

The Associational Baptist Church Manual

A collection of historic Baptist documents and pastoral helps
to strengthen local churches

Third Edition



Edited by: Dr. Charley Holmes & Jordan M. Tew

*“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus
throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”*

Ephesians 3:21

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Introduction

By Dr. Charley Holmes
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*That the man of God may be perfect,
thoroughly furnished unto all good works (II Timothy 3:17)*

Do you believe in the sufficiency of Scripture? Many Baptists say they do, yet their practice denies it. The word “sufficiency” means adequacy and competency. In the biblical context, it means, as Peter says in 2 Peter 1:3, that God has provided all we need for life and godliness (what we believe and how we live what we believe). Paul says in II Timothy 3:17 (paraphrased) that all scripture is from God and enables those who serve him to be adequately equipped for all (not some or most) good works.

All good works include all aspects of our individual life, our family and community life, and, especially, our religious belief and practice.

Our current doctrinal statement puts it this way in Section II, A & B:

- A. The Scriptures are God's inerrant revelation, complete in the Old and New Testaments, written by divinely inspired men as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:21). Those men wrote not in words of human wisdom but in words taught by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:13).
- B. The Scriptures provide the standard for the believer's faith and practice (II Tim. 3:16, 17), reveal the principles by which God will judge all (Heb. 4:12; John 12:48), and express the true basis of Christian fellowship (Gal. 1:8, 9; II John 9-11).

The New Hampshire Confession states it more clearly:

- I. Of the Scriptures, we believe that God authored the Bible through divinely inspired men. The Bible is, therefore, the inerrant, infallible, and perfect treasure of heavenly instruction that reveals both God's purpose in salvation and the precepts by which He will judge the world. The Bible is the core of Christian unity and the

supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

II. The doctrinal statement of the first association of Baptists in America was even more specific:

1. The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience, although the light of nature and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and His will which is necessary unto salvation. – *Philadelphia Baptist Confession of Faith*

Many Baptists say they believe in the doctrine of sufficiency, yet their practice denies it. The truth of this statement has a seemingly infinite number of examples. Here are a few examples from our day:

1. Some say they believe only truly regenerate people can be church members, yet they add members to the church rolls who cannot give an account of their beliefs or display evidence of repentance.
2. Some say they believe the role of pastor/teacher is restricted to males, yet they allow women to teach mixed groups.
3. Some say they believe the Scriptures teach what ought to be done in public worship, yet they include unbiblical elements in worship services.
4. Some say they believe in associational polity as found in the New Testament, yet they neglect to stay in fellowship with other churches of like faith and order and behave more like extreme independent Baptists.
5. Some say they believe the Great Commission was given to local churches, yet they relinquish the Great Commission to para-church organizations and mission boards/societies.

In an effort to help us practice what we say we believe, Baptist Publishing House is releasing the *Associational Baptist Church Manual*, which contains historic Baptist documents to strengthen churches in the tradition of J.E. Cobb's *Baptist Church Manual*.

1. The Essential Qualities of a Church

By: J.E. Cobb and Dr. Charley Holmes

Introduction and History

This chapter is derived from J. E. Cobb's *Baptist Church Manual*, originally published in 1941. His manual has served Baptist churches well over the years—especially in defining the nature of New Testament churches.

The Nature of a Scriptural Church

What is a scriptural church? We authoritatively say, “A New Testament church is an assembly of people called out from the world by the preaching of the gospel, accompanied by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and baptized in the faith and fellowship of the gospel to a life of conformation to the will of God, to execute the will and perpetuate the ordinances of Christ until He comes.” That is a comprehensive definition of a scriptural or New Testament church.

New Testament churches have:

1. The means of the Word, ordained by God himself, to give the world the knowledge of its sinful condition and state, and to reveal Christ as the all-sufficient Savior.
2. The active and energizing work or the creative work of the Holy Spirit.
3. The scriptural doctrine of baptism as to its authority, act, and design.
4. The doctrine that the church has been made, by Christ, the custodian of truth, and the agent for the dissemination of truth in the world.
5. The doctrine that Christ is the head of and lawgiver to the church.
6. The doctrine that the church is responsible to Christ only.

7. The independence or autonomy of the church.
8. The doctrine of the congregational or democratic form of church government.
9. The doctrine of equality in the membership of a church.
10. The doctrine that the church is the sole agent in the execution of the will or law and the perpetuation of the ordinances of Christ.
11. The doctrine and fact of the second coming of the Lord.
12. No prohibition of the association of churches as equals in performing the work given by Christ to His churches.

From the foregoing definition of the term “church,” only a local body can fulfill these terms. Things are comprehended in the definition that would be an impossibility for a universal body to perform. Only a local, visible assembly of people can meet the stipulations and specifications of a New Testament church. Every time Christ or the apostles referred to the church, they used the term in the institutional sense or with reference to a local body of believers.

The Quality of Spirituality

The church is a spiritual body or assembly. That is, she has spiritual work to perform. Her duty is to perform a spiritual function in contradistinction to bodies that perform only worldly functions. That idea is plainly discerned from Paul’s statement in Romans 12:1, 2 ASV:

“I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

The American Standard Version gives us the words “spiritual service,” which is a closer rendition than the King James Version’s “reasonable service.”

The point is that the individual members of a church, having been redeemed, should dedicate their lives to the spiritual service of God. The members as a whole will be doing cooperatively the thing the apostle admonished. A church of the Lord Jesus Christ has no business getting mixed up in worldly affairs. The church is not a commercial institution; therefore, she should not engage in worldly pursuits or avocations.

The Quality of Separation

The church is to be separate from the world. Jesus said concerning His people: “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (John 17:16). Jesus was in the world, but He was not of it. His life and His doctrine were in opposition to that of the world. The Scriptures teach that the church should be a separate body—separate from everything that is worldly in purpose and nature.

