

TENETS OF FAITH

of the

APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF GOD SEVENTH DAY

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INTRODUCTION

Due to the tremendous worldwide growth of this organization resulting in a complexity of problems regarding a uniformity of beliefs and practices, the Eldership of the founding church in Langley B. C. Canada, deemed it wise and necessary for the continual expansion of this organization worldwide, to set forth in writing the basic Tenets of Faith which constitute the requirements for full voting membership and holding of office in this organization.

Therefore we urge each member to study carefully the following articles and, as much as possible, according to the knowledge acquired, to abide and practice these principles.

This set of Articles of Belief is not designed to be a closed creed, for we believe in "**growth in grace and knowledge.**" In consequence thereof, we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to "**lead and guide into all truths**", (John 16:13), and do hereby commit ourselves to the adoption of any and all Biblical truth that may be revealed in God's Holy Word which must form the basis of every facet of our faith

To the end that this action shall foster love and unity in the fellowship, and communion of the body, we submit the following Articles of Belief with fervent prayer that the Spirit of the Lord will be our Guide and Teacher as we seek to implement the exhortation of Holy Scripture which instructs us to:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim.2:15)

"Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim.4:16)

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim.3:16,17)

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess.5:21).

And further, to obey Christ's commission:

"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:18-20).

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark 16:15-18).

PREFACE

(Note) This Edition is a summarization of our basic beliefs. For a more comprehensive compilation of the Tenets of Faith, we refer the reader to the edition entitled "Fundamental Bible Doctrines."

For a General Perspective of the varied subjects we wish to classify them under the following headings:

1. The Doctrine of God: **THEOLOGY**
2. The Doctrine of Jesus Christ: **CHRISTOLOGY**
3. The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit: **PNEUMATOLOGY**
4. The Doctrine of man: **ANTHROPOLOGY**
5. The Doctrine of sin: **HAMARTIOLOGY**
6. The Doctrine of salvation: **SOTERIOLOGY**
7. The Doctrine of the church: **ECCLESIOLOGY**
8. The Doctrine of final things: **ESCHATOLOGY**

TENETS OF FAITH

1. THE BIBLE

We believe that the Holy Bible, in its original form, is God's Word to man; infallible, unerring, authoritative and all-sufficient; touching faith and morals. We do not accept the apocryphal writings as part of the Canon of Holy Scriptures. (2 Tim.3:15,16; 2 Pet.1:21; Rev.22:18,19).

2. THE GODHEAD

We believe there is but **ONE TRUE** and **LIVING GOD**, the **EVERLASTING, ALL-WISE, ALL-POWERFUL** and **LOVING FATHER** (Isa.44:6; 45:22) and that **JESUS CHRIST**, the **ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD**, became the **INCARNATE WORD** (John 1:1-3,14) by a virgin birth (John 1:14; Gal.4:4). The **HOLY SPIRIT** is the **SPIRIT of GOD** (Matt.3:16) or the **SPIRIT of CHRIST** (Rom.8:9) and is the promised **COMFORTER** (John 14:16,17) for all believers. (Acts 2:39).

3. CREATION: THE ORIGIN OF ALL THINGS

We believe that all things came into existence by a supernatural act of God in the spoken **WORD** and that evolution is a false theory and had no part in the formation of the cosmos or of man (Gen.1:1,3,26,27,31; 2:1,2,7).

4. ORIGIN OF EVIL AND THE FALL OF MAN

We believe sin originated with Satan, the devil (1 John 3:8; John 8:44; Rev.12:7-9; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4; Gen.3:1-13; Rom.5:12 - the fall of man).

5. THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION

We believe that, as a result of Adam's sin, all are sinner's and need redemption from sin in order to inherit eternal life. God's love for fallen man provided a plan of redemption from the wages of sin which is death. (Rom.3:23; 5:8,12; 6:23; John 3:16; Gal.4:4; Heb.9:22,26,28; 10:1-4,10-12).

6. JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR

We believe that Jesus Christ is our only Saviour (Acts 4:12; 1 Tim.2:5,6; Heb.9:22,26,28; 10:10-12); that the shedding of His blood was sufficient to pay for the sins of the world (John 19:30; Heb.9:12; Rom.5:11); that Jesus took our sins upon Himself and became sin for us (1 Peter 2:24; Isa.53:5; 2 Cor.5:21). In order to die for man's sin, Jesus became man (The Incarnation) which He accepted willingly (John 1:1-3,14; Phil.2:5-8).

