7 | 18. Romans 6:21, 23 | 29. Romans 3:24 |
| 9. Ephesians 2:8 | 19. 1 Corinthians 15:17–18 | 30. John 6:40 |
| 10. Matthew 22:37 | 20. Romans 5:8 | 31. Romans 8:17 |
| 11. Luke 10:26–27 | 21. 2 Peter 3:9 | 32. Revelation 21:3 |

Redemption and the Savior

Redemption is the love of God in action in the person of his Son to deal directly with human sin,¹ this sin being two kinds: adamic or original sin² whereby, because of Adam's transgression, all are born with a sinful and depraved nature³ and therefore subject to the natural consequence thereof, which is death;⁴ and actual or personal sin⁵ whereby, because of acts committed in deliberate disobedience to the will of God,⁶ whether of commission⁷ or omission,⁸ all incur the divine wrath and condemnation for personal sin,⁹ becoming also subject, thereby, to its penalty, which is the second death or final and irretrievable extinction of being.¹⁰

To make possible man's redemption God works in the person of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ,¹¹ made in the likeness of sinful flesh,¹² that he might become both the sinner's substitute¹³ and the captain of his salvation.¹⁴

As our substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ became our vicarious sin-bearer,¹⁵ offering himself upon the cross as the perfect sacrifice,¹⁶ the spotless Lamb of God,¹⁷ that dying in our stead,¹⁸ the just for the unjust,¹⁹ he might become the propitiation for our sin²⁰ and so make possible not only the divine suspension of our penalty,²¹ but also our unmerited forgiveness²² and justification in God's sight.²³

As captain of our salvation, the Lord Jesus became our victorious life-giver,²⁴ battling directly with our two dread enemies, defeating sin by his sinless death²⁵ and death by his triumphant resurrection,²⁶ so delivering us from their stranglehold²⁷ and releasing within us a

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Romans 5:8 | 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; | 19. 1 Peter 3:18 |
| 2. Isaiah 43:27 | Revelation 21:8 | 20. 1 John 2:2 |
| 3. Psalm 51:5 | 11. John 3:16 | 21. Romans 5:9 |
| 4. Romans 5:12 | 12. Romans 8:3 | 22. Ephesians 1:7 |
| 5. Isaiah 53:6 | 13. Isaiah 53:5-6 | 23. Romans 5:1 |
| 6. Isaiah 59:2 | 14. Hebrews 2:10 | 24. John 10:10-11; |
| 7. 1 John 3:4 | 15. 1 Peter 2:24 | 27-28 |
| 8. James 4:17 | 16. Hebrews 10:11-12 | 25. Colossians 2:14-15 |
| 9. Ephesians 5:6 | 17. 1 Peter 1:19 | 26. 1 Corinthians 15:20-22 |
| 10. Malachi 4:1; | 18. Hebrews 2:9 | 27. John 8:36 |

new Spirit of life²⁸ which makes possible, in addition to forgiveness and justification, our sanctification to holiness.²⁹

In redemption, therefore, God realizes in Christ, a four-fold purpose with respect to believers: their forgiveness,³⁰ deliverance,³¹ reconciliation³² and progressive growth in holiness,³³ all of which find their final consummation³⁴ in the resurrection³⁵ and eternal restoration to divine fellowship.³⁶

28. Romans 8:2

29. Romans 6:22–23

30. Colossians 1:14

31. Colossians 1:13

32. 2 Corinthians 5:18–19

33. Ephesians 4:13–16

34. Romans 8:18–19

35. John 6:39–40

36. Revelation 21:3–4

The Christian Life

In a most important and practical theme, the Bible presents the Christian life and describes its beginning, development and consummation. The Christian life is a high human privilege,¹ which involves being a child of God,² having eternal life³ and partaking of the divine nature.⁴ It is the life of one who accepts Jesus Christ as Savior and thus is united to him by faith⁵ so that Christ lives in the Christian by the Spirit⁶ and the believer is justified⁷ before God. This life of service to God⁸ is possible because of Jesus' death and resurrection,⁹ and is characterized by faith,¹⁰ hope,¹¹ love,¹² peace¹³ and joy.¹⁴

