



Berea Baptist Declaration of Faith

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the Faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. (JUDE 3)

BEREA BAPTIST DECLARATION OF FAITH

Articles of Faith

Due to the various different religious organizations which profess to take the Bible as their guide as we do, yet differ with us in doctrine, faith, and practice, we feel constrained to set forth a distinctive declaration of what we believe; not as a substitute for the Holy Scriptures, but as exponents of what are conceived to be the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God.

I. THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one living and true God (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 43:10-11), an infinite (Ps. 139:7-12; 147:5); intelligent (Acts 15:18), sovereign (Ps. 115:3) Spirit (John 4:24), Whose name is JEHOVAH (Ps. 83:18), the Creator (Gen. 1:1) and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth (Dan. 4:35; I Chron. 29:11-12), inexpressibly glorious in holiness (Ex. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; I Peter 1:15-16; Rev. 4:6-8), and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love (Matt. 10:37; Mark 12:30; Rev. 4:11), that in the unity of the Godhead there are three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; I Cor. 12:4-6; II Cor. 13:14; I John 5:7), equal in every Divine perfection (John 5:17; 10:30; 14:23; 17:5; Acts 5:3-4; I Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6), and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Eph. 2:18; II Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5).

II. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

We believe that God is an absolute sovereign (I Chron. 29:10-12; Job 23:13; Ps. 103:19; 115:3; 119:91; Isa. 46:9-11; Rom. 11:33-36), having mercy on whom He will and hardening whom He will (Ex. 3:19; Rom. 9:14-24), doing according to His will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth (Deut. 4:35), working all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11), efficiently causing all good and wisely and holily permitting all evil that comes to pass for reasons known fully to Himself only

(Deut. 29:29) and overruling it for His own glory (Rom. 11:3-36; Prov. 16:4) and good of the redeemed (Rom. 8:28).

III. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe in the divine inspiration of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament (II Tim. 3:15-17), and receive them as a gracious revelation of the mind and will of God (Deut. 4:2; Ps. 19:7; Prov. 30:5-6; II Pet. 1:19-21; Rev. 22:18-19); we believe that therein are revealed all the doctrines and truths which we set forth in this confession.

We believe that all Scripture in the original manuscripts is given by verbal inspiration of God; that this inspiration was accomplished miraculously by the providence and power of God, and is not to be compared with the inspiration attributed to works of human genius; yet not in such a way as to impair the reality of human agency, which is abundantly manifest in the revelation of personal peculiarities in temperament, style, and vocabulary; that it is not in different degrees, but extends equally and fully to each part of the Bible whether it be historical, legal, poetical, prophetic, or doctrinal, extending to the words themselves as found in the original manuscripts; that this inspiration covers historical and scientific references as fully as matters of doctrine, so that the Bible in its original manuscripts was without error of defects; that it has God for its Author (I Thess. 2:13), salvation for its end (II Tim. 3:15; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; 10:8-10; John 5:38-39; I Peter 1:10-12), and truth without any mixture of error for its matter (Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rom. 3:4); that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us (John 12:47-48; Rom. 2:12; James 2:12; Deut. 18:19); and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union (I Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1-2; 3:16; I Peter 4:11), and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (Acts 17:11; II Cor. 13:5 ; I Thess. 5:21 ; I John 4:1 ; Isa. 8:20).

We also believe God has preserved His Word in the original; (Hebrew Masoretic Text) and in the original Greek (Textus Receptus), and in faithful translations of these original languages (Ps. 119:160; Matt. 24:35); therefore we deem the King James Version, which was translated from these texts, to be the official Bible of our church. Other versions may be read and studied, but we must beware of modern

versions which are unfaithful in the translation of the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts and are hostile to the deity of Christ and other truths. The books commonly called Apocrypha, although originally printed in the 1611 King James Version, are not part of the canon of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority to the churches of God, and are no more than mere human writings.