7. FAITH

We believe that without faith in God and His Word, one cannot be saved (Heb.11:1,6; 2 Tim.3:15) and that faith cometh through the reading or hearing of the Word of God (Rom.10:14,17; John 5:39). A theoretical belief in God is not sufficient for salvation and the evidence that one has faith is by the works produced. (James 2:17-19; 1 Thess.1:7). Besides bringing salvation, faith will bring us healing. (Matt.9:22; 15:28).

8. REPENTANCE

We believe a necessary step for salvation is repentance of sin. (Acts 2:38; 3:19; Matt.3:7,8; Luke 13:3; Eph.5:6). In order for one to be forgiven of their sin, they must be sorry with a godly sorrow (Ps.38:18; 2 Cor.7:10,11). Since sin is the transgression of God's Law (1 John 3:4; James 4:17) we must acknowledge the **Ten Commandments** as still being in force today, and obey them (Rom.3:20; 7:7; 1 John 2:3,4; 5:2,3).

9. CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We believe another step necessary for the forgiveness of sin is the confession (acknowledgement) of our sin (1 John 1:9; Num.5:6,7; Ps.32:5). Confession must be made with our mouth and if we cover our sin we shall be condemned (Rom.10:10; Prov.28:13) True confession will result in full forgiveness with no remembrance of our sins (Ps.103:11,12; Isa. 55:7; Micah 7:19; 1 John 1:9; Ps.32:1,2). If we will not forgive one another, God, will not forgive us (Matt.6:12-15; Eph.4:32).

10. CONVERSION OR THE NEW BIRTH

We believe one must be converted or "**born again**" in order to enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:1-5; Matt.18:3; 1 Peter 1:3,23; 1 Cor.4:15; 1 John 5:1,18) The new birth is brought about by the workings and power of the Word of God and the Spirit (James 1:18; John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23). At conversion God gives us a new heart (mind) (Ezek.18:31; Rom.12:1,2) and we become a new creature (creation) (2 Cor.5:17; Eph.2:5; Rom.8:9).

11. WATER BAPTISM

We believe water baptism by total immersion is a mandatory requirement for every "**born again**" believer (Acts 2:38; 8:12,36-39; 16:31-33; Matt.3:15; 28:19,20) and that this ordinance must be done in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:38; 19:5). Water baptism does not in reality "**wash away sin**" but is "**an answer of a good conscience toward God**". (1 Peter 3:21).

12. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in a definite experience of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit following conversion (**not conversion itself, but following conversion**) and evidenced by an outward sign of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance (Matt.3:11; Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:1-6). This experience is not optional, but a necessary endowment of power for service (John 7:38,39; Luke 24:39; Acts 1:5-8; 8:14-17; Eph.5:18). The experience of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit was foretold in prophecy and had its initial fulfilment on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4) and is still available to every believer. (Joel 2:28,29; Isa. 28:11; Matt.3:11; Mark 16:17; Acts 1:5; 2:39).

13. THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

We believe that the supernatural Gifts of the Holy Spirit are for the church today and are needed for spiritual edification and bringing unto maturity both the individual and the Body of Christ in the local assembly as well as the Church Universal (1 Cor.12:1-10,27-31; 14:1,5,26,39; Rom.12:6-8). These gifts are not natural endowments but supernatural impartations (1 Cor.12:11; 14:1,2,12,13,25,37; Mark 16:17,18). We are not to neglect or despise God's gifts to the believer (1 Tim.4:14; 2 Tim.1:6; 1 Thess.5:20; 1 Cor.14:39). Moreover, in the New Testament dispensation, the Gifts of the Spirit do not operate on the infallible level and therefore there is a need for rules and regulations concerning their operation (1 Cor.14:12-15,26-32; Rom.12:6-8). As the natural body has different members, so the Body of Christ has a variety of spiritual gifts (1 Cor.12:4-7,12-20,27-30; Rom.12:4-8) and no one member should monopolize the gifts (1 Cor.12:14-20; 14:30,31) neither should any member be despised (1 Cor.12:21-26).

14. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

We believe the born-again, Spirit-filled believer should grow in grace and knowledge, thereby producing the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of a new-born life in Christ. The fruit of the Spirit must not be construed to mean the same thing as the Gifts of the Spirit, the former being the result of "**putting off the flesh**" and "**putting on the new man**" (Gal.5:22,23; Eph.4:22-32; Col.3:1-17). We draw attention to the opposite manifestations mentioned in Gal.5:19-21) as "**works of 'the flesh'**" and not "**demon possession**". Though truly born-again believers can be oppressed, harassed and influenced by satanic influences, they cannot be "**demon possessed**". "**Possession**" and "**oppression**" are two completely different words. Christ does not share the "**throne of our hearts**" with the devil. Satan cannot "**pass-over**" the blood of Jesus that covers a believer's life.

15. THE FIVE MINISTRY GIFTS FOR THE CHURCH

We believe in a plurality of ministries in the Body of Christ (the Church Universal) as given in Eph.4:11 as well as Rom.12:6-8. The purpose of the Ministry Gifts is "**for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the Body of Christ**" (Eph.4:12,13) and to bring us to the unity of the faith. The office and duties of an APOSTLE are described in Matt.10:1-8; 1 Peter 1:1; Rom.1:11; 11:13; Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-6; 14:22,23; 15:41; Titus 1:5. The difference between the 12 Apostles of Jesus and all subsequent Apostles is that the former had to be "eyewitnesses of Christ's resurrection" (Acts 1:22). They also had a special ministry to the Jews to call from them the "**election**" (Rom.11:5-7) which constituted the **144,000** (Rev.7:1-8).

16. PROPHETS AND THE GIFT OF PROPHECY TODAY

We believe in the ministry of the **PROPHET** which is given to select ministers chosen by God for this unique ministry. This ministry is not the same as the "**Gift of Prophecy**" which is available to every believer (Eph.4:11; 1 Cor.12:27-30; 14:31) Examples of "**prophets**" in the New Testament church are given in Acts 11:27,28; 13:1; 15:32; 21:10,11. Please note that that the daughters of Philip "**did prophesy**" they were not referred to as "**prophets**". This is because they ministered in the Gift of Prophecy that is available to all believers (Acts 21:8,9). It is important that we distinguish the office of the prophet from the Gift of Prophecy which Paul declares is available to **EVERY** Spirit-filled believer. In 1 Cor.14:1,24,31, Paul says that every believer may prophesy, whereas, in 1 Cor.12:29 he says not all are prophets. That is, not every believer has the prophetic ministry in an official capacity. In this capacity, the prophet specializes in his unique calling such as **Exhorting, Instructing, Warning, Counseling, Reforming, Rebuking and Foretelling**. (Eph.4:12,13; Acts 13:1-3; Matt.24:2; 4:7,11-14).

17. EVANGELISTS, PASTORS AND TEACHERS

We believe that the ministry of the **EVANGELISTS, PASTORS** and **TEACHERS** is operative in the Body of Christ. An **EVANGELIST**, as the Greek word, "**EVANGELISTES**" indicates, is a messenger or a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The **PASTOR**, (Gr. "**POIMON**") is the **SHEPHERD** of God's flock, having a special ministry in feeding and caring for the flock of God. (Eph.4:11; Acts 21:8; 2 Tim.4:5) The term most often used for a **PASTOR** is **ELDER** (Gr. "**PRESBYTERES**") and in some places a **BISHOP** (Gr. **EPIKOPES**, meaning **OVERSEER**). (Acts 14:23; 15:2; 20:17,28; 1 Tim.3:1; 5:17; Titus 1:7).

An Elder may fulfil his office as a spiritual **Overseer** but not have the unique calling of a **Shepherd**. Thus he would serve as an assistant to the **Pastor**. The ministry of the teacher is very important and requires a special gift of teaching (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor.12:28; 1 Tim.2:7; Titus 2:3). The scriptures indicate there was a plurality of ministries in the local church (Phil.1:1; 1 Tim.5:17; Titus 1:5) and there should be no favoritism, partiality or superiority among the ministries (1 Peter 5:5,6; 1 Tim.5:21; Rom.12:6-10). Honor and respect must be shown to ministers in sacred office (1 Tim.5:17; Heb.13:7,17).