The church is to be separate from the world in her conversation and life. Paul instructed the church at Corinth concerning keeping herself separate from the world and worldliness (II Corinthians 6:11-18). The instructions are just as applicable to churches today as they were to that church then.

Jesus said, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16).

What influence for good and righteousness will a church have if her members indulge in all kinds of worldly and wicked practices? If members of churches would act upon Paul’s advice to “abstain from all appearance of evil,” they would yield more good influence for Christ. That is their mission as the children of God and members of His churches.

The church is to be separate from the state. The church and the state are entirely separate institutions. They should have no connection. The Scriptures teach the principle of separation of the church and state. Jesus did not come into the world to be a worldly king or set up a worldly kingdom. In the temptation in the wilderness, as recorded by Matthew and Luke, the devil offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship him, but He refused. Before Pilate, He said, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36).

The Quality of Preservation

Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men” (Matthew 5:13).

Salt has a preserving element in it; the church also has that effect. The world would have been destroyed long ago had it not been for the influence of the church. Salt acts as a disinfectant by destroying germs and retarding their growth. The influence of the church restrains the evil of the world. Salt makes food more palatable; the church makes the world a more pleasant place in which to live. She improves the moral taste. Salt will give one a thirst for water; the church, living up to the scriptural standard, will give people a thirst for the Water of Life—Christ. Church members should exercise great care that they might wield a good influence on the world.

The Quality of Perpetuation

Christ gave the church the quality of perpetuation. We cannot truthfully say that He gave her the quality of self-perpetuation, for the quality to perpetuate herself is a divinely given one. By the term, perpetuity does not mean that an individual, local church is perpetuated unto the consummation of the ages, but that the church, as an institution, is perpetuated eternally.

Christ told the church that the gates of hell would not prevail against her (Matthew 16:18). In the Great Commission, Jesus promised, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (age)” (Matthew 28:20). Paul said, “Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end” (Ephesians 3:21). It is evident that if the gates of hell cannot prevail against the church, and if Christ is present with her unto the end of the age, and if God is to get glory in the church throughout the ages, the church is of necessity perpetuated.

The Quality of Reproduction

When Christ instituted the church, He gave her the quality of reproduction. Jesus does not personally institute each true church any more than God directly creates each individual human. When God created man, He gave him the ability to reproduce. By that quality, man has been perpetuated upon the earth. When Christ instituted the first church, He gave her the power, ability, or quality of reproduction. Churches have existed

ever since. They will continue to exist. When Christ comes again, He will find the same church He left upon the earth—not the same individual members, but the same church.

The Quality of Peculiarity

The apostle Peter said that the saved are a “peculiar people.” There are certain peculiar characteristics to be found of Christ’s churches that cannot be found in other groups. Those peculiar marks distinguish the churches of Christ from all others. Some of the “so-called” churches may have some of those peculiar marks, but none of them will have all of them. The peculiar traits are named but not argued.

1. A lineage from the church instituted by Christ during His personal ministry.
2. A regenerated membership.
3. A biblical order of the New Testament commandments: (a) repentance, (b) faith, (c) baptism, (d) the Lord’s Supper.
4. The practice of absolute equality in the membership.
5. Acceptance of the Bible as the only and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice.
6. An experiencing of being persecuted, but never persecuting others.

Those six peculiarities completely differentiate the churches of Jesus Christ from all other religious groups.

The Quality of Faithfulness

The Lord commanded His churches to be faithful. In commanding them to do so, He implanted in the hearts of the members of the church a disposition to be faithful. Churches are sometimes derelict, the same as individuals, but in the main, they are faithful to the great fundamentals of the faith of Christ. This quality of faithfulness accounts for the purity of the churches in this age. That is a quality that should be well-guarded. It is a matter of prophecy that in the last days, some churches will become unfaithful to their Lord and Master. There is a promise to the faithful: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

The Quality of Independence or Autonomy

Autonomy means that a church of Jesus Christ is self-governing. The church is the highest ecclesiastical authority. No association, convention, conference, or synod can dominate a scriptural church.

The authority of the church is not vested in a bishop, pope, or presbyter; the authority is inherent in the church herself. The pastor of a church has no coercive authority over a church. He has scriptural authority as an under-shepherd of Jesus Christ to teach, preach, and administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, but no domineering authority.

The Lord gave the church the right to judge. She judges her members concerning the qualifications for membership and the conduct of the members. She judges her leaders concerning their qualifications and service. In I Corinthians 5:12-13, Paul said:

“What have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore, put away from among yourselves that wicked person.”
Since Paul was a scriptural preacher, he admonished the church to do the judging and the excommunicating.

The Lord left in the hands of the church the authority to execute His laws and to carry out His Great Commission to evangelize the world. No man has the right to preach or teach authoritatively or to baptize believers unless authorized by the church to do so. The authority to preach the gospel, to baptize, to observe the Lord's Supper, and to teach the observance of all things whatsoever the Lord commanded was given to the church—and to the church only.

The commission to evangelize the world was given to the church. Since the Lord gave the commission to the church as an institution, and since the institution still exists, then we are under the commission. We are as obligated to evangelize the world as the first church. Like local bodies (Biblically ordered Baptist churches) are free to associate themselves in the execution of the will and law of Christ while maintaining their existence as independent and autonomous churches.

Concerning mission work, it is granted that missionary efforts must begin from some church. It is done by missionaries being chosen by local church bodies, joining with other churches by means of messengers, who should be instructed, and agree to help in their support. That is nothing more than simple church cooperation or association which violates no law of Christ. If churches should join an organization in which they would be forced to surrender their independence, they would violate the plain teachings of Jesus Christ.

2. The Association of Churches

An update of Cobb's article by Dr. Charley Holmes

The association of the churches of Jesus Christ as equals is a New Testament doctrine.¹ The concept of independent churches working together on an equal footing is directly tied to the doctrine of the inerrancy and sufficiency of Scripture.

