

CONFESSION OF FAITH

I. Of the Scriptures, we believe that the Holy Bible, as originally written:

- (a) is verbally (every word) and plenary inspired (equally in all parts) inspired and the product of God working through Spirit-controlled men (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pt. 1:19-21, 25; Acts 1:16; 28:25; Ps. 119:89; Rev. 22:18,19 1 Cor. 2:7-14).
 - (b) truth without admixture of error, and the complete and inerrant authority for faith and practice, and accurate in all areas of science and history to which it speaks (Ps. 119:105, 130, 160; Lk. 24:25-27, 44, 45; Jn. 17:17).
 - (c) shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme authority by which all human conduct, creed and opinions should be tried, and that men in their relationship with God must move from truth to experience and not from experience to truth (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Mt. 7:21-23; Ps. 119:89; Prov. 30:5, 6; Rom. 3:4; 1 Pet. 1:23; Rev. 22:19; John 12:48; Is. 8:7-11; Jn. 1:45-47; 5:39).
1. By "THE HOLY BIBLE," we mean that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation that, as originally written, not only contains and conveys the Word of God, but is the very Word of God. This revelation from God is complete and no further revelation is being given.
 2. By "INSPIRATION," we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error as no other writings have been or ever will be.

II. Of the True God, we believe:

Of God The Father

- (a) that there is only one living and true God who is infinite in every excellence; Maker, Sustainer, and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness; and worthy of all worship, confidence, and love (Ex. 15:11; 20:2, 3; Deut. 6:4; Isa. 45:5-7; Rev. 4:11; Ps. 83:13; 1 Thess. 1:9; Jn. 5:26; 1 Jn. 5:7; Gen. 1:1; 2:7; Col. 1:16; Jn.17:5; Eph. 4:6; Mt. 1:18-23).
- (b) that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct, but harmonious offices (Mt. 28:19; Jn. 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14).

Of Jesus Christ the Son

- (a) that He is absolute Deity; that He was divine as no other man can be, being very God of very God, existing from all eternity, and living as co-equal with the Father and the Spirit (Jn. 1:1-3; 10:30; 14:9; Col. 2:8-10; Heb. 1:2, 3, 8; Mic. 5:2).
- (b) that, in His voluntary humiliation, He did not lay aside His Deity; but He laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, assumed the place of a Son, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes (Phil. 2:5-8; Mt. 1:21-22; 28:1; Mk. 14:61, 62; Jn. 10:30, 32, 33; 14:9; 20:28; 2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:15-17; 1 Jn. 1:1, 2; 5:20).

- (c) that at His incarnation He was miraculously begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary as no other man was or ever can be born (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Mt. 1:18-25; Lk. 1:26-35; Jn. 1:1,14).
- (d) that He accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (Jn. 10:15; Rom. 3:24,25; 5:8; 1Pt. 2:24).

Of the Holy Spirit

- (a) that He is a divine Person, equal with God the Father and Son, and of the same nature (Jn. 14:16, 17, 26; Matt. 28:19; Heb. 9:14).
- (b) that He was active in creation (Gen. 1:1-3).
- (c) that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled (2 Thess. 2:7).
- (e) that He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment (Jn. 16:8-11).
- (f) that He bears witness to and empowers the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony (Jn. 15:26, 27; Acts 5:30-32).
- (g) that His purpose in this age is to glorify the Son, and that He never depreciates the completeness that is in Jesus Christ by exalting anyone or anything, above or as an addition to, Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 12:3; Col. 2:10).
- (h) that He is the agent of the new birth (Jn. 3:5, 6).
- (i) that He indwells, seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps believers until the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13, 14, 4:30; Jn. 14:26, 16:13; Acts 11:16; Rom. 8:9, 14, 16; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:32 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rom. 8:9-11, 26, 27).
- (j) that He gives to the believer at salvation, gift(s) of service according to His will (1 Cor. 12:11) and to be used only for the edification of the body (1 Cor. 13:5b; Eph. 4:16); That He glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (Jn. 16:13,14; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 2 Cor. 3:18). Speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-12; Heb. 2:1-4).

III. Of the Devil, or Satan, we believe that Satan is a distinct personality who:

- (a) was created by God and was once holy and enjoyed heaven's honors, but, through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell (Isa. 14:12-13; Ezk. 28:15-17).
- (b) drew after him a host of angels (Rev. 12:9; Jude 6; 2 Pet.2:2; Jn. 14:30).
- (c) is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world (1 Thess. 3:5; Matt. 4:1-3).
- (d) is man's great tempter (1 Pet. 5:8).
- (e) is the enemy of God and His Christ (Zech. 1:3; 1 Jn. 3:8; Mt. 13:25, 37-39; Lk. 22:3, 4).