God calls sinners outwardly by the Word¹⁵ — usually by preaching¹⁶ — and inwardly by his Spirit.¹⁷ The Christian life begins when one responds to God's call by repentance¹⁸ and faith.¹⁹ With this response, there is a changed life which the Bible compares to adoption,²⁰ or to birth,²¹ into the family of God, and to re-creation²² for a righteous life.²³

Development, or growth, of the Christian life is both expected²⁴ and commanded²⁵ in Scripture. For this purpose, God has provided aids to Christian growth — some of which are baptism,²⁶ the Lord's Supper,²⁷ Christian fellowship,²⁸ Bible study²⁹ and prayer.³⁰ Growth is seen in faith,³¹ obedience³² and victory over sin.³³ The Holy Spirit indwells the believer providing various gifts,³⁴ producing Christian graces³⁵ and giving power.³⁶

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 1 John 3:1 | 13. John 14:27 | 25. 2 Peter 3:18 |
| 2. 1 John 3:2 | 14. 1 John 1:4 | 26. Acts 2:38 |
| 3. John 3:15 | 15. Isaiah 55:6-7 | 27. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 |
| 4. 2 Peter 1:4 | 16. 1 Corinthians 1:17 | 28. Hebrews 10:24-25 |
| 5. Galatians 2:20 | 17. John 16:8-11 | 29. 1 Peter 2:2 |
| 6. Romans 8:10-11 | 18. Acts 17:30 | 30. Luke 18:1 |
| 7. Romans 5:1 | 19. Romans 10:8-10 | 31. Galatians 3:11 |
| 8. Romans 12:1 | 20. Romans 8:15 | 32. John 15:14 |
| 9. Romans 4:25 | 21. John 1:12 - 13 | 33. 1 John 5:18 |
| 10. Hebrews 11:6 | 22. 2 Corinthians 5:17 | 34. 1 Corinthians 12:4 |
| 11. Colossians 1:27 | 23. Ephesians 2:10 | 35. Galatians 5:22-23 |
| 12. 1 Corinthians 13:13 | 24. 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 | 36. Acts 1:8 |

The consummation of the Christian life will occur at Christ's return when the Christian will be cleansed from all sin,³⁷ given a resurrection body,³⁸ and ushered into God's kingdom for eternal fellowship with him.³⁹

37. Revelation 21:5

38. 1 Corinthians 15:52–53

39. 1 Thessalonians 4:17

The Gospel

The gospel, defined briefly as the “good news,” is God’s message to the world of salvation,¹ anticipated in the Scriptures,² and realized in the person of Jesus Christ.³ As the heart and core of the Word,⁴ it becomes effective in human life when one believes its message⁵ and accepts its offer of forgiveness,⁶ reconciliation⁷ and life through his atoning death and resurrection.⁸

The gospel is entrusted to the Church,⁹ an organism instituted by Jesus¹⁰ and commissioned to proclaim the gospel as a witness to all nations in¹¹ preparation for his return¹² and the establishment of his everlasting kingdom.¹³ This responsibility is both individual and collective: individual with respect to all believers,¹⁴ and especially to those whom God calls to the ministry of preaching¹⁵ or teaching his gospel; collective in its witness to saving grace,¹⁶ spiritual fruit¹⁷ and Christian fellowship.¹⁸

Accompanied,¹⁹ sanctioned, directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the gospel becomes the most important means of grace,²⁰ mighty in its convicting power,²¹ sharp in its discernment of human motive.²² It bears promise of freedom through its revealed truth,²³ of hope that anchors life,²⁴ of power that sustains life beyond the control of sin,²⁵ and of immortality as the consummating gift of God.²⁶ To every one who hears and accepts its offer is given the obligation to obey its commands,²⁷ live by its precepts²⁸ defend its truths and proclaim it to the world.²⁹ Operative in a person’s life, it becomes the power of God for salvation.³⁰