IV. THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

We believe that the Genesis account of creation is to be accepted literally and not figuratively or allegorically; that God created man in His own image (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7), and not by or through the process of evolution from lower species; that all animals and vegetable life was likewise directly created (Gen. 1:20-25; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16; Rom. 1:18-20) and placed under God's inviolable law that they should bring forth only after their kind (Gen. 1:21-24).

V. THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN

We believe that the Devil or Satan is a personal evil spirit (I Cor. 2:12; Eph. 2:2), formerly a holy angel (Ezek. 28:11-19), from which estate he by transgression fell (I Tim. 3:6), drawing a host of angels as their leader (Job 4:18; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:3-9), being the prince of the power of the darkness of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), that he is the enemy of God (Zech. 3:1-2; Matt. 13:39), the tempter (Gen. 3:1-6; Matt. 4:3), and accuser of the saints (Job 2:1-7; Rev. 12:10), the possessor of the power of death (Heb. 2:14-15), as allowed by God, author of all evil and of all false religions (John 8:44; II Cor. 11:13-15; 4:34), the chief power behind the present apostasy (II Thess. 2:7; I Tim. 4:1); and that he is destined to final defeat and eternal destruction in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

VI. THE FALL AND DEPRAVITY OF MAN

We believe that man was originally created upright (Eccl. 7:29) and finitely perfect (Gen. 1:27,31), but by voluntary transgression he fell from his happy and holy estate (Gen. 3:6-24) in consequence of which disobedience and threatened death was then and there inflicted (Gen. 2:16-17; Rom. 5:12); and he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins and becoming subject to the power of the Devil; that the sin of Adam was imputed to his entire race (Rom. 5:18-19; I Cor. 15:22), and that the

corrupt nature has been transmitted to all his posterity by ordinary generation (Gen. 8:21 ; Job 14:4; Ps. 51:5; 58:3; Isa. 48:8); and hence every descendent of Adam is by nature a child of wrath (Eph. 2:1-3), totally destitute of spiritual life (John 5:24; Col. 2:13), at enmity with God (Rom. 8:7), wholly inclined to evil (Job 15:16; Jer. 13:23; 17:9) and without strength (Rom. 5:6) or hope (Eph. 2:12) unless saved by Christ (Matt. 1:21) and made alive by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3, 5; 6:63; II Cor. 3:6).

VII. THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD

We believe that election is the eternal (Eph. 1:4), personal (Deut. 7:6; John 15:16; Acts 9:15), unconditional (II Tim. 1:9) purpose of God, according to which He graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves lost sinners (Rom. 11:5-6; Eph. 1:3-14; I John 4:19; I Peter 1:1-2); that being perfectly consistent with the responsibility of man through the knowledge of what is right and wrong revealed to the conscience and in the Holy Scriptures (John 9:41; Rom.2:14-16; James 4:17), it comprehends all the means in connection with the end (Acts 13:48; Rom. 8:28-31; II Thess. 2:13-14; James 1:17-18); that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable (Ex. 33:18-19; Jer. 31:3; Matt. 20:15; Rom. 9:22-24; 11:32-36; Eph. 1:11); that it utterly excludes boasting (Eph. 2:8-9) and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in GOD, and active imitation of His free mercy (I Cor. 1:26-31; 4:7; I Peter 2:9); that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree (I Cor. 9:22; II Tim. 2:10); that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel (I Thess. 1:4-10; Rom. 1:16); that it is the foundation of Christian assurance (Isa. 42:16; Rom. 8:28-31; 11:29); and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence (Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11; II Peter 1:10-11).

VIII. THE WAY OF SALVATION

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35) in a miraculous manner, born of the virgin Mary (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25), without human father (Gal. 4:4); that He by the appointment of the Father freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin (Heb. 2:14; 4:15 ; 7:26; I Peter 2:22), honored the Divine law by perfect obedience (Isa. 42:21; Matt. 5:17; Rom. 3:21; Gal. 4:4-5), and by His vicarious death made full atonement for all of the sins of all the elect (Matt. 20:28; John 10:11, 15; Isa.