- (f) is the accuser of the saints (Rev. 12:10).
- (g) is the author of all false religions, the chief power promoting the present apostasy (2 Cor. 11:13-15; Mk. 13:21, 22).
- (h) is the lord of the Anti-Christ (1 Jn. 4:3; 2 Jn. 7; 1 Jn. 2:22).
- (i) is the author of all the powers of darkness (Rev. 13:13, 14; 2 Thess. 2:8-11).
- (j) although powerful and to be respected, is not omniscient, omnipotent, nor omnipresent and cannot overcome the believer who is submitting in obedience to Jesus Christ and His Word in faith (Js. 4:7; 1 Jn. 4:4).
- (k) is destined to find defeat at the hands of God's Son, through His death on the cross (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 19:11, 16, 20; Rev. 12:7-9; 20:1-3), and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire, a place prepared for him and his angels (Rev. 20:10-15; Mt. 25:41).

IV. Of the Creation, we believe in the Genesis account of creation, and:

- (a) that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively. God created the world in six literal 24-hour days. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age theory and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Acts 4:24; Col. 1:17; Heb. 11:3; Jn. 1:3; Rev.10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jer. 10:10).
- (b) that man was created directly by God and in God's own image and after His own likeness (Gen. 1:27; 1 Cor. 11:7).
- (c) that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through long periods of time from lower to higher forms (Gen. 2:7, 21-23; Jn. 1:3).
- (d) that all animal and vegetable life was created directly, and in such a way as to reproduce "after its own kind" (Gen. 1:11, 24; Col. 1:16, 17).

V. Of Man and His Fall, we believe:

- (a) that man was created in innocence and in the image of God (Gen. 1:27).
- (b) that by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12, 19).
- (c) that consequently, all men are now sinners by inheritance from Adam and by individual choice and, until regenerated, are dead in sin, totally depraved and utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26,27; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 3:10-13, 23).
- (d) that all men are by nature utterly void of the righteousness required by the law of God, and definitely inclined to evil (Rom. 3:11; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:1-3, 12; Ps. 40:12).
- (e) that man is under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Rom. 1:19, 20, 2:1, 12-15; 3:9-20, 23).
- (f) that man's only hope of eternal life is through redemption in Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:3, 5; Acts 4:12; Eph. 2:8, 9; Gal. 3:26).

VI. Of Christ's Atonement For Sin, we believe:

- (a) that the salvation of sinners is wholly of God's grace (Eph. 2:8, 9; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24, 25) and through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who, by appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Him the form of a man, was tempted in all points as we are yet without sin in nature or deed, honored the Divine Law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins (Jn. 3:16; Mt. 18:11; Phil. 2:7, 8; Heb. 2:14, 4:15; Rom. 3:25; 1 Jn. 4:10; Isa. 53:6; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21).
- (b) that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree (Jn. 10:18; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 1:4; 1 Pt. 2:24; Isa. 53:11; Heb. 12:2; 1 Pt. 3:18).
- (c) that, having risen bodily from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way the suitable, compassionate, all sufficient Savior and the mediator for His believer priests (Isa. 53:12; Heb. 7:25, 9:12-15, 10:10, 12, 14, 18; 1 Jn. 2:2).
- (d) that the blessings of this atonement are given to all who believe from the heart and confess to God this Lord and Savior as his own Lord and Savior. It is the immediate duty of man to obey the command to accept this offer of mercy (Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:8, 9, 10).

VII. Of Salvation By Grace, we believe:

- (a) that in order to be saved, all men must be born again (Jn. 3:3; Gal. 3:26).
- (b) that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17).
- (c) that it is instantaneous, and not a lengthy process (Jn. 3:5-7; Acts 16:30-33).
- (d) that in the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God (2 Pt. 1:4; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1, 4-9; Col. 2:13; Titus 3:5).
- (e) that the new creation is brought about in a manner above comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience by faith in the Gospel (Jn. 1:12, 13, 3:8).
- (f) that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith in the finished work and Person of Jesus Christ and newness of life (Rom. 10:8-10; 1 Jn. 5:1-5).

VIII. Of Justification, we believe that the blessing Christ secures to believers is justification and:

- (a) that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on the basis of Christ's righteousness and atonement (Acts 13:39; Isa. 53:11; Rom. 5:1, 9, 8:1).
- (b) that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done or ever will do, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed to us (Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 4:24, 25, 5:1, 17; Gal. 3:11).