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. 1 Corinthians 15:2 | 11. Matthew 28:19 | 21. Hebrews 4:12 |
| 2. Zechariah 9:9 | 12. Matthew 24:14, 27 | 22. Hebrews 4:12 |
| 3. Luke 2:30 | 13. Daniel 2:44 | 23. John 8:31, 32 |
| 4. John 5:39 | 14. Mark 16:15 | 24. Hebrews 6:19 |
| 5. John 20:31 | 15. 2 Timothy 4:2 | 25. James 1:21 |
| 6. Matthew 12:31 | 16. 1 Peter 5:12 | 26. Romans 2:6, 7 |
| 7. 2 Corinthians 5:19 | 17. John 15:8 | 27. James 1:22 |
| 8. Philippians 3:10 | 18. Philippians 1:5 | 28. Colossians 1:22, 23 |
| 9. Matthew 16:19 | 19. Ephesians 6:17 | 29. Mark 16:15 |
| 10. Matthew 16:18 | 20. 1 Corinthians 15:1, 2 | 30. Romans 1:16 |

Prayer

Prayer, or communion with God, is the conscious expression of man's fellowship with,¹ his worship of,² and his dependence upon³ God. It may follow varying forms of address, but falls into five major types: the prayer of adoration,⁴ expressing deep reverence and worship; the prayer of supplication,⁵ seeking response to personal need; the prayer of intercession⁶ appealing on behalf of another; the prayer of confession,⁷ seeking forgiveness; and the prayer of thanksgiving⁸ for divine mercies. True Christian prayer is always characterized by a sense of relationship with God in every aspect of life,⁹ and a certainty of dependence upon the advocacy of Jesus Christ as the sustainer of spiritual life.¹⁰

As to the conditions of prayer — Jesus taught, by parable,¹¹ by direct statement,¹² and by personal example,¹³ that faith is essential to effectual prayer,¹⁴ that humility¹⁵ and sincerity¹⁶ condition it, and that forgiveness of one's fellowmen is prerequisite to its acceptance.¹⁷ Prayer includes both the active aspect of petitioning¹⁸ and the passive aspect of waiting.¹⁹

As to the obligation of prayer — on God's part it carries promise of hearing and answering, when in conformity with his will,²⁰ on man's part there is admonition to pray constantly,²¹ boldly,²² expectantly,²³ and with perseverance,²⁴ but always in subservience to divine will and purpose.²⁵

As to the effectiveness of prayer — it makes the Bible effectual as a channel of blessing and life,²⁶ with meditation it becomes the very strength of worship and devotion;²⁷ empowered by the Holy Spirit prayer is a universal²⁸ and effectual²⁹ means of grace.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. 1 John 1-3 | 11. Luke 11:5-8 | 21. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 |
| 2. Psalm 50:23 | 12. Matthew 6:6, 7 | 22. Hebrews 4:16 |
| 3. Psalm 121:1, 2 | 13. John 17 | 23. Mark 11:24 |
| 4. John 17 | 14. Luke 22:42 | 24. Luke 11:1-13 |
| 5. Psalm 51 | 15. Luke 18:13 | 25. Luke 11:2 |
| 6. John 17 | 16. Luke 18:13 | 26. Psalm 119:18 |
| 7. Psalm 51 | 17. Luke 11:4 | 27. Psalm 119:10, 11 |
| 8. Daniel 2:20-23 | 18. Psalm 40:13 | 28. Matthew 7:7 |
| 9. John 17:21 | 19. Psalm 40:1 | 29. James 5:16 |
| 10. Ephesians 3:14-21 | 20. Luke 11:9-10 | |

Christian Stewardship

Inasmuch as God is creator of all things in heaven and on earth,¹ he exerts ownership over all things.² God created man to manage the earth for him.³ A manager of another's goods is oftentimes called a "steward" in the Bible.⁴ Thus, man is given a position of management, or stewardship, over all of life and life's resources for God's purposes. For the individual, this involves time, abilities, energies and money. The Christian should seek God's guidance to make the wisest use possible of all of these resources.

The right use of material possessions gives man a tangible way to express himself in service to others.⁵ Since the church is the body of Christ upon the earth,⁶ and since Jesus told us the first thing to seek is the kingdom of God and his righteousness,⁷ good stewardship maintains that man should dedicate a worthy portion of his time, abilities, spiritual gifts and money for the advancement of Christ's mission in the world through his church.⁸

Christian stewardship applies to the individual's personal relationship with Christ⁹ as well as his relationship with his family,¹⁰ with his neighbor and with his fellow members in the church. This involves responsibility¹¹ in each of these areas, as well as a privilege for service. The Bible teaches that man will be held accountable¹² before God for this stewardship.