53:1-12; Rom. 4:25; I Cor. 15:1-3; Heb. 9:12-14, 26; I Peter 3:18); that having risen from the dead He is now enthroned at the right hand of God in Heaven (Heb. 1:8; Col. 3:1-4; Rom. 8:34; I Peter 3:22); and uniting in His wonderful Person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Saviour (Ps. 89:19; Col. 2:9; Heb. 2:18; 7:25-26); that the full benefit of which is received by faith alone (Rom. 3:20-28) in the shed blood of Christ (Rom. 3:24-25) and that no repentance, no faith, no feeling, no resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to rules and regulations of any church, no baptism, nor any other such thing can in the least way add to the value of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (Titus 3:5).

IX. THE GRACE OF REGENERATION

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again (John 3:3, 6-7; I Cor. 2:14; II Cor. 5:17; Tit. 3:5); that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind (Deut. 30:6; Jer. 24:7; Ezek. 36:26; Gal. 5:6; I John 4:7); that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth (Ps. 119:50; Prov. 1:23; John 17:20; I Cor. 4:15; James 1:16; I Peter 1:23-25), so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel (Ps. 110:3; John 6:44-45, 65; II Cor. 10:5; Eph. 1:17-20; I Peter 1:22-25); and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance (Acts 5:31; II Tim. 2:24-25), faith (John 6:29; Acts 18:27; Phil. 1:29; Col. 2:12; I Peter 1:21), and newness of life (Rom. 6:4; I Cor. 6:9-11; I Peter 4:1-4).

X. THE BLESSINGS OF SALVATION

We believe the blessings which Christ secures to those who believe in Him is salvation; that it includes all the Divine redemptive acts of God on behalf of the elect, such as effectual calling, which is the Divine act of God effectually and irresistibly calling the elect to obtain the salvation which Christ purchased for them by His atonement (John 10:26-28); justification, which is the Divine act of God whereby He purchased by the shed blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9), and by His mighty power, the freedom of the believer from the power and dominion of sin (Rom. 3:24; 4:25; 5:1; 8:30; Acts 13:39; Titus 3:7); grace, the Divine disposition of God wherein He saves, not upon any merit of their own (Eph. 2:5, 9-10), but wholly by the work and merit of Christ (John 3:16; I Peter 2:24; 3:18; Rev. 7:13-15); propitiation, the Divine act of God

in offering Christ as the sinner's substitute (Isa. 53:4-6, 11-12); imputation, the Divine act of God whereby He imputes or counts the righteousness and excellencies of Christ to the believer (Rom. 4:1-13; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; I John 3:5); forgiveness, the Divine act of God by which He remits the sins of a believer (Jer. 31:34; Luke 24:47; Acts 13:38; Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:13; Titus 2:14); sanctification, the Divine act of God whereby He imparts His holiness to the inner man (Eph. 4:24; II Peter 1:4, I John 3:7), or newly born one, and sets apart the entire man to the service of God (Rom. 6:1-23; II Cor. 7:1; I Thess. 4:3-4; 5:22; II Tim. 2:19-22); glorification, the Divine act of God whereby that element or part of man which is mortal will be changed into a state and condition of immortality (Rom. 8:11; I Cor. 15:35-57; Phil. 3:20-21; Col 3:4; I John 3:1-2).

XI. THE WORK OF MISSIONS

We believe that Jesus Christ gave the New Testament church as an institution a world-wide and an age-lasting commission in Matthew 28:19-20 to evangelize, baptize, and catechize; that the gospel is to be preached to every creature (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8); that men and women everywhere are responsible to repent (Mark 6:12; Acts 17:30) and believe the gospel (Mark 1:15; Acts 16:31), and that no accountable person will be saved without hearing and receiving the gospel (Mark 16:16; John 3:18, 36; John 17:20; Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 1:21; II Cor. 4:3-4; I Thess. 2:16; II Thess. 1:8-9); that the heathen without the gospel are lost and will be judged by the light of nature and conscience (Ps. 19:1-4; Rom. 2:11-15); that it is the responsibility of every New Testament Baptist Church to go forth and organize new churches of like faith and order (Acts 13:1-4); that it is the duty of every church to support missionaries who are sent out by the authority of an assembly of scripturally baptized believers, who meet the Bible qualifications of a missionary (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9), who furnish a doctrinal statement, and disclosure of how mission funds are used, as they are directed by the Spirit of God and the majority vote of the whole congregation.

