

I. The Infallibility of Scripture

The Bible is the inspired Word of God to man. It gives a true history of the creation of the heavens, the earth, and of mankind. It contains a correct prophecy concerning the destiny of man and of all things. We believe that the Word of God is inerrant and infallible.

"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, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (II Tim. 3:16-17). We contend that there is true harmony in all the scriptures, when rightly divided (II Tim. 2:15). There is no salvation outside of that contained within the pages of the Bible. The only rule of faith and conduct is the Bible.

II. The Oneness of the Godhead (The Deity of Christ)

Both Old and New Testaments affirm the solemn fact that there is but one God (Deut. 6:4, Gal. 3:20, Eph. 4:6). God is a Spirit and there is but one Spirit (John 4:24; Eph. 4:4). There is but one God in essence and in person. The one God is the eternally self-existent One, the eternal "I Am" (Ex. 3:13-15), the Creator of the heavens and the earth and of all mankind. He is the one true God from whom and in whom there is a divine three-fold manifestation and relationship made known as Father (Creator, Source and Origin of all things and of all souls)

(Isa. 43:10, 44:6), Son (Redeemer in time) (Matt. 1:21, John 3:16) and Holy Ghost (Indwelling Spirit, Comforter, Sustainer, Keeper and Regenerator in the Church) (John 14:16-26, Rom. 8:11). The Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ, is that God.

Jesus Christ is the God-Man. He is the true Son of God and the true Son of man according to the flesh. Jesus is God manifested in the flesh and Savior of the world (John 1:1-14, I Tim. 3:16). He was conceived and born of the virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost (St. Luke 1:30-32); yet, this does not destroy His Pre-existence in Spirit as the Mighty God (Gen. 1:1, Isa. 9:6, Matt. 1:23, Col. 1:16-17).

III. The Atoning Blood of Jesus Christ

Without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission of sin (Heb. 9:22). The need for atonement arises from the fall of Adam into sin (Rom. 5:12). It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul

(Lev. 17:11). Since mankind was unable to redeem himself due to his fallen nature, Jesus Christ, because of His Holy and righteous nature, was the only one qualified to provide atonement (Heb. 7:26, Rom. 5:11). First Peter 1:18-19 states, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot..." Christ has made peace through the blood of His cross (Col. 1:20). "...Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. 2:13).

Hebrew 9:11-14 states, "But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the

unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

IV. The Virgin Birth

Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary, first prophesied in the Old Testament (Isa. 7:14, Jer. 31:22). The angel revealed to Joseph and Mary that this conception was without the knowing of any man, but was of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 1:18-25, Luke 1:30-38).

V. Faith and Repentance Toward God

A person must come to God by faith in the gospel message (Heb. 11:6, Rom. 1:16, Mark 16:15-16). We believe that saving faith leads one to obey the gospel, and that obedience based upon such faith brings salvation. We also believe that the only means of sinners being accepted by God is by genuine repentance of their sins. Repentance is a change of heart, mind, and attitude toward sins (Isa. 55:7). "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. 51:17). John the Baptist preached repentance. Jesus proclaimed it, and before His ascension, commanded "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:46-47).

VI. The Essentiality of Water Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the Remission of Sins

Water baptism is an essential part of New Testament salvation and not, as some teach, "just an outward form of an inward cleansing". Without proper baptism, it is impossible for one to be saved. Without proper baptism, one cannot enter into the kingdom of God (God's true church) (John 3:5). Baptism is not merely a part of local church membership.

Water baptism can be administered only by immersion (John 3:5, Rom. 6:4, Col. 2:12). Jesus said, "...born (to bring forth) of the water..." (John 3:5). Paul said, "We are buried with Him (Lord Jesus Christ) by baptism." (Rom. 6:4). Philip and the Eunuch "went down into the water", and "... come up out of the water." (Acts 8:38-39).

The purpose of water baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16). It is in baptism that the blood of Jesus Christ is applied to the believer in purification of the conscience and in the cleansing of the soul (Heb. 9:22, Acts 2:38, Rom. 6:4, I Peter 3:21).