NOTE: The Five Fold Ministries is represented by the human hand (1 Kings 18:44). The **THUMB**, the **APOSTLE**; the **INDEX**, or pointing finger, the **PROPHET**, foretells future, points out sin; the **LONGEST FINGER**, the **EVANGELIST**, reaches out for souls; the **RING FINGER**, or the heart finger, the **PASTOR**, has a heart for the sheep; the **LITTLE FINGER**, the **TEACHER**, can get into the ear. The **THUMB**, reaches out to all fingers, and so, the **APOSTLE**, one sent by God, lays the foundation for the churches, the other ministries working in harmony with the **APOSTOLIC** ministry.

18. JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

We believe a person is "**JUSTIFIED**" (made "**just**" or be absolved from guilt) by faith in the shed blood of Jesus only, not by any "**works**" and "**SANCTIFICATION**" (made holy) is produced by the **BLOOD OF CHRIST** (Heb.9:14), the **HOLY SPIRIT** (1 Peter 1:2) and by the **TRUTH** (John 17:17,19; Gal.2:16; Rom.3:29,30; 4:4,5; 5:1,9,15,16).

19. GROWTH IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE

We believe as the natural child must grow and develop, so the new-born Christian must grow in **GRACE** and **KNOWLEDGE**. Many abnormalities and problems would not happen in the family of God if Christians would apply themselves to study the Word of God with the object in view of knowing God's will for them and submitting to the Biblical guidelines for spiritual growth and maturity (2 Peter 1:2-11; 3:18; Phil.4:8; 1 Cor.3:1-3). In our spiritual development we must "**put off**" the "**works of the flesh**" and "**lay aside**" the sin that besets us (Eph.4:22-32; Col.3:1-11; 2 Cor.7:1; Heb.12:1,2).

20. PRAYER

We believe that **PRAYER** is a very essential ingredient for a healthy, victorious and abundant Christian life. In fact, the neglect of fervent believing prayer is probably the most important ingredient that results in lukewarmness, weakness, depression and defeat. (Luke 18:1,7; Matt.7:7-11; 26:41; John 16:24; James 1:5,6; Rom.8:26; Phil.4:8; Eph.6:18; 1 Thess.5:17).

21. PUBLIC WORSHIP AND REVERENCE FOR GOD

We believe it mandatory that Christians reverence, respect and give sincere worship to God. Many scriptures enjoin us to this effect (John 4:24; Ps.29:2; 95:1-6; 96:1-9; 100:1-5; Heb.10:25; Luke 4:16; Acts 4:24-33; 1 Cor.14:26,40; Eccl.5:1; 1 Tim.3:5).

22. MEDITATION AND BIBLE STUDY

We believe it is very important that our minds are centered and focused on God and His Word for we become what we meditate upon. In our day especially, when there is a "**battle for the mind**", our thoughts and meditation need to be under the control of the Holy Spirit. We must not follow our "**feelings**" or be influenced by anti-Biblical concepts just to be popular or receive the applause and approval of mankind. (1 Tim.4:15; Ps.1:2; 63:3; 104:34; 119:11,105,130,165; Prov.1:7-9; 2:1-5; Phil.4:8; 2 Tim.2:15; 3:15-17; Acts 17:11).

23. FOOT WASHING AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe we must obey the Lord and follow His example in the Ordinance of **FOOT WASHING** and the observance of the annual memorial of His death in the **LORD'S SUPPER** (1 Cor.11:1,2,23-30; John 13:1-17; 1 Peter 5:5; Luke 22:7-20).

Since the Lord's Supper is the N.T. antitype of the O.T. Passover and a memorial of our Lord's death, it should be observed annually at the same time that Jesus instituted it. (Ex.12:6; 13:10; Deut.16:6; Matt.26:17-30; 1 Cor.11:23).

24. THE LAW OF GOD

We believe **God's Holy Laws, the Ten Commandments**, are the basic standard of our Christian faith, that was never abrogated. It is the standard by which we know what is wrong and right. It spells out sin and is our guide in our belief and conduct (Ex.20:3-17; Eccl.12:13; Matt.5:17,18; 19:16-19; 1 John 2:2-6; 3:4; 5:2,3; Rom.7:7,12,22) It will be the standard by which God will judge the world and identify the true followers of the Lord. (James 2:8-12; Rev.12:17; 14:12; 22:14).