Inerrancy means the Scriptures are without error, while sufficiency means that the Scriptures provide all that is needed for the believer's doctrine (beliefs) and practice (actions). The inerrancy and sufficiency of Scripture are very important. By affirming these truths, one holds that the Scriptures are without error, are complete, and provide all the information needed for the beliefs and practice of any believer or church. Further, believers who affirm these doctrines will practice only what is commanded or demonstrated by clear example in the Scriptures.

The Scriptures nowhere command that one church cannot fellowship with or join in Great Commission efforts with another church. Conversely, we see no example of one church remaining isolated from all others. Likewise, there are no scriptural instructions or examples of churches sending representatives to form nonprofit corporations (i.e., conventions—local, state, or national) to do the work of the Great Commission.²

¹ Biblical basis of churches associating together:

- Acts 11:22-29: Sending teachers to help weak churches, provision of help to sister church
- Acts 15: Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem by the church, they were received by the church in Jerusalem, messengers were sent by the church in Antioch to report to other churches, the report went to different groups of churches (associations).
- Romans 15:26-27: The church in Macedonia and Achaia contributed to the needs of the church in Jerusalem.
- 2 Corinthians 8:19-23: Churches chose a messenger to do the benevolent work of the Macedonian church.

² Religious conventions had their genesis in the late 1700's. At that time a common strategy was for individuals to band together for secular or political causes as societies (clubs). The most common societies promoted temperance or abolition. Some well-intentioned believers, who were impatient with the speed at which churches and associations did missions work went

The churches of Christ in New Testament times associated in the work, but they in no way so combined as to lose their independence. If churches so combine as to lose their individuality, independence, and freedom, they cease to be scriptural churches. A fundamental characteristic of a Baptist church is her independence and individuality. A scriptural association is not composed of messengers who are elected by the churches and sent to a convention to vote as individuals. It is composed of churches.

Churches in a district, county, state, or nation may work together in carrying out the will of the divine head of the church. Any such cooperation is an association. Most churches associate on a county, district, and state basis. There is also the shared effort of most of our churches in the Baptist Missionary Association of America. All the associations are alike in principle; the only difference is that the state associations cover more territory than the county or district associations. The national association includes churches throughout the United States. District or county associations are chiefly concerned with evangelizing and discipling the territory contiguous to the churches composing them; the state associations are primarily interested in evangelizing the state in which the churches composing them are located. The national association's chief work is to evangelize and disciple internationally.

Limits of an Association

It is not the duty of associations, either district, state, or national, to control or to exercise any sort of dominion over the churches (directing activities or fundraising). Instead of the association "running" the churches, the churches must "run" the association.

Associations, in the strict sense of the term, are not organizations. When the messengers of the churches composing associations meet, they enter into a temporary organization. That is necessary in order that everything may be carried on in order and in decency. While they are in the

beyond the Scriptures and founded societies/conventions. This, supposedly, was to speed up missions activities.

Strictly exclusive churches isolated from one another is less than what the Bible teaches, being **sub-biblical**. There are no examples of religious corporations (conventions) in the Scriptures and are, therefore, **extra-biblical**. The banding together of autonomous churches who have common beliefs and practices is the New Testament standard. Churches are to be **autonomous but not alone**.

(Footnotes 1 and 2 by Dr. Charley Holmes)

organization, however, they can transact no business or do anything that will, in any way, bind the churches.

The association is a creature of the churches; the churches are not creatures of the association. The association proper never meets to transact any sort of business; only the messengers of the churches composing the association meet and counsel concerning the execution of the work authorized by the respective churches. It is the duty of messengers to know the will of their respective churches and to do only that which they know is the will of the churches. Actions initiated by messengers in the meetings without the knowledge or consent of their churches cannot be binding upon the churches.

Churches cannot be bound by any law, duty, or mission by which the Lord, Who is the head of the church, has not already bound them. Churches cannot transfer their authority to messengers who are sent to the stated meetings of the association. The associational meeting is merely a committee composed of messengers sent by their churches. Churches may commit certain duties to committees to be performed, but they cannot commit to them any authority. The messengers of the churches can voice only what is the will of their respective churches. The authority is, and must ever remain, in the churches.

Values of an Association

The Lord recognized the value and importance of fellowship and association. In unity, there is strength. In the constitution of a church, no person loses his individuality or liberty. A church of Jesus Christ is a local, visible body of baptized believers united under the authority of God's Word, properly observing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper and fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus could have commissioned each disciple individually to do His work, but He willed that the Great Commission should be accomplished through the unified efforts of local churches. Therefore, He instituted His church that believers might unite their efforts for the ongoing of His work.

The church is Christ's divine instrument. She provides an avenue for communion and worship. A live coal lifted from the fire and placed alone on the hearth will soon fade into coldness while the other coals glow with heat. Through the cooperation of God's children within local churches, more can be accomplished in a given community. Through the association of churches, more can be accomplished in the world. One church, working

alone, cannot fulfill the Great Commission, but scriptural churches working together can evangelize and disciple the whole world. Two or more churches may associate in shared work, just as two or more individuals can do so. They can do so without surrendering their individuality, independence, or rights as churches. That is the kind of association taught in the Scriptures. Solomon, though not writing to churches, stated the principles of association:

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him: and a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).

Solomon was merely stating that in unity, there is strength. Churches may work together in unity, but they cannot form a union. It is entirely optional with a church as to whether she associates with other churches. There is no law that can force a church to do so, for there is no ecclesiastical authority higher than that of a church. The way in which churches may associate in the work of evangelization and benevolence is revealed in the Scriptures.