IX. Of the Freeness of Salvation, we believe:

- (a) in God's electing grace (1 Thess. 1:4; Col. 3:12; 1 Pt. 1:2).

- (b) that salvation is freely offered to all by the Gospel (Rom. 10:9-13; Rev. 22:17).
- (c) that it is the immediate duty of all to accept this salvation by whole-hearted, penitent and obedient faith (Jn. 3:15-18; 1 Tim. 1:15; Acts 2:37-41; Rom. 10:8, 9).
- (d) that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel. A rejection which brings upon man the condemnation of God's wrath (Jn. 3:18, 36; Rom. 1:18, 20, 2:1, 4, 5).

X. Of Repentance and Faith, we believe that repentance and faith:

- (a) are inseparable graces (Mk. 1:15).
- (b) are solemn obligations (Acts 20:21).
- (c) are wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God who convicts the believer of guilt, danger, helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, so that the believer turns to God with unfeigned contrition, and confesses to God his wholehearted faith in the work and person of the Lord Jesus Christ as his all sufficient Savior (Acts 2:27, 28; Rom. 10:9-13).

XI. Of Sanctification, we believe this is the process by which, according to the will of God, the believer is set apart from sin, unto Christ, and has three aspects:

- (a) the believer has been set apart positionally before God the moment he believes (1 Cor. 1:30, 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 10:10, 14).
- (b) the believer is being set apart progressively in his walk day by day as he grows in grace toward the likeness of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit in the continual use of the appointed means, especially the Word of God, self-examination, watchfulness, prayer and yielding to the Spirit through biblical change (Jn. 17:17; Rom. 8:13; 2 Pt. 3:18; Rom. 8:28, 29a; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Tim. 4:7b; Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Jn. 3:3; Rom. 12:1, 2; Eph. 4:22, 24).
- (c) the believer is to be set apart prospectively from the very presence of sin when his sanctification is completed at the coming of Christ for the church (1 Jn. 3:2; 1 Thess. 3:13, 5:23).

XII. Of the Security of the Believer or Perseverance of the Saints, we believe is the design of God's Divine Plan:

- (a) that every person, immediately upon acceptance of Christ as personal Savior and Lord receives eternal life and is made at once a Son of God (1 Jn.5:11-13; Jn. 1:12).
- (b) that believers are kept by the power of God through faith, are kept in a state of grace, and are eternally secure apart from any human works (Jn. 6:36-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1, 38-39; 1Cor. 1:4-8; 1Pt. 1:5).
- (c) that such only are believers who endure to the end (Phil. 1:6; Jn. 8:31; Rev. 21:7, 8; Eph. 2:10).
- (d) that the believers' persevering attachment to Christ and His own and their growth in the likeness of Christ are God's marks which distinguish them from superficial professors (Rom. 8:28, 29a; Jn. 14:21-23; Jn. 10:27-29; 1 Jn.2:19; 5:1-3; Jn. 13:34, 35; Eph. 2:10, Titus 2:11-13; Js. 2:14-20).

XIII. Of the Church, we believe:

- (a) that the church universal is a New Testament institution, established by Jesus Christ, who is its sole Head; revealed through the apostles; empowered and perpetuated by the Holy Spirit; His "Body" for

service and His “Bride” for glory. It began with the New Testament saints at Pentecost and will be consummated at the coming of Christ in the rapture (Matt. 16:18; Acts 1:8, 2:1-13, 41-47, 15:14; Eph. 1:22, 23, 3:21, 5:23-32; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).

(b) that the Church Universal is manifested through the local church which is:

(1) a congregation of baptized (by immersion) believers, associated together by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel (Acts 2:41, 42).

(2) observing the ordinances of Christ. (1 Cor. 11:2).

(3) governed by His law (Eph. 1:22, 23).

(4) exercising the gifts, responsibilities and privileges invested in them by His work (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 12:4, 8:11).

(c) that its scriptural offices are those of elders, (pastors, bishops), and deacons whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. (Acts 14:23, 6:5, 6, 15:23, 20:17-28; 1 Pt. 5:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:1-7, 8-13).

(d) the true mission of the church is expressed in the New Testament and abbreviated in (Mt. 28:19, 20; Eph. 4:11-16).

...To make individual disciples.

...To baptize them into a properly organized and functioning local church.

...To teach them to obey His Word as He has commanded. This includes assisting parents in teaching truth.

(e) that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit’s direction by the Word (Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23, 24; 1 Pt. 5:1-4).

(f) that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel and that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation (Acts 15:22; Jude 2, 3; 2 Cor. 8:23, 24; 1 Cor. 16:1-3).

(g) that on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence, the will of the local church following the Word of God is final (Mal. 3:10; Lev. 27:32; 1 Cor. 5:11-13).

XIV. Of the Ordinances, we believe:

(a) that Christian baptism is:

(1) the immersion in water of a believer (Acts 8:36-39; Mt. 3:6; Jn. 3:23; Rom. 6:4, 5; Matt. 3:16).

(2) in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19).

(3) to show forth in a solemn testimony and picture of our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Rom. 6:3, 5; Col. 2:12).

(b) that the Lord’s Supper is the commemoration of our Lord’s death until He comes, by the sacred use of broken bread and the freshly pressed juice of the vine as symbols of the price He paid for us. This commemoration should be preceded always by solemn self-examination (1 Cor. 11:23-28).

XV. Of the Righteous and the Wicked, we believe that:

- (a) there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Gal. 3:22, 26; Gen. 18:23; Rom. 6:17, 18; 1 Pt. 4:18; Prov. 11:31).
- (b) such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified or set apart by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in their standing before God (Rom. 1:17; 1 Cor. 15:22; Jn. 5:24; Rom. 3:22-24, 4:22-24; Eph. 1:6, 7).
- (c) all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and are under the curse (1 Jn. 5:19; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 6:23, 7:5).
- (d) this distinction holds among men both before and after death, in the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost (Matt. 25:34, 41, 46; Lk. 9:26, 16:25, 26; Jn. 8:21; Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:10-15).

XVI. Of Civil Government, we believe:

- (a) that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pt. 2:13,14; 2 Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:21, 22).
- (b) that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed (Mt. 22:21; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2; Titus 3:1; 1 Pt. 2:13, 14, 17; Dan. 1:8-15) except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:19, 20, 5:29; Dan. 3:17, 18, 6:10, 11) who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth. In this connection we stand firmly for the separation of the Church and State (Mt. 10:28, 22:21, 23:10; Rev. 11:16; Phil. 2:10, 11; Ps.72:11).

XVII. Of the Family, we believe:

- (a) that marriage of a man to a woman is the plan of God and sacred and the only legitimate marriage in His sight (Gen. 2:18-25; Mt. 19:3-9; Eph. 5:18-32; 1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12; Mal. 2:13, 14).
- (b) that the roles of husband, wife, parent, and child are clearly defined in Scripture (Eph. 5:21-32; Col. 3:16-21; 1 Pt. 3:1-7), that they are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate functions for men and women in the home and church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders and elders of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12). We also believe that marriage pictures Christ's relationship to His Bride, the church, and that marriage is permanent, broken only the death of a spouse (Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Cor. 7:39).
- (c) that the sexual relationship is sacred and fulfilling only within the bonds of marriage, and is condemned outside the marriage relationship. Any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (Gen. 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4 1 Cor. 7:3, 4; Heb. 13:4).
- (d) that children are a blessing of God and the responsibility for them rests solely upon the parents and they are to be brought up in loving structured control and conscientious instruction in the truths of God and His principles of life (Ps. 127:3; Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:6, 7; Ps. 78:4-7; Prov. 22:6; Prov. 17:6).
- (e) of the sacredness of life: We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. We therefore reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1,5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Lk. 1:44).

XVIII. Of the Resurrection, Return of Christ, and Related Events, we believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at their full and face value.

These beliefs include:

- (a) Christ's bodily resurrection from the tomb (Mt. 28:6, 7; Lk. 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Cor. 15:4-8; Mk. 16:6; Lk. 24:2-6; Acts 2:24, 32, 3:15, 4:2; Rom. 4:25).
- (b) His ascension to the Father's right hand (Acts 1:9, 11; Lk. 24:51; Mk. 16:19; Heb. 10:12).
- (c) His present high priesthood (Heb. 4:14-16; Heb. 7:24, 25, 8:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Jn. 2:1).
- (d) His future appearing in the air to receive His saints (1 Thess. 4:16, 17; Acts 1:11; Heb. 9:28).
- (e) the resurrection of the righteous dead (1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:42-44, 15:52).
- (f) the physical change of the living in Christ (1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:17; Phil. 3:20, 21).
- (g) the believer's response to God's Word will be evaluated at the Judgment Seat of Christ for reward or loss (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; Rom. 14:10; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 22:2).
- (h) the White Throne Judgment of the unsaved, and the new heaven and the new earth (Rev. 20:11-15, 21:1,2).

XVIV. Of Lawsuits between believers we believe that:

- (a) Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes.
- (b) that the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members.
- (c) we do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (1Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31,32).

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the forgoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members.