25. THE LAW OF GOD AND THE LAW OF MOSES

We believe the Bible makes a clear distinction between the **Ten Commandments** and the **Ceremonial Law** thus informing us of which laws were abolished by Christ's death and which ones are still binding. The following scriptures refer to the **Law of Moses** (Deut.31:24-26; 2 Chron.35:12; Col.2:14-17; Eph.2:15; Heb.7:19; 9:1-10; Acts 15:1,5,24) which **was abolished**. But **God's Law**, which **was not abolished** is referred to in the following scriptures (Ex.24:12; 31:18; 40:12; Deut.5:22; 1 Kings 8:6,9; Ps.111:7,8; 19:7; Rom.7:12; James 2:8-12; Rev.22:14).

26. THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

We believe the **seventh day** of the week commonly called **Saturday**, is still **God's Holy Sabbath day of rest and worship**. It was observed by Godly people all through the ages, including Jesus, the New Testament saints and is still the same Sabbath rest that was instituted by our Lord at creation. It is an integral part of God's Holy Law, the Ten Commandments. (Ex.16:4,23,28,29; 20:8-10; Gen.2:1-3; 26:5; Mark 2:27; Isa.56:6,7; Luke 4:16,31; 23:56; Matt.24:20; Acts 13:42-44; 16:12,13; 17:2; 18:4; Heb.4:4,9,10).

27. PROPER OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH

We believe the Sabbath day is sanctified and hallowed by God and should be regarded as such. However it should not be made a day of gloominess or legalistic observance of rituals but a day of rejoicing, celebration, rejuvenation and special spiritual worship of Creator God inasmuch as it is a memorial of creation as well as recreation for sinful man. (Ex.20:8-10; Isa.56:6,7; 58:13,14; Mark 2:27; Luke 4:16,31; 23:56; Acts 17:2; 18:4; 13:42-44; Heb.4:4,9,10).

28. SUNDAY OBSERVANCE-CHANGE OF THE SABBATH

We believe Sunday observance is contrary to Scripture teaching, is a blatant rejection of the authority of God, the immutability of God's Law and is one of the outstanding signs of the apostasy of the church. The change of the Sabbath by the anti-christ system was foretold in Scripture and we are instructed to come out of the fallen church systems. (Dan.7:24,25; 2 Thess.2:3,4; Matt.15:6,9; Rev.18:4; 1 Tim.4:1,2; 2 Tim.4:1-4) The first Sunday-keeping law was enjoined by the pagan Roman Emperor Constantine in 321 A.D. ("**Let all the judges and townfolk, and the occupation of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun...**") Both Catholic and Protestant writers acknowledge that Sunday observance is a man-made institution. But we ought to obey God rather than man. Israel committed abomination when they worshipped the sun (Ezek.8:15,16) (Modern Easter sunrise services). Many false interpretations of Scripture have been presented in an endeavour to support Sunday worship. The Bible warns against this.

29. CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

We believe the Bible clearly teaches that Christ was crucified on **Wednesday the middle of the week and resurrected exactly three days and three nights later**, which was "**in the end of the Sabbath.**" Friday crucifixion and Sunday morning resurrection is false and denies the sign of Jesus' Messiahship. (Matt.12:38-40; Jonah 1:17). Matt.28:1 states plainly that Jesus was resurrected "**In the end of the Sabbath**". It is unfortunate that later translators of the Bible have changed the meaning of this passage by trying to make it mean "**Sunday**"

morning". Berry's Interlinear Greek-English N.T. renders this passage thus: "**Now late on Sabbath, as it was getting dusk toward the first day of the week...**". The Revised Version (1884 Edition) says the same thing. In John 19:14,31,42 it is clearly stated that Jesus was crucified on the **Jewish Passover day**, the day before the **Passover Sabbath**, an **High day Sabbath** and Matt.28:1 stated that He rose "**Late on the Sabbath**" thus fulfilling the sign of Jonah (**three days and three nights in the grave**). "**Good Friday and Easter Sunday**" are feeble attempts to "**christianize**" pagan holidays. Friday was the day set aside to worship the sex Goddess, the Goddess of fertility "**Freya**". "**Easter**" is the modern form of "**Astarte**" or "**Ishtar**" the Goddess of the spring festival. The fish symbol and the rabbit (hare) also relate to sexual worship (high reproductivity).