1. Genesis 1:1-27

2. Psalm 24:1

3. Genesis 1:28

4. Genesis 43:19;
Matthew 20:8

5. Ephesians 4:28

6. Ephesians 4:12

7. Matthew 6:33

8. Malachi 3:10;
Hebrews 10:25
2 Timothy 2:2

9. Matthew 16:24

10. 1 Timothy 5:8

11. Luke 12:40-48

12. Luke 16:2;
Romans 14:12

The Church

Variouly symbolized as the temple of the Lord,¹ the family of God,² the body of Christ,³ and the fellowship of believers,⁴ the Church is a spiritual body,⁵ divinely instituted,⁶ of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head,⁷ and of which all who belong to him are members.⁸

As invisible⁹ and universal,¹⁰ it consists of the whole company of Christian disciples¹¹ of whatever nation, tongue or creed,¹² so long as they have truly accepted Christ as Lord and Savior,¹³ are united to him by a living and saving faith,¹⁴ have therefore been adopted into the family of God,¹⁵ and are indwelt by his Spirit,¹⁶ having their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life.¹⁷

As visible¹⁸ and restricted,¹⁹ it comprises any congregation or congregations of believers²⁰ who habitually meet together²¹ for fellowship,²² worship,²³ instruction,²⁴ and administration of the ordinances;²⁵ but as so used is never to be confused with the Church invisible, which is the only actual or true Church.

It is this Church invisible, the universal body of Christ, to which Christ, its ever-living Head, has committed the ministry of reconciliation²⁶ the administration of the ordinances,²⁷ the edification of the saints,²⁸ the care of the flock,²⁹ the preaching of the gospel,³⁰ the salvation of the lost,³¹ and the evangelization of the world.³²

Continued on next page

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Ephesians 2:21 | 13. Romans 10:9-10 | 24. Colossians 3:16 |
| 2. Ephesians 3:14-15 | 14. John 15:4 | 25. Acts 2:41; |
| 3. Ephesians 4:12 | 15. Romans 8:15 | 1 Corinthians 10:16 |
| 4. Galatians 2:9 | 16. Romans 8:9 | 26. 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 |
| 5. Romans 12:5 | 17. Revelation 21:27 | 27. Romans 6:3-6; |
| 6. Matthew 16:18 | 18. 1 Corinthians 4:17 | 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 |
| 7. Colossians 1:18 | 19. Romans 16:5, 17 | 28. Ephesians 4:12 |
| 8. 1 Corinthians 12:12 | 20. Acts 9:31; | 29. Acts 20:28 |
| 9. Hebrews 12:23 | Philemon 1:2 | 30. Mark 16:15 |
| 10. 1 Corinthians 12:13 | 21. Hebrews 10:25 | 31. Romans 10:13-15 |
| 11. Galatians 3:27-28 | 22. Acts 2:42 | 32. Matthew 28:19-20 |
| 12. Colossians 3:11 | 23. Ephesians 5:19 | |

This is the bride,³³ in behalf of which the Lord Jesus shed his precious blood,³⁴ for which he expects to return at the end of the age,³⁵ that he may claim it at the marriage supper,³⁶ and present it to himself a glorious Church,³⁷ having neither spot³⁸ nor blemish.³⁹

- 33. 2 Corinthians 11:2;
Revelation 21:2
- 34. Ephesians 5:25

- 35. John 14:3
- 36. Revelation 19:7-9
- 37. Ephesians 5:27

- 38. Ephesians 5:27
- 39. Ephesians 5:27

The Sacraments

The New Testament lays down two ordinances or sacraments, these being Baptism¹ and the Lord's Supper,² both of which are ordinances in that their observance is made incumbent upon the Church by direct command,³ and sacraments in that they are outward, visible symbols of inward, spiritual truths.⁴