By studying Acts and the Epistles,³ one will learn that missionaries were sent out, that is elected, by a church. Other churches then cooperated in supporting them. In the associational work of the churches known as the Baptist Missionary Association of America, missionaries are elected by their churches. Then the association, which is composed of churches, agrees to work together in their support. That is truly associated work. No church surrenders her independence in associating in the work of supporting the missionaries chosen by means of messengers of sister churches.

There are two extremes into which churches have fallen as to the way of doing missionary and benevolent work. The first is practiced by churches cooperating according to the convention model. The expressed purpose of the Southern Baptist Convention is to "elicit, combine, and direct the energies of the entire denomination⁴." Any agency or institution that can

³ See footnote 1

⁴ Baptist Faith and Message 2000, Article XIV

elicit, combine, and direct the energies of the entire denomination, meaning all the churches, can easily become an overbearing influence. The convention system tends to remove the decision-making process too far from the churches. It is unscriptural for churches to surrender their independence and become subject to any other body and to deed the Great Commission to an unscriptural organization. The second extreme is churches that independently approve and send missionaries, then solicit aid from other churches in his support. This method gives the other churches no voice whatsoever in the selection of such missionaries and seems to disregard the independence of the other churches. One church cannot demand that other churches support those elected by her. Is that not an infringement of one church upon another to solicit her support of those elected without her voice? Would there not be as much propriety in a church's calling a pastor and soliciting the aid of other churches in his support as there is in electing missionaries and soliciting funds from other churches to support them?

No one church can do all that is required in the Great Commission in regard to evangelizing the world, but all working together can send the gospel of Christ into every nation. The Scriptures make due provision for such shared efforts. It is the part of wisdom for the churches to follow the scriptural way of association in the work.

Participation in an Association

It is a common practice for a church, coming into a district association, to present a petitionary letter. The letter usually certifies to the messengers of the churches composing the association that the church is sound in the faith and regular in her order. As a rule, information is given as to her Articles of Faith and Church Covenant. The messengers, being satisfied as to the soundness and regularity of the church, fellowship the messengers from the petitioning church. The moderator, as a rule, gives the hand of fellowship. In the different state associations and in the Baptist Missionary Association of America, the same general procedure is followed.

When a church wishes to come into the fellowship of a state association or the Baptist Missionary Association of America, she presents a petitionary letter stating agreement with the Statement of Principles of Cooperation, and the church is received by vote of the messenger body. That is done as a matter of precaution. Our churches should believe in

taking every precaution possible to keep those not in agreement with them from having their representatives among them to cause friction. They desire association with all churches which are in full sympathy and fellowship with their principles, but they do not want any which disagree with them on their principles of associated work.

When churches come into the associated work, they should be willing fully to declare themselves in fellowship with other churches in the work. All orthodox churches which so declare themselves will be heartily received into the various district, state, and national associations. Churches who adopt beliefs or practices not in line with the churches in the association may be disfellowshipped, which is to be removed from the association if that is the desire of the churches.⁵

⁵ “Nevertheless, the associated body may exclude from their connection any church that may act as an unworthy part. Indeed, it would be absurd to examine churches at their admission, if afterward they are to be continued in the connection, let their principles and practice be what they may . . .

The association has a right to call any delinquent church to account, whether for malicious abuse of its power towards or over any of its members, neglect of attendance at the association, disregard of those things recommended to them, or any material defect in principle or practice; and if satisfactory reasons are not given, therefore, nor repentance, then to exclude them.”

(Refer to the chapter titled “Guidebook for Baptist Churches,” Chapter 11, Parts 6 & 10)

3. The New Hampshire Confession of Faith

Introduction and History

This Confession was drawn up by the Rev. John Newton Brown, D.D., of New Hampshire, about 1833. Baptists have accepted it as a clear and historic statement of their faith. The BMA of America has endorsed the New Hampshire Confession of Faith as a representative compendium of what Baptists have historically believed through the centuries.

This confession was consulted and provided a pattern and guide for the formulation of the Doctrinal Statement of the BMA of America. The version included in this book is taken from J. M. Pendleton's Church Manual, originally printed in 1867, which served as the basis for the version found in Cobb's Manual.

(Original Scripture citations are at the conclusion of this chapter.)

I. Of the Scriptures

We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principals by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

II. Of the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

III. Of the Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of

God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

IV. Of the Way of Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God; who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by His personal obedience and by death made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

V. Of Justification

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

VI. Of the Freeness of Salvation

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

VII. Of Grace in Regeneration

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life.

VIII. Of 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; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the

way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; 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 Savior.

IX. Of God's Purpose of Grace

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with the regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.

X. Of Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in continual use of the appointed means – especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

XI. Of Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare, and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

XII. Of 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; that it is holy, just, and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.

XIII. Of a Gospel Church

We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only scriptural officers are bishops or pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

XIV. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is a prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's supper, in which the members of the church by the sacred use of bread and wine are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

XV. Of the Christian Sabbath

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Sabbath; and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for that rest that remains for the people of God.

XVI. Of the Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except only in the things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

XVII. Of the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only 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; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

XVIII. Of the World to Come

We believe that the end of this world is approaching; that at the Last Day Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; and that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be condemned to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

Scripture References for the New Hampshire Confession

Article I:

2 Tim. 3:16, 17. "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." Also, 2 Peter 1: 20-21; 2 Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16; 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16: 29-31; Psalm 119: 111; Rom. 3:1, 2.

2 Tim. 3:15, "...able to make thee wise unto salvation." Also, 1 Peter 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:16; John 5:38, 39.

Prov. 30:5, 6. "Every word of God is pure, ...Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. Also, John 17:17;

Rev. 22: 18, 19; Rom. 3:4.

Rom. 2:12. "As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law."

John 12:47, 48. "If any man hear my words...the word that I have spoken...the same shall judge him in the last day." Also 1 Cor. 4:3, 4; Luke 10:10-16; 12:47, 48.

Phil. 3:16. "Let us walk in the same rule; let us mind the same thing." Also Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1, 2; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Peter 4:11.

1 John 4:1. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God."

Isa. 8:20. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

1 Thess. 5:21. "Prove all things."

2 Cor. 13:5: "Prove your own selves." Also Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6;

Jude 3: 5; Eph. 6:17; Ps. 119:59, 60; Phil. 1:9-11.

Article II:

1 John 4:24. "God is a Spirit." Ps. 147:5. "His understanding is infinite."

Ps. 83:18. "Thou whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth." Heb. 3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:10.

1 John 4:24. "God is a Spirit."

Ps. 147:5. "His understanding is infinite."

Ps. 83:18. "Thou whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth." Heb. 3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:10.

Mark 12:30. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

Rev. 4:11. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Matt. 10:37; Jer. 2:12, 13.

Matt. 28:19. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

John 15:26. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 1 John 5:7.

John 10:30. "I and my Father are one." John 5:17; 14:23; 17:5, 10;

Acts 5:3, 4; 1 Cor. 2:10, 11; Phil. 2:5, 6.

Eph. 2:18. "For through Him (The Son) we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father."

2 Cor. 13:14. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." Rev. 1:4, 5 and compare 2:7.

Article III:

Gen. 1:27. "God created man in his own image."

Gen. 1:31. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." Eccl. 7:29; Acts 15:26; Gen. 2:16.

Gen. 3:6-24. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. Therefore, the Lord God drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden, Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life." Rom. 5:12.

Rom. 5:19. "By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners."

John 3:6; Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:15-19; 8:7.

Isa. 53:6. "We have all turned, everyone to his own way." Gen. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-18.

Eph. 2:1-3. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others."

Rom. 1:18. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. 1:32; 2:1-16; Gal. 3:10; Matt. 20:15.

Ezek. 18:19, 20. "Yet say ye, Why? Doth the son bear the iniquity of the father? ...the soul that sinneth it shall die, The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

Rom. 1:20. "So that they are without excuse."

Rom. 3:19. "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Gal. 3:22.

Article IV:

Eph. 2:5. "By grace ye are saved." Matt. 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; Acts 15:11.

John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 1:1-14; Heb. 4:14; 12:24.

Phil. 2:6-7. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Heb. 2:9, 14; 2 Cor. 15:21.

Isa. 42:21. "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law and make it honorable." Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4, 5; Rom. 3:21.

Isa. 53:4, 5. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Matt. 20:28; Rom. 4:25; 3:21-26; 1 John 4:10; 2:3; 1 Cor. 15:1-3; Heb. 9:13-15.

Heb. 1:8 "Unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."
Heb. 1:3; 8:1; col. 3:1-4.

Heb. 7:25. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Col. 2:9. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Heb. 2:18 "In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 7:26; PS. 89:19; Ps. 45.

Article V:

John 1:16. "Of his fullness have all we received." Eph. 3:8.

Acts 13:39. "By him all that believe are justified from all things."

Isa. 3:11, 12; Rom. 8:1.

Rom. 5:9. "Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Zech. 13:1; Matt 9:6; Acts 10:43.

Rom. 5:17. "They which receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Titus 3:5, 6;

1 Peter 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom. 5:21.

Rom. 4:4, 5. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Rom. 5:21; 6:23; Phil. 3:7-9.

Rom. 5:19. "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Rom. 3:24-28; 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12.

Rom. 5:1, 2. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Rom. 5:3. "We glory in tribulations also."

Rom. 5:11. "We also joy in God." 1 Cor. 7:30, 31; Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8.

Article VI:

Isa. 55:1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

Rev. 22:17. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Luke 4:17.

Rom. 6:26. "The gospel...according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." Mark. 1:15; Rom. 1:15-17.

John 5:40. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Matt. 23:37; Rom. 9: 32; Prov. 1:24; Acts 13:46.

John 3:19. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil." Matt. 11:20; Luke 19:27; 2 Thess.1:8.

Article VII:

1 John 3:3. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:6, 7; 1 Cor. 1:14;

Rev. 8:7-9; 21:27.

2 Cor. 5:17. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Ezek. 36:26; Deut. 30:6; Rom 2:28, 29; 5:5; 1 John 4:7.

John 3:8. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

John 1:13. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." James 1:16-18. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 2:13.

1 Peter 1:22-25. "Ye have purified your souls by obeying the truth through the Spirit."

1 John 5:1. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-11.

Eph. 5:9. "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness and truth. Rom. 8: 9; Gal. 5: 16-23; Eph. 3: 14-21; Matt. 3: 8-10; 7:20;

1 John 5: 4, 18.

Article VIII:

Mark 1:15. "Repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Acts 11:18. "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

Eph. 2:8. "By grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

1 John 5:1. “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.”

John 16:8. “He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”

Acts 2:37, 38. “They were pricked in their heart, and said – Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins.” Acts 16:30, 31.

Luke 18:13. “And the publican – smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” Luke 15:18-21; James 4:7-10; 2 Cor. 7:11; Rom. 10:12, 13; Ps. 51.

Article IX:

Rom. 10:9-11. “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Acts 3: 22, 23; Heb. 5:14; Ps. 2:6; Heb. 1:8; 8:25; 2 Tim. 1:12.

2 Tim. 1:8, 9. “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God; who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Peter 1:1, 2; Rom. 11:5, 6; John 15:16; 1 John 4:19; Hosea 12:9.

2 Thess. 2:13, 14. “But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt. 20:16; Acts 15: 14.

Exod. 33:18, 19. “And Moses said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will cause all my goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.”

Matt. 20:15. “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?” Eph. 1: 11; Rom 9:23, 24; Jer. 31:3; Rom. 11:28, 29; James 1:17, 18; 2 Tim 1:9; Rom. 11:32-36.

1 Cor. 4:7. “For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” 1 Cor. 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; 4:16;

Col. 3:12; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:10; 1 Peter 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:12.

2 Tim. 2:10. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

1 Cor. 9:22. "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." Rom. 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 2 Peter 1:10.

1 Thess. 1:4-10. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God; for our gospel came unto you, not in words only, but in power, and the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," etc.

Rom. 8:28-31. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and them he justified he also glorified. What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

2 Peter 1:10, 11. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Phil. 3: 12; Heb. 6:11.

Article X:

1 Thess. 4:3. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."

1 Thess. 5:23. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." 2 Cor. 7: 1; 13: 9; Eph. 1:4.

Prov. 14:8. "The path of the just is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6: 1; 2 Peter 1: 5-8; Phil. 3:12-16.

John 2:29. "If ye know that he [God] is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."

Rom. 8:5. "They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." John 3: 6; Phil. 1: 9-11; Eph. 1:13, 14.

Phil. 2: 12, 13. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." Eph. 4:11, 12; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:5;

Luke 11:35; 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18; 4:30.

Article XI:

John 8:31. “Then said Jesus – If ye continue in my word, then ye are my disciples indeed.”

1 John 2:19. “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

John 13:18; Matt. 13:20, 21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9.

Rom. 8:28. “And we know all things work together for good unto them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose.”

Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Ps. 121:3; 91:11, 12.

Phil. 1:6. “He who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Phil. 2:12, 13; Jude 24, 25; Heb. 1:1: 14; 2 Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; 1 John 4:4.

Article XII:

Rom. 3:31. “Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law.” Matt. 5: 17; Luke 16: 17; Rom. 3: 20; 4: 15.

Rom. 7:12. “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Rom. 7: 7, 14, 22; Gal. 3: 21; Ps. 119.

Rom. 8:7, 8. “The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Josh. 24: 19; Jer. 13: 23; John 6: 44; 5: 44.

Rom. 8:2, 4. “For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.” Rom. 10: 4; 1 Tim. 1: 5; Heb. 8: 10; Jude 20, 21; Heb. 12: 14; Matt. 16: 17, 18; 1 Cor. 12: 28.

Article XIII:

1 Cor. 1:1-13. “Paul – unto the church of God which is at Corinth, Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” Matt. 18: 17; Acts 5: 11; 8: 1; 11: 31; 1 Cor. 4: 17; 14: 23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3:5.

Acts 2:41, 42. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls."

2 Cor. 8:5. "They first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." Acts 2: 47; 1 Cor. 5:12, 13.

1 Cor. 11:2. "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them unto you."

2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 11:23; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:6;

2 Cor. 2:7; 1 Cor. 4:11.

Matt. 28:20. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." John 14:15; 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21 1 Thess.4:2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6:2. All the Epistles.

Eph. 4:7. "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

1 Cor. 14:12. Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."

Phil. 1:27. "that I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel." 1 Cor. 12: 14.

Phil. 1:1. "With the bishops and deacons." Acts 14:23; 15; 22; 1 Tim.3; Titus 1.

Article XIV:

Acts 8:36-39. "And the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, 'If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest.' And they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." Matt. 3 5, 6; John 3:22, 23; 4: 1, 2; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8: 12; 16: 32-34; 18:8.

Matt. 28:19. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Acts 10:47, 48; Gal. 3:27, 28.

Rom. 6:4. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Col. 2: 12; 1 Peter 3: 20, 21; Acts 22: 16.

Acts 2:41, 42. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and there were added to them, the same day, about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Matt. 28:19, 20. Acts and Epistles.

1 Cor. 11:26. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20.

1 Cor. 11:28. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. 5: 1, 8; 10: 3-32; 11: 17-32; John 6: 26-71.

Article XV:

Acts 20:7. "On the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them." Gen. 2:3; Col 2:16, 17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2.

Exod. 20:8. "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy."

Rev. 1:10. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day."

Ps. 118:24. "This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Isa. 58:13, 14. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob." Isa. 56:2-8.

Ps. 118:15. "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous."

Heb 10:23, 25. "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is."

Acts 11:26. "A whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people."

Acts 13:44. "The next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." Lev.19: 30; Exod. 46:3; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2, 3; Ps. 26: 8; 87: 3.

Heb. 4:3-11. "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest."

Article XVI:

Rom. 13:1-7. "The powers that be are ordained of God. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." Deut. 16:18; 2 Sam. 23:3; Exod: 18:23; Jer. 30:21.

Matt. 20:21. "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Titus 3: 1; 1 Peter 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:1-8.

Acts 5:29. "We ought to obey God rather than man."

Matt. 10:28. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Dan. 3:15-18; 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20.

Matt. 23:10. "Ye have one Master, even Christ."

Rom. 14:4. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?"

Rev. 19:16. "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Ps. 72: 11; Ps. 2; Rom. 14:9-13.

Article XVII:

Mal. 3:18. "Ye shall discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." Prov. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Gen. 18:23; Jer. 15:19; Acts 10:34, 35; Rom. 6:16.

Rom 1:17. "The just shall live by faith."

Rom. 7:6. "We are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

1 John 2:29. "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." 1 John 3:7; Rom. 6:18, 22; 1 Cor. 11:32; Prov. 11:31; 1 Peter 4:17, 18.

1 John 5:19. "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." Gal. 3:10. "And as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse." John 3:36; Isa. 57:21; Ps. 10:4; Isa. 55:6, 7.

Prov. 14:32. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death." See also the example of the rich man and Lazarus.

Luke 16:25. "Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." John 8:21-24; Prov. 10:24; Luke 12:4, 5; 9:23-26; Eccl. 3:17; Matt. 13, 14.

Article XVIII:

1 Pet. 4:7. "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." 1 Cor. 7:29-31; He. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; 13: 39, 40; 2 Peter 3:3-13.

Acts 1:11. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-11.