30. CHRIST'S SECOND COMING

We believe in the literal, visible pre-millennial, glorious second coming (parousia) of Jesus Christ as king, judge and Ruler of the universe. The "**Secret Rapture**" theory is **false** and misleading. It is unscriptural to set dates for Christ's return as some have done. Christ's return will be the time of the resurrection of the righteous dead and the translation of the righteous living as well as the ushering in of the millennial reign of Christ and the saints at the marriage supper of the Lamb. (John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Rev.1:7; Matt.24:23-27,36; 25:1-13,31-34; 1 Cor.15:51-54; 1 Thess.4:13-17; Dan.8:35,44; Rev.11:15).

31 SIGNS OF CHRIST'S COMING

We believe the Bible gives us many signs by which we can know that the Lord's coming is near at hand. (Matt.24:3-14, 23-31,36-44; 1 Tim.4:1-3; 2 Tim.3:1-5; Dan.12:4; Luke 17:22-36; 2 Peter 3:3-13; James 5:1-7). In the last days we shall see the rebirth of the papal power, the formation of the one-world church under the headship of the harlot woman also represented by a "**little horn**" that persecuted the saints and is finally destroyed by the ten horned kingdom. See Rev.13:1-18; 17:1-18. While the one-world church is forming there will also be a "**coming out**" of the true people of God from the false church systems and the Bride of Christ will prepare herself for the Marriage supper of the Lamb. (Rev.18:4; 19:1-9). The prophecy of the "little horn" - Dan.7:7,8,19-27.

32. THE MILLENNIUM

We believe in the post-tribulation millennial reign of Christ with His saints on the earth. The righteous dead will be raised at the beginning of the millennium and the "**rest of the dead**" (the wicked) will be raised at the end of the millennium. Satan will be bound during the millennium but will be loosed at the end to give him liberty to "**deceive**" the wicked nations believing they can now take the Kingdom from Christ and the saints, but fire shall come down from God out of heaven to utterly destroy Satan and the wicked and cleanse the earth to be the habitation of Christ and the saints. At the end of the millennium, the kingdom shall be given back to God, the Eternal One. (Rev.11:15; 20:1-15; 2 Peter 3:3-13; Dan.2:35,44; 7:27; Matt.25:31-34; 1 Cor.15:20-28).

33. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

We believe in the literal, bodily resurrection of the righteous dead with immortal, incorruptible "**spirit**" bodies. The wicked dead will be raised in their natural mortal bodies to be judged, punished and destroyed. (John 5:28,29; Job 14:14,15; Ps.17:15; 1 Cor.15:12-23; 35:55; 1 Thess.4:13-18; Rev.14:13; 20:5 last part and verse 6. then read first part of verse 5 and verses 7-10). The saints will be raised with "**spiritual**" bodies. (1 Cor.15:44,49; Matt.22:30; 1 John 3:2; Phil.3:21).

34. THE STATE OF THE DEAD - MAN'S MORTAL NATURE

We believe the Bible teaches that death is a "**sleep**" and that all the "**DEAD**" shall be resurrected. Man does not possess an immortal "**soul**". Only God has immortality at the present but the saints will be clothed with immortality at the resurrection. Life after death, before the resurrection, is a false teaching stemming from superstitious pagan beliefs. (1 Thess.4:13; 1 Cor.15:18,20; John 3:13; 11:11-14; Job 4:17; 14:6,21; Ps.8:5; 115:17; 146:4; Eccl.3:20; 9:5; 12:7; Gen.2:7; Dan.12:2; 1 Tim.6:16).