Water baptism should be administered in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:38, 8:16, 19:5). Baptism should not be administered in the titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as some contend. Jesus was the name given to our Savior before His birth: "...for He shall save His people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21). "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12). The apostles always administered baptism in the name of Jesus Christ from the Day of Pentecost forward (Acts 2:38, 8:16, 10:48, 19:5). Let us note in Matthew 28:19, as Jesus stated His Great Commission, that the word "name" is singular and not plural. This signifies that there is to be one name used in baptism. The apostles understood that name to be Jesus. Father, Son and Holy Ghost are titles that express God's relationship to His creatures. He is the Father in creation. He is the Son in His redemptive role in saving mankind from sin. He is also the Holy Ghost in His

sanctifying and preserving the indwelt believer, but His name is one - Jesus (Zech. 14:9).

VII. Essentiality of Being Filled With the Holy Ghost With the Initial Evidence of Speaking in Other Tongues as the Holy Ghost Gives Utterance

All true believers must be filled with the Holy Ghost, as promised by our Lord (John 7:37-39). The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the birth of the Spirit (John 3:5), necessary to place the believer in the kingdom of God or the body of Christ (the Church) (I Cor. 12:12-13). The outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost marked a "new dispensation" in the Spirit's dealings with humanity as prophesied in the Old Testament (Isa. 28:11-12, Joel 2:28-29). The baptism of the Holy Ghost was also foretold by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:11), and promised by Jesus Christ (John 14:26, 15:26). It was first poured out on the Jews (Acts 2:1-4), then upon the Samaritans (Acts 8:17), and finally upon the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-46, 19:6).

One has neither the nature nor the power to live for Christ nor to perform His work without the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the divine life of Christ dwelling in the believer (Gal. 2:20). It is the evidence of God's ownership and the preserving and sealing of the believer. The Apostle Paul shows that the Holy Ghost comes after one believes; He does not come simultaneously with believing, as some evangelicals teach (Eph. 1:13-14).

The initial evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost is speaking in other tongues (languages) as the Spirit gives utterance. It was prophesied in Isaiah 28:11, foretold by Jesus Christ (Mark 16:17, John 3:8), and evidenced in the early church (Acts 2:4, 10:44-46, 19:6). Speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Holy Ghost (other tongues - Acts 2:4) is not to be confused with the gift of tongues (unknown tongues - I Cor. 14:2), an endowment given by the Holy Ghost, along with other spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12:7-11). Unknown tongues is that gift given by God to some believers to be used for self-edification (I Cor. 14:4), except when there is an interpreter present (I Cor. 14:27-28) to interpret for the edification of the church.

There are also other distinctions between speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterances and speaking in unknown tongues. The gift of unknown tongues is controlled by the possessor of the gift and needs regulation (I Cor. 14:23-28). Paul gives regulation relative to unknown tongues in I Corinthians 14:27-28. Another distinction is that other tongues were understandable by unregenerate people (Acts 2:5-8); whereas, unknown tongues can only be understood by one with the gift of interpretation and as he interprets it to the church (I Cor. 14:2, 14:27-28).

VIII. A Life of Sanctification, Consecration, and Godliness

The Christian life is one of sanctification (I Thes. 4:7). After being saved, we are commanded to "go and sin no more." (John 8:11). Our lives are to be set apart from sin, consecrated, and dedicated solely to God for His glory. We are commanded to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world (Titus 2:12). We are also instructed that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12:14).

We must cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (II Cor. 7:1) and separate ourselves from all worldliness (James 4:4). We contend that sanctification initially begins at regeneration. It

continues progressively throughout the life of the believer and is finalized at the rapture in which the Christian will receive complete Christ-likeness (I John 3:1-3). We believe that Biblical sanctification can be produced only by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. When the believer is fully occupied with love for his Lord, it is the "constraining love of Christ" (II Cor. 5:14) that causes him to gladly live a sanctified, consecrated, and godly life.

IX. Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance commanded by Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:26-29, I Cor. 11:23-32). Melchizedek administered the same (Gen. 14:18, Heb. 6:20). It is our conviction to use (unleavened) bread and wine (Matt. 26:17, I Cor. 5:6-8). The bread and the wine are legitimate representatives of the broken body and the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:26-28, I Cor. 11:24-25).