XII. REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God (Acts 11:16-18; I Cor. 12:3, 9; Gal. 5:22; I John 5:1); whereby

being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness (Ps. 116: 3-5; Isa. 6:5), and of the way of salvation by Christ (John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31), we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy (Luke 18:13; II Cor. 7:11); at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on Him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour (Acts 3:22-23; Rom. 10:9-11; II Tim. 1:12; Heb. 7:25).

XIII. THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end (Job 17:9; Matt. 10:22; John 8:31; Rev. 2:10); that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors (Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; 13:18; I John 2:19); that a special providence watches over their welfare (Ps. 90:1-10; 91:11-12; 121:3; Jer. 32:40; Matt. 6:30-33; Rom. 8:28); and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (II Kings 6:16; Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Heb. 1:14; 13:5; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 4:4; Jude 24-25).

XIV. THE HARMONY OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government (Ps. 19:7; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20, 31; 4:1-5); that it is holy, just, and good (Ps. 119; Rom. 7:7, 12, 14, 22; Gal. 3:21); and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin (Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; Matt. 19:21-26; John 6:44; 5:44; Rom. 8:7-8; 1 John 3:4); to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is the one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the New Testament church (Matt. 16:17-18; Rom. 8:2, 4; 10:4; I Cor. 12:28; I Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; 12:14; Jude 20-21).

XV. FREEDOM ON DIETARY FOODS

We believe that the prohibition of unclean beast, strangled meat and blood is not applicable to us and neither part of our salvation nor the cause to affect our relationship to God (Heb. 13:9), that the necessity of distinguishing clean and unclean beast was purposed for animal sacrifices and offerings (Gen. 7:2;

8:20), it was only given to the nation of Israel by way of law(Lev.11:1-2 & 45), that clean beast is the pictorial of the sacrificial death of the unblemished and Holy begotten Son of God Jesus Christ(John 1:29; 1Pet. 1:18-20; Heb. 9:11-15; 10:1-12), that by reason we are no longer offer clean beast because of Christ death that made us holy priest to offer spiritual sacrifices(1Pet.2:5); that Christ sacrificial death is not only intend to reconcile and save His people but also to gather and reconcile all things that was stained by sin(Isa.11:6-10; Eph.1:10; Col.1:20), that is why God allowed no more distinction of clean and unclean beast for consumption(Mark 7:18-19; Acts 10:10-16; Col. 2:14-16; Heb.9:10). And further the prohibition of strangled meat and blood written in Acts15:20&29 is not intended for all churches of our Lord, that the council of the church concluded to sent letter that was only meant to settled the problem of the churches who had troubled about the law of Moses and circumcision(Acts 15;23-24), that the letter sent to the Gentile churches was intent not to provoke the Jewish members in the same church and by doing these they do well; that the freedom of food consumption is not imposing to personal dislikes and it is not promoting cannibalistic act as contrary and sinning against God's moral law(1Cor.10: 23-33).

XVI. THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

We believe that a New Testament church is a local, visible, congregation of scripturally baptized believers (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:41, 47; I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:5), associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel (Acts 2:42; I Cor. 5:12-13; II Cor. 8:5); observing the ordinances instituted by Christ (Matt. 26:26-30; 28:19-20) its only Head (Eph. 1:20-23; 5:23); governed by His laws alone (Gal. 6:2; James 4:12); that such an assembly is the body and bride of Christ in its locality (John 3:29; I Cor. 12:27; II Cor. 11:2), with which all the regenerated should affiliate, for this is the only kind of true church in the world today, that its officers of ordination are pastors (Eph. 4:11) and deacons (Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:8-13); that each assembly has the absolute right to self-government as led by the Holy Spirit, free from any interference whatsoever from any organization, group, convention, association, or individual; that it is scriptural for assemblies to cooperate with each other for the furtherance of the gospel and the doctrines of the Word of God (Acts 15:1-31 ; II Cor. 8:23-24; 11:8-9; Phil. 4:15-16), but that each church is the sole human judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; that only sound New Testament Baptist