Baptism is an immersion in water⁵ in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost,⁶ wherein the believer does publicly confess his faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;⁷ and whereby, in the symbolism of the rite, he signifies, primarily, his death to the old life of sin,⁸ the burial of his old self in baptism's watery grave,⁹ and the resurrection of his new self in Christ Jesus¹⁰ to live a life of obedience¹¹ and trust;¹² and, secondarily, the inner cleansing of his heart and life¹³ which was administered by the Lord at his conversion.¹⁴ Since baptism thus signifies the beginning or birth of his Christian life, its observance is intended only once.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial,¹⁵ in the symbolism of bread¹⁶ and cup,¹⁷ wherein those who partake proclaim the Lord's death until he comes;¹⁸ and whereby, in the receiving of emblems, which represent his broken body¹⁹ and shed blood,²⁰ they do sense their common fellowship,²¹ and do feed upon him by faith²² to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.²³ Since the Lord's Supper thus signifies the constant renewal of the believer's life, its observance is intended time and time again.²⁴ In Advent Christian practice this is normally once a month on the first Sunday.

Continued on next page

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Mark 16:16 | 8. Romans 6:2 | 17. 1 Corinthians 10:16a |
| 2. Matthew 26:26 | 9. Romans 6:4a | 18. 1 Corinthians 11:26 |
| 3. Matthew 28:19–20;
1 Corinthians 11:24 | 10. Romans 6:4b | 19. 1 Corinthians 11:24 |
| 4. Romans 6:1–6;
Mark 14:22–25 | 11. Romans 6:13 | 20. 1 Corinthians 11:25 |
| 5. Colossians 2:12 | 12. Romans 6:11 | 21. 1 Corinthians 10:17 |
| 6. Matthew 28:19 | 13. Acts 22:16 | 22. John 6:53–55 |
| 7. Acts 8:36–37 | 14. 1 John 1:7 | 23. John 6:56–58 |
| | 15. Luke 22:19b | 24. 1 Corinthians 11:26 |
| | 16. 1 Corinthians 10:16b | |

Both ordinances, therefore, are for believers only: baptism being reserved for those who have repented of their sins and accepted Christ as Savior;²⁵ and the Lord's Supper being reserved for those who, having accepted Christ as Savior, are obediently seeking to live for him.²⁶

25. Acts 8:37

26. 1 Corinthians 11:27-32

Conditional Immortality or Life Only in Christ

Scripture teaches that people do not naturally possess endless life,¹ but that God will give immortality to people² only upon the condition that they accept Christ.³

Although God created Adam with the possibility of living forever,⁴ mankind lost the right to immortality⁵ by his sin.⁶ People do not possess immortality now.⁷ They are by nature mortal,⁸ dependent upon God for continued existence,⁹ under the sentence of death,¹⁰ transitory like grass¹¹ or vapor,¹² and capable of being destroyed completely.¹³

Immortality is the possession of God alone.¹⁴ This endless, or eternal, life is made available to mankind by the death of Jesus Christ,¹⁵ as the free gift of God.¹⁶ Thus immortality will be given by God¹⁷ to any person who fulfills the condition of faith in Christ.¹⁸ This faith leads people to do God's will,¹⁹ to continue in well-doing,²⁰ and to serve God.²¹ Immortality will be given to believers at the resurrection of the dead,²² following which they shall spend eternity with God.²³

Those who live in unbelief will all stand before God in the final judgment,²⁴ and will be condemned to the second death.²⁵ In the fires of Gehenna,²⁶ the wicked will be burned up²⁷ and will totally perish,²⁸ being completely destroyed²⁹ as though they had never existed.³⁰ Then death itself shall be destroyed.³¹

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Job 4:7 | 12. James 4:14 | 23. Revelation 21:3 |
| 2. Romans 6:23 | 13. Matthew 10:28 | 24. 2 Corinthians 5:10 |
| 3. John 3:15 | 14. 1 Timothy 6:15-16 | 25. Revelation 21:8 |
| 4. Genesis 1:29; 2:9 | 15. John 3:14-15 | 26. Matthew 10:28 |
| 5. Romans 5:12 | 16. Romans 6:23 | 27. Malachi 4:1 |
| 6. Genesis 3:22-23 | 17. Romans 2:6-7 | 28. John 3:16 |
| 7. 1 Corinthians 15:52-53 | 18. John 3:16 | 29. Matthew 10:28 |
| 8. Job 4:17 | 19. 1 John 2:17 | 30. Obadiah 16b |
| 9. Acts 17:28a | 20. Romans 2:6-7 | 31. 1 Corinthians 15:26 |
| 10. Hebrews 9:27 | 21. James 2:17 | |
| 11. 1 Peter 1:24 | 22. 1 Corinthians 15:52-53 | |