Acts 24:15. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." 1 Cor. 15: 12-59; Luke 14: 14; Dan. 12: 2; John 5: 28, 29; 6:40; 11: 25, 26; 2 Tim 1:10; Acts 10:42.

Matt. 13:49. "The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just." Matt. 13:37-43; 24:30, 31; 25:31-33.

Matt. 25:35-41. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

Rev. 22:11. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Peter 2: 9; Jude 7; Phil. 3:19; Rom. 6: 22; 2 Cor. 5:10, 11; John 4:36; 2 Cor. 4:18.

Rom. 3:5, 6. "Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid; For how then shall God judge the world?"

2 Thess. 1:6-12. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, rest with us – when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe." Heb. 6:1, 2; 1 Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev. 20:11, 12; 1 John 2:28; 4:17.

4. Doctrine Review Questions

By: Charles Spurgeon

Introduction and History

This document is a reprint of Charles Spurgeon's Catechism. Spurgeon (1834 - 1892) edited this Baptist Catechism for his own congregation in 1855. A catechism is simply a way of teaching something through a series of questions and answers.

Although not original to the BMA, this document is a significant resource because it illustrates what many Baptists have historically believed. The teachings outlined within it are, in no way, binding upon the churches of the BMA. It may be used for personal study, teaching others, responsive readings in church services, family Bible study, etc.

Questions and Answers (Q&A)

1. Q. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God (1Co 10:31), and to enjoy Him forever (Psa 73:25-26).

2. Q. What rule has God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him?

A. The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Eph 2:20; 2Ti 3:16), is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify God and enjoy Him (1Jo 1:3).

3. Q. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man (2Ti 1:13; Ecc 12:13).

4. Q. What is God?

A. God is Spirit (John 4:24), infinite (Job 11:7), eternal (Psa 90:2; 1Ti 1:17), and unchangeable (Jam 1:17) in His being (Exo 3:14), wisdom, power (Psa 147:5), holiness (Rev 4:8), justice, goodness, and truth (Exo 34:6-7).

5. Q. Are there more Gods than one?

A. There is but one only (Deut 6:4), the living and true God (Jer 10:10).

6. Q. How many persons are there in the Godhead (Trinity)?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one God, the same in essence, equal in power and glory (1Jo 5:7; Mat 28:19; 2Co 13:14).

7. Q. What are the decrees of God?

A. The decrees of God are His eternal purpose according to the counsel of His own will, by which, for His own glory, He has foreordained whatever comes to pass (Eph 1:11-12).

8. Q. How does God execute His decrees?

A. God executes His decrees in the works of creation (Rev 4:11) and providence (Dan 4:35).

9. Q. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is God's making all things (Gen 1:1) out of nothing by the Word of His power (Heb 11:3), in six normal consecutive days (Exo 20:11), and all very good (Gen 1:31).

10. Q. How did God create man?

A. God created man, male and female, after His own image (Gen 1:27), in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness (Col 3:10; Eph 4:24), with dominion over the creatures (Gen 1:28).

11. Q. What are God's works of providence?

A. God's works of providence are His most holy (Psa 145:17), wise (Isa 28:29), and powerful (Heb 1:3), preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions (Psa 103:19; Mat 10:29).

12. Q. What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the state in which he was created?

A. When God had created man, He entered into a covenant of life with him, upon the condition of perfect obedience (Gal 3:12); forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil upon pain of death (Gen 2:17).

13. Q. Did our first parents continue in the state in which they were created?

A. Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the state in which they were created by sinning against God (Ecc 7:29) by eating the forbidden fruit (Gen 3:6-8).

14. Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is any want of conformity to, or transgression of the law of God (1Jo 3:4).

15. Q. Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression (1Co 15:22; Rom 5:12).

16. Q. Into what state did the Fall bring mankind?

A. The Fall brought mankind into a state of sin and misery (Rom 5:18).

17. Q. In what consists the sinfulness of that state into which man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that state into which man fell consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin (Rom 5:19), the lack of original righteousness (Rom 3:10), and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin (Eph 2:1; Psa 51:5), together with all actual transgressions that proceed from it (Mat 15:19).

18. Q. What is the misery of that state into which man fell?

A. All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, (Gen 3:8, 24) are under His wrath and curse (Eph 2:3; Gal 3:10), and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever (Rom 6:23; Mat 25:41).

19. Q. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the state of sin and misery?

A. God having, out of his good pleasure from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life (2Th 2:13), entered into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of the state of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation by a Redeemer (Rom 5:21).

20. Q. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ (1Ti 2:5), who, being the eternal Son of God, became man (John 1:14), and so was, and continues to be, God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever (1Ti 3:16; Col 2:9).

21. Q. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

A. Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking to Himself a true body (Heb 2:14), and a reasonable soul (Mat 26:38; Heb 4:15), being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary, and was born of her (Luke 1:31, 35), yet without sin (Heb 7:26).

22. Q. What offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer?

A. Christ as our Redeemer executes the offices of a prophet (Act 3:22), of a priest (Heb 5:6), and of a king (Psa 2:6), both in His state of humiliation and exaltation.

23. Q. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A. Christ executes the office of a prophet in revealing to us (John 1:18) by His Word (John 20:31), and Spirit (John 14:26), the will of God for our salvation.

24. Q. How does Christ execute the office of a priest?

A. Christ executes the office of a priest in His once offering up Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice (Heb 9:28), and to reconcile us to God (Heb 2:17), and in making continual intercession for us (Heb 7:25).

25. Q. How does Christ execute the office of a king?

A. Christ executes the office of a king in subduing us to Himself (Psa 110:3), in ruling and defending us (Mat 2:6; 1Co 15:25), and in restraining and conquering all His and our enemies.

26. Q. In what did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born, and that in a low condition (Luke 2:7), made under the law (Gal 4:4), undergoing the miseries of this life (Isa 53:3), the wrath of God (Mat 27:46), and the cursed death of the cross (Phi 2:8); in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time (Mat 12:40).

27. Q. In what does Christ's exaltation consist?

A. Christ's exaltation consists in His rising again from the dead on the third day (1Co 15:4), in ascending up into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God the Father (Mar 16:19), and in coming to judge the world at the last day (Act 17:31).

28. Q. How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ by the effective application of it to us (John 1:12) by His Holy Spirit (Ti 3:5-6).

29. Q. How does the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. The Spirit applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ by working faith in us (Eph 2:8), and by it uniting us to Christ in our effective calling (Eph 3:17).

30. Q. What is effectual calling?

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit (2Ti 1:9) by which, convincing us of our sin and misery (Act 2:37), enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ (Act 26:18), and renewing our wills (Eze 36:26), He persuades and enables us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the Gospel (John 6:44-45).

31. Q. What benefits do those who are effectively called partake of in this life?

A. Those who are effectively called, in this life, partake of justification (Rom 8:30), adoption (Eph 1:5), sanctification, and the various benefits which, in this life, either accompany or flow from them (1Co 1:30).

32. Q. What is justification?

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace in which He pardons all our sins (Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7), and accepts us as righteous in His sight (2Co 5:21), only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us (Rom 5:19), and received by faith alone (Gal 2:16; Phi 3:9).

33. Q. What is adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace (1Jo 3:1), by which we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God (John 1:12; Rom 8:17).

34. Q. What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit (2Th 2:13), by which we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God (Eph 4:24), and are enabled more and more to die to sin, and live to righteousness (Rom 6:10-11).

35. Q. What are the benefits which, in this life, either accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A. The benefits which, in this life, accompany or flow from justification (Rom 5:1-2, 5) are: assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17), increase of grace, and perseverance in it to the end (Pro 4:18; 1Jo 5:13; 1Pe 1:5).

36. Q. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at their death?

A. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness (Heb 12:23), and immediately pass into glory (Phi 1:23; 2Co 5:8; Luk 23:43), and their bodies, being still united to Christ (1Th 4:14), rest in their graves (Isa 57:2) till the resurrection (Job 19:26).

37. Q. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the Resurrection?

A. At the Resurrection, believers being raised up in glory (1Co 15:43), shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the Day of Judgment (Mat 10:32), and made perfectly blessed both in soul and body in the full enjoying of God (1Jo 3:2) to all eternity (1Th 4:17).

38. Q. What shall be done to the wicked at their death?

A. The souls of the wicked shall, at their death, be cast into the torments of hell (Luk 16:22-24), and their bodies lie in their graves till the Resurrection, and judgment of the great day (Psa 49:14).

39. Q. What shall be done to the wicked at the Day of Judgment?

A. At the Day of Judgment, the bodies of the wicked, being raised out of their graves, shall be sentenced, together with their souls, to unspeakable torments with the devil and his angels forever (Dan 12:2; John 5:28-29; 2Th 1:9; Mat 25:41).

40. Q. What did God reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

A. The rule which God first revealed to man for his obedience is the moral law (Deu 10:4; Mat 19:17), which is summarized in the Ten Commandments.

41. Q. What is the summary of the Ten Commandments?

A. The summary of the Ten Commandments is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves (Mat 22:37-40).

42. Q. Which is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, “You shall have no other gods before me.”

43. Q. What is required in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment requires us to know (1Ch 28:9) and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God (Deu 26:17), and to worship and glorify Him accordingly (Mat 4:10).

44. Q. Which is the second commandment?

A. The second commandment is, “You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing mercy to thousands to those who love me and keep my commandments.”

45. Q. What is required in the second commandment?

A. The second commandment requires the receiving, observing (Deu 32:46; Mat 28:20), and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God has appointed in His Word (Deu 12:32).

46. Q. What is forbidden in the second commandment?

A. The second commandment forbids the worshipping of God by images (Deu 4:15-16), or any other way not appointed in His Word (Col 2:18).

47. Q. Which is the third commandment?

A. The third commandment is, “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.”

48. Q. What is required in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God’s names (Psa 29:2), titles, attributes (Rev 15:3- 4), ordinances (Ecc 5:1), Word (Psa 138:2), and works (Job 36:24; Deut 28:58-59).

49. Q. Which is the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment is, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

50. Q. What is required in the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment requires the keeping holy to God such set times as He has appointed in His Word, expressly one whole day in seven to be a holy Sabbath to Himself (Lev 19:30; Deu 5:12).

51. Q. How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days (Lev 23:3), and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God’s worship (Psa 92:1-2; Isa 58:13-14), except so much as is taken up in the works of necessity and mercy (Mat 12:11-12).

52. Q. Which is the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment is, “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”

53. Q. What is required in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment requires the preserving of the honor and performing the duties, belonging to everyone in their various positions and relationships as superiors (Eph 5:21-22, 6:1, 5; Rom 13:1), inferiors (Eph 6:9), or equals (Rom 12:10).

54. Q. What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity—as far as it shall serve for God’s glory, and their own good—to all those who keep this commandment (Eph 6:2-3).

55. Q. Which is the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment is, “You shall not murder.”

56. Q. What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment forbids the taking away of our own life (Act 16:28), or the life of our neighbor unjustly (Gen 9:6), or whatever tends to it (Pro 24:11-12).

57. Q. Which is the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment is, “You shall not commit adultery.”

58. Q. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment forbids all impure thoughts (Mat 5:28; Col 4:6), words (Eph 5:4; 2Ti 2:22), and actions (Eph 5:3).

59. Q. Which is the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment is, “You shall not steal.”

60. Q. What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment forbids whatever will or may unjustly hinder our own (1Ti 5:8; Pro 28:19, 21:6), or our neighbor’s wealth, or outward estate (Eph 4:28).

61. Q. Which