churches today preserve the essential apostolic faith and practice; that these churches have the power of perpetuating themselves; that one New Testament Baptist church should beget new churches of like faith and order; that there has been from the first century until now an unbroken chain of true churches through the ages; that these churches on earth alone possess divine authority (Matt. 28:18); therefore, we brand as unscriptural open communion, alien baptism, pulpit affiliation with heretical ministers, mission boards, ecumenicalism, unionism, modernism, modern conventionism and associationism, one-church dictatorship, preacher-dictatorship and all kindred evils arising from these practices.

XVII. WOMEN'S PLACE IN THE CHURCH

We believe that women must learn in silence inside the church with all submission and not permitted to teach, preach, lead or held in authority in the church as it was commanded by the Lord (1Cor. 14:34,37; 1Tim. 2:10-12), that they should adorn modest apparel and professing godliness with good works (1Tim. 2:8-9; Tit. 2:2); that by putting veil on the head symbolizes submission to God, angels and men (1Cor. 11:2-10), and through submission women are not allowed to the office of pastor and deacon in the church (1Tim. 3:1-2 & 12; Tit. 1:6), but that did not prevent them to the duty of the great commission to the unbelievers (Luke 24:33,47-48), and to engage in congregational activities specially in teaching the young ones as teachers of good things (2Tim. 1:5, Tit. 2:3-4).

XVIII. THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM

We believe that Bible baptism is the dipping into water (Matt. 3: 1-17; John 4:1-2; Col. 2:12) of a penitent believer (Acts 8:36-39) by the Divine authority of a true New Testament Baptist church (Matt. 28:18-20) in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, not in order to obtain the remission of sins, but to declare that the believer has already been saved by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:1-11) and to picture in a most solemn emblem His death to sin and resurrection to walk in newness of life; that it is a prerequisite to membership in the church and participation in the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41-42); that the ceremonial washing of sins is only pictorial (Acts 22:16; I Peter 3:20-21); therefore, all valid baptism must be administered by the authority of a true New Testament

Baptist church, and any so-called Baptist church which knowingly receives alien immersion is not a Scriptural Baptist church, and its ordinances are not valid.

XVIX. THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that the Lord's Supper is not a sacrament, but a solemn symbolic ordinance placed in the church by our Lord (Matt. 26: 26-30), in which the members of the one church observing the ordinance (I Cor. 11:18, 20, 22-23), by the use of unleavened bread and wine, commune not with one another, but the Lord (I Cor. 10:16); that it shows forth not their love for one another, but their Lord's death till He comes (I Cor. 11:24-26); that the one loaf of the supper points to the unity of the body observing it (I Cor. 10:17), which unity is essential to the scriptural observance of the ordinance (I Cor. 11:18-34).

XX. THE LORD'S DAY

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Rev. 1:10); that the apostles & disciples distinguished themselves of gathering after the Lord's resurrection and ascension in heaven (Matt.28:1,17; John 20:19-29; Acts 2:1); that the apostle Paul entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day was not to gathered for worship but to preached and convinced the unbelievers according to the scriptures (Acts 13:14-15,42-52; 16:13; 17:1-2; 18:1-4); that the first day it is to be kept sacred to religious purposes (Ex. 20:8; Ps. 118:24; Rev. 1:10); that Christians should refrain from all secular labor and worldly recreations (Isa. 58:13-14); that they should devoutly use all the means of grace, both private and public, by which they may be drawn closer to God and provoked to holier living (Heb. 10:25), and in preparation for the rest which remains for the people of God (Heb. 4:3-11).