Death and Resurrection

The Scriptures refer to three types of death: the spiritual death¹ of the unsaved during this life, the physical death of all at the end of this life,² and the second death³ or destruction of sinners at the final judgment. Here we deal with physical death and resurrection.

Death entered the world because of Adam's sin,⁴ and became a universal experience,⁵ coming upon all people as the wages of sin.⁶ When a person dies, his spirit returns to God⁷ and his body decomposes.⁸ Death is "sleep,"⁹ during which all people are unconscious and incapable either of thought¹⁰ or of action.¹¹ For the righteous, death is a rest from their labors.¹²

Physical death will continue until the return of Christ,¹³ following which there will be a resurrection of all people,¹⁴ the just and the unjust.¹⁵ The righteous will be raised to life eternal and the wicked to damnation.¹⁶ The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death itself.¹⁷

1. Ephesians 2:1

2. Genesis 5:5, 8, 11

3. Revelation 21:8

4. Genesis 2:17

5. Romans 5:12

6. Romans 6:23

7. Ecclesiastes 12:7

8. Job 19:26;

Genesis 3:19

9. Psalm 13:3

10. Psalm 146:4

11. Psalm 6:5; 115:17

12. Revelation 14:13

13. 1 Thessalonians 4:16

14. Acts 24:15

15. Acts 24:15

16. John 5:28–29

17. 1 Corinthians 15:26

The Second Coming

The Bible clearly teaches that Christ will return to this earth at an appointed time.¹ Prophets foretell it in Old Testament writings;² Jesus himself assures the disciples of its certainty;³ angels call attention to it at the ascension;⁴ the apostles speak of it frequently in their Epistles;⁵ John records his revelation of it, given to him by Jesus Christ, in the book of Revelation.⁶

As to manner — his coming will be personal,⁷ physical,⁸ visible to all the world,⁹ sudden,¹⁰ unexpected by most people,¹¹ accompanied by angels,¹² glorious in its majesty,¹³ wholly triumphant over all the forces of evil.¹⁴

As to purpose — his coming will be to terminate this age of world history;¹⁵ to bring to pass the resurrection of the dead;¹⁶ to summon all men to judgment,¹⁷ rewarding saints with immortality¹⁸ and punishing sinners with complete¹⁹ and eternal²⁰ destruction.

He will then reign over his immortal Church,²¹ in the City of the New Jerusalem,²² on a restored²³ and remade²⁴ earth, free from all sorrow and all evil,²⁵ with God dwelling in the city as source of light and life²⁶ throughout eternity.²⁷

As to the time of his return — the day and the hour are known to the Father alone,²⁸ but will be preceded by many unusual signs on the earth²⁹ and in the heavens,³⁰ and immediately before, by the “sign of the Son of Man in heaven.”³¹

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Acts 17:31 | 12. Matthew 25:31 | 23. Acts 3:21 |
| 2. Malachi 3:1 | 13. Matthew 24:30 | 24. Revelation 21:1 |
| 3. John 14:3 | 14. Revelation 19:11–16 | 25. Revelation 21:4 |
| 4. Acts 1:11 | 15. 2 Peter 3:10 | 26. Revelation 21:23 |
| 5. Titus 2:13 | 16. 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17 | 27. Revelation 22:5 |
| 6. Revelation 22:20 | 17. Revelation 22:12 | 28. Matthew 24:36 |
| 7. Acts 1:11 | 18. Romans 2:7 | 29. Luke 21:25 |
| 8. Hebrews 9:28 | 19. Romans 6:23 | 30. Luke 21:26 |
| 9. Revelation 1:7 | 20. 2 Thessalonians 1:9 | 31. Matthew 24:30 |
| 10. Mark 13:36 | 21. Daniel 7:14 | |
| 11. Matthew 24:38–39 | 22. Revelation 21:2–3 | |