X. Feet Washing

We should follow the example of Feet Washing set forth by our Lord and Master in John 13:2-15. Feet Washing is not arbitrary. We are commanded by our Lord to practice it (John 13:14-15). We are instructed by our Lord Jesus to "teach them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you". (Matthew 28:20). Feet Washing is an example of humility or of lowly and willing service. In I Timothy 5:10, the Apostle Paul cited Feet Washing as an observance of the faithful and dedicated.

When Feet Washing is observed, it should take place immediately following Communion. It should not be observed without Communion, nor every time Communion is observed.

XI. Divine Healing

The Lord alone is our Healer (Ex. 15:26, Psa. 103:2-3). We believe that divine healing is a benefit for all through Calvary. This benefit is subject to the will of God. Divine healing was purchased for us by the blood of Jesus Christ, being especially specified by His stripes (Isa. 53:5, I Peter 2:24). The Word of God states that divine healing is a sign that will follow the church of the gospel age (Mark 16:15-18), and that Christians should call for the Elders of the church for divine healing (James 5:14-16).

XII. Tithes and Offerings

Tithes and offerings are the apostolic principles of financing God's church. A tithe is the tenth of one's earnings. An offering is that which is given of free-will in honor and sacrifice to God above one's tithe. Giving is also a means of receiving blessings from the Lord (Lev. 27:30, Mal. 3:8-10, Matt. 23:23, Prov. 3:9, Luke 6:38, I Cor. 9:11-14, I Cor. 16:2, II Cor. 9:6-8).

XIII. The Imminent Pre-Millennial Return of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Pre-Millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in bodily form as He went up (Acts 1:11) is doctrinally set forth by the apostles in the New Testament. It was taught by Jesus Christ and the early church looked forward to it (Matt. 24, Acts 3:19-21, Phil. 3:20-21, I Thes. 4:14-17, Titus 2:13-14, Rev. 22:20).

XIV. The Resurrection and Rapture of the True Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ

The scripture teaches the resurrection of those who have died in Christ and their rapture, together with those living in Christ, "to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thes. 4:13-17, Rom. 8:23, Titus 2:13, I Cor. 15:51-52).

It is an event for "catching away" holy people (His bride, His church) who have accepted redemption through His blood, by birth of water and of the Spirit and are found faithful when Christ comes.

This event takes the church out of the world before the great tribulation (Isa. 26:20-21). This is the hope of the church and grounds for the believer's purification (I John 3:3).

XV. Confession of Sins

Another important area of the Apostolic Doctrine is confession of sins. It is not God's will that the Christian commit sin; therefore, God has given us the Holy Ghost which empowers the Christian to live a victorious life (Acts 1:8, I John 2:1). Through lack of wisdom, faith, or mental alertness, the Christian, at times, fails to do what he should or does things he should not. Confession is the means instituted of God for the Christian to be forgiven and cleansed of his sins. In I John 1:9, we are told, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". This is only if we confess.

Confession is the recognition and acknowledgement (admission) of one's sins through godly sorrow and repentance (II Cor. 7:10). The necessity of confession is seen in Proverbs 28:13, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy".

God, in His eternal purpose of salvation, has been pleased to use human agency in the revealing, communicating, and carrying out of His will (human instrumentality). We believe that it is according to Apostolic Doctrine that confession be made to the pastor (Matt. 16:19, John 20:23, II Cor. 2:10, II Cor. 5:18-21). Let us be reminded that sin cannot be covered from God (Prov. 28:13); therefore, a human agent is necessary in confession.

Part of the pastor's role in confession is to reveal the will of God to the erring Christian, when necessary, and to give guidance to one desiring restoration and fellowship with God and the church. The pastor is the overseer and under-shepherd of God over the precious flock, watching for their souls (Acts 20:28, Heb. 13:17). Therefore, it should not be thought unreasonable that the pastor should be looked to in all matters concerning the spiritual well-being, as well as the moral and mental health of the dear children of God.

XVI. Eternal Judgment

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this, the judgment." (Heb. 9:27). The godly will appear before the judgment seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10). This is the judgment for reward for the works of a believer. The final judgment is known as the Great White Throne Judgment. Those of this judgment are the wicked from the beginning of human history to the judgment at the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:11-15). This judgment of the wicked results in everlasting punishment.