35. DESTINY OF THE WICKED AND THE HELL QUESTION

We believe in the utter destruction of the wicked and that in most cases the word "**hell**" refers to the resting place of the dead - **the grave**. The Hebrew word translated "**hell**" is "**sheol**" and means simply **the grave**. The Greek word "**hades**" in the N.T. has the same meaning. When Jesus spoke of the punishment of the wicked (speaking only to the Jews) he made reference to "**GEHENNA**" a garbage dump just outside Jerusalem which was constantly burning refuse and dead bodies of criminals. The Greek word "**TARTARUS**" (hell in English), is used only once (2 Peter 2:4) and has reference only to angels. Rom.6:23 states the wages of sin is **DEATH**, not eternal torment in hell fire. The following scriptures prove that the wicked will be utterly annihilated (2 Thess.1:8,9; Ps.37:20; Mal.4:1-3; Ezek.18:4,20; Matt.25:33,41; 10:28; Luke 13:3; Rev.20:7-9). The expression "**forever and ever**" in Rev.20:10 is wrongly translated from the original Greek. The literal translation is "**the ages of the ages**" simply meaning that the wicked will be utterly destroyed at the end of the age. O.T. Hebrew "**SHEOL**" equals "**GRAVE**". See Ps.16:10; 139:8. Also used figuratively in Jonah 2:2; 2 Sam.22:6; Ps.116:3. N.T. "**HADES**" equals ". See Acts 2:31; Matt.11:23; 16:18; Rev.1:10; 20:13,14. The Catholic "**PURGATORY**" is a relic of the superstitious pagans.

36. TITHES AND OFFERINGS

We believe that the institution of **TITHING** (returning to God one tenth of our income) is a divinely appointed principle recognizing God as Sovereign and all-loving in providing for man's needs and in the means of providing livelihood for the ministry. Offerings are the love gifts over and above the tithe and are used in variable ways for the spreading of the gospel and meeting the needs of the poor. (Ps.24:1; Prov.3:9; Haggai 3:8; Deut.8:18; Mal.3:8-12; Num.18:21; Heb.7:8; Matt.23:23; 2 Cor.9:7; 1 Cor.16:1-3; Luke 21:1-3).

37. CHURCH ORDER AND ORGANIZATION

We believe the Bible gives us guidelines for **CHURCH ORDER** and **ORGANIZATION** so that we are not allowed to do "**our own thing**". Biblical church order brings unity and power into the church and Biblical church organization promotes the moving of the Holy Spirit in Body Ministry. (John 17:11; Eph.4:3; Rom.12:5; 1 Cor.12:12-27; 14:26-33; 1 Tim.3:14,15). Christ is to be the **HEAD** of the church. Each local church has autonomous rights, yet there must be a working together and an interdependence of each church with others. The principle of the **Five Fold Ministry** recognizes the authority of the Apostles and Prophets who operate on the universal level giving guidance, instruction and correction to the local churches by the God-given knowledge and wisdom for the edification of the body of Christ. (Col.1:18; Eph.2:19-22; 4:11-13; Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-4; 15:1-31).

38. THE JEWISH QUESTION

We believe the Bible teaches that the seed of Abraham, later called the children of Israel and the Jewish Nation, was chosen by God to be His ambassadors and custodians of the knowledge of the true God to the whole world. (Gen.13:14-17; 26:1-5; 28:10-15). Abraham's posterity was delivered from Egyptian bondage and finally possessed the land promised to Abraham. However, because of their backsliding into idolatry, they were taken into Babylonian captivity for 70 years. When they repented, God gave them another 490 years (**70 prophetic weeks**) to prove their worthiness to be His representatives. They failed again and at the end of the 490 years (A.D. 34) they suffered their final rejection as God's chosen nation and the gospel went to all nations. Thus, any person of any nation can come into God's family and become a part of the family of God. God makes no distinction as to race and the true Israel today are those who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour. (2 Chron.36:11-21; Jer.25:12; 29:9-11; Rom.2:28,29; 9:6,7; 11:13-21,26; Gal.3:28,29; 6:15,16; Dan.9:24-27; Ezra 7:11-23; Acts 10:34,35). God has only one plan of salvation, both for the Jews and the Gentiles. (Eph.2:19-22; 3:14,15; 4:4,5; Rom.11:17,21-24; Acts 4:12) There is only one family of God (Gal.6:16; 1 Tim.3:15; Heb.12:22,23).

39. **HEALTHFUL LIVING - CLEAN AND UNCLEAN FOOD**

We believe the Bible teaches healthful living and therefore we have guidelines for proper diet and cleanliness. Our bodies are to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, therefore we must not "**defile**" them. (3 John 2; Ex.15:26; 1 Cor.3:17; 6:19,20; Rom.12:1; Dan.1:8; 1 Peter 2:9; Prov.20:1; 23:20-32) The Bible dearly distinguishes the clean from the unclean. See Lev.11 and Deut.14:1-21).

40. **SOUND DOCTRINE**

We believe sound doctrine is very important, especially in our day of multiplicity of conflicting doctrines and rejection of Biblical teachings and standards. Here are some scriptures which speak of false doctrines (Matt.24:11; 2 Cor.11:13-15; 2 John 7; Acts 20:29,30; 2 Thess.2:3; 1 Tim.4:1,2; 2 Tim.4:2-4). The following scriptures bring out the importance of sound doctrine (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:9; Rom.6:17; 1 Tim.1:10; 6:3).

Historical Evidence of the Falling away (**The apostasy**)

From "**The Growth Of The Christian Church**" by R.H.Nichols, we quote the following, "Thus within the Church there was a great mass of paganism, or pagan ideas about religion and morals, and pagans ways of action carried over by these people who were Christians only in name and form." p. 87 "Saint worship is the chief example of this tendency. The saints became to be regarded as something like lesser deities whose intercession availed God. **PLACES** connected with their lives were considered especially sacred. Pilgrimages to such places naturally followed. To venerate **RELICS** or material objects connected with the saints, parts of their bodies, properties, and to believe that in them was the power to perform miracles came easily to those in whom superstition still remained." p. 61 "The distinction between clergy and laymen unknown in the first century, was gradually marked. The office of the bishop was magnified and authoritative power was centralized at the imperial capital, Rome." "More liturgies and forms of prayer were produced. Church buildings became larger and more decorative...Church walls were covered with paintings and mosaics and embroideries. Dignity and impressiveness was sought in the service as well as stately ritual and solemn music." p. 59,60 "In worship the central feature was the **MASS**, as the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was now usually called. Christianity became a religion of **FEAR**, the world was thought to be full of devils who sought to injure men's bodies and souls. Thus **CHARMS** became to be worn and an awful sanctity was attributed to church buildings, the Mass, Relics and the persons of the clergy. Stories were told and believed how disrespect to clergy was followed by calamity and death. Christianity took such a form that was far removed from the simplicity and spirituality and joyful trust of the religion of Jesus." p. 93

ADDENDUM:

Quotations from Catholic and Protest writers acknowledging the change of the Sabbath was made by man without Biblical authority.

From "**A Doctrinal Catechism**".. By Rev. Stephen Keenan. page 174, (Catholic) we quote: "Ques. Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?" "Ans. Had she not such power she could not have done that which all modern religionists agree with her - she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority."

"Neither Christ, nor His apostles, nor the first Christians, celebrated the first day of the week instead of the seventh day as the Sabbath." (New York Tribune, May 24, 1900, Baptist)

"The observance of the first instead of the seventh day rests on the testimony of the church and the church alone." (Hobart Church News (Episcopalian) July 2, 1894)

Archdeacon Farrar Church of England writes: "The Sabbath is Saturday, the seventh day of the week. The Christian church made no formal, but gradual, and almost unconscious transference of the one day to the other." (The voice from the Sinai, p. 163,167)

Dr. E.T.Hiscock (Baptist) in the New York Examiner, Nov. 16, 1893. wrote: "There was and is a command to **"keep holy the Sabbath day"** but that Sabbath was not Sunday. It will, however, be readily said, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week. Where can the record of such a transaction be found? **Not in the New Testament - absolutely not.**"

THE BIBLE SAYS:

"Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.." (Ex.20:8)

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27,28)

"And the next Sabbath came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God," (Acts 13:44)

"There remaineth therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God," (Heb.4:9)

"And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." (1 John 2:3,4)

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:2,3)

"Here is the patience of the saints: Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." (Rev.14:12)

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Rev.22:12)

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." (John 4:23)

The apostle Paul gave a warning to the believers of the city of Colosse by saying:

"beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit,
after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after

CHRIST

Colossians 2:8