The Declaration of Principles

I. We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, being in its entirety a revelation given to man under divine inspiration and providence; that its historic statements are correct, and that it is the only divine and infallible standard of faith and practice. (*Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:15–16; John 17:17*)

II. We believe, as revealed in the Bible:

a. In one God, our Father, eternal, and infinite in his wisdom, love and power, the Creator of all things, “in whom we live, and move, and have our being.” (*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 40:28*)

b. And in Jesus Christ, our Lord, the only begotten Son of God, conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; who came into our world to seek and to save that which was lost; who died for our sins, who was raised bodily from the dead for our justification; who ascended into heaven as our High Priest and Mediator, and who will come again in the end of this age, to judge the living and the dead, and to reign forever and ever. (*1 Timothy 3:16*)

c. And in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, sent from God to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, whereby we are sanctified and sealed unto the day of redemption. (*John 14:16, 26; John 16:7–11; Ephesians 1:13–14*)

III. We believe that man was created for immortality, but that through sin he forfeited his divine birthright; that because of sin, death entered into the world, and passed upon all men; and that only through faith in Jesus Christ, the divinely ordained Life-giver, can men become “partakers of the divine nature,” and live forever. (*2 Timothy 1:10; Romans 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 51–54*)

IV. We believe that death is a condition of unconsciousness to all persons, righteous and wicked; a condition that will remain unchanged until the resurrection at Christ’s second coming, at which time the righteous will receive everlasting life while the wicked will be “punished with everlasting destruction;” suffering complete *extinction of being*. (*Ecclesiastes 9:5; Job 14:14; John 5:28–29; Matthew 10:28*)

V. We believe that salvation is free to all those who, in this life and in this age, accept it on the conditions imposed, which conditions are simple and inflexible, namely, turning from sin, repentance toward God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a life of consecration to the service of God; thus excluding all hope of a future probation, or of universal salvation. (*John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:1–2; Luke 13:22–30*)

VI. We believe that Jesus Christ, according to his promise, will come again to this earth, even “in like manner” as he went into heaven — personally, visibly and gloriously — to reign here forever; and that this coming is the hope of the church, inasmuch as upon that coming depend the resurrection and reward of the righteous, the abolition of sin and its consequences, and the renewal of the earth — now marred by sin — to become the eternal home of the redeemed, after which event the earth will be forever free from sin and death. (*Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17; Revelation 22:12–13*)

VII. We believe that Bible prophecy has indicated the approximate time of Christ’s return; and comparing its testimony with the signs of our times, we are confident that he is near, “even at the doors,” and we believe that the great duty of the hour is the proclamation of this soon-coming redemption, the defense of Bible authority, inspiration and truth, and the salvation of lost men. (*2 Peter 1:19–21; Matthew 24:42–45; Revelation 22:17*)

VIII. We believe the church of Christ is an institution of divine origin, which includes all true Christians, of whatever name; but that local church organizations should be independent of outside control, congregational in government, and subject to no dictation of priest, bishop or pope — although true fellowship and unity of action should exist between all such organizations. (*Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:11–16*)

IX. We believe that the only ordinances of the church of Christ are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper; immersion being the only true baptism. (*Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3–5; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26*)

X. We believe that the first day of the week, as the day set apart by the early church in commemoration of Christ’s resurrection, should be observed as the Christian Sabbath, and used as a day of rest and religious worship. (*Psalms 118:22–24; Luke 24:1–12; 1 Corinthians 16:2*)

XI. We believe that war is contrary to the spirit and teachings of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ; that it is contrary to the spirit of true brotherhood, and that our influence should be used against it. We believe the Bible also teaches that properly constituted government is ordained of God and is a divine instrument for man's welfare and protection. When an Advent Christian decides on the basis of Scripture and conscience, either to bear arms or to submit to penalties imposed for his refusal to do so, local Advent Christian congregations should extend continued fellowship and nurture. (*Romans 13:1-7; Matthew 15:15-22*)



ADVENT CHRISTIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE

PO 690848

14601 Albemarle Road

Charlotte, North Carolina 28227

www.acgc.us