XXI. CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment and arrangement, for the best interests and good order of human society (Gen. 9:1-7; Ex. 18:23; Deut. 16:18; II Sam. 23:3; Jer. 30:21; Rom. 13:1-7); and that magistrates are to be prayed for (I Tim. 2:1-3), conscientiously honored and obeyed (Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13); except in matters opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Dan. 3:15-

18; Matt. 10:28; Acts 4:18-20; 5:29), Who is the only Lord of men's conscience, and the Prince of the kings of earth (Ps. 72:11; Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4, 9-13; Rev. 19:16).

XXII GODLY LIVING

We believe that born-again believers should abstain from all appearance of evil (I Thess. 5:22; II Tim. 2:19); that they are to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world (Titus 2:11-13); that they are to be careful to maintain good works (Titus 3:8; Eph. 2:10); that they are to seek in every possible way to serve Jesus Christ (II Cor. 5:15 ; Gal. 2:20; I Peter 4:2) and to walk worthy of their high and heavenly calling (Eph. 4:1; Phil. 3:12-14; Heb. 3:1); that failure to do this will result in chastisement (Heb. 12:5-14); and that continued disobedience proves one is a stranger to the saving grace of God (Rom. 6:11-12, 16-22; I John 3:1-10).

XXIII. THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Gen. 18:23; Prov. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Jer. 15:19; Mal. 3:18; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 6:16); that such as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem (Prov. 11 :31; Rom. 1:17; 6:18, 22; I Cor. 11:32; I Peter 4:17-18; I John 3:7); while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse (Ps. 10:4; Isa. 55:6-7; John 3:36; Gal. 3:10; I John 5:19); and this distinction holds among men both in and after death (Prov. 10:24; 14:32; Eccl. 3:17; Luke 12:4-5; 16:25; John 8:21-24; Rev. 22:11).

XXIV. THE RESURRECTIONS

We believe that there will be a resurrection both of the righteous and the wicked (Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 26:8); that there will be one thousand years of time intervening between the resurrection of the righteous and of the wicked (Rev. 20:4-6) that the dead in Christ shall rise first (I Cor. 15:23; I Thess. 4:13-18) and that at the expiration of the one thousand years the wicked will be raised and judged (Rev. 20:4-11).

XXV. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe that the second coming of Christ is to be premillennial, bodily, visible, and that it will consist of two stages. His pre-tribulational appearance in the air and His post-tribulational coming to earth; that at the rapture all those who sleep in Christ will be raised in glorified bodies and all saints who live and remain on the earth will be translated that they should not see death and shall be caught up with them in the air (I Thess. 4:13-18); that at His coming to earth (Zech. 14:1-5; Matt. 24:29-31) He will sit on the throne of His glory for the first time (Matt. 25:31; Rev. 3:1), judging all men then living on the earth (Isa. 11:3-4); receiving the righteous into His kingdom and sending the unrighteous into everlasting fire (Matt. 25:31-46); that the throne of David is His throne (Isa. 9:6-7; Luke 1:32-33); that the two stages of His coming will be separated by a seven-year tribulation period (Dan. 9:2-27; Rev. 11:1-19) during which the woes depicted in the Book of Revelation will be poured out during the reign of the Antichrist (Rev. 6-19); that during the tribulation period on earth the judgment seat of Christ and the marriage of the Lamb will take place in Heaven (Matt. 5:11-12; I Cor. 3:10-15; II Cor. 5:9-10; Rev. 19:1-9) after which the Lord Jesus Christ will return with all the saints for the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:14-16; 19:11-21); that Satan will be bound a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3), and the saints will reign a thousand years with Christ on earth (Ps. 149:5-9; Dan. 7:18, 27; II Tim. 2:12; Rev. 1:5-6; 2:26-27; 5:9-10; 20:4-6).

XXVI. THE FINAL STATES

We believe that the earth will be redeemed from the curse of sin and fitted as the eternal dwelling place of the people of God (Matt. 5:5; Rom. 8:20-22); that the fitting of the earth for the eternal home of the redeemed will be by a process of purification by fire (II Peter 3:7-13); that the finally impenitent and incorrigibly wicked will be cast, both souls and resurrected bodies (Matt. 10:28; Mark 9:42-49), into the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. 20:14-15), where they shall be punished forever (Rev. 14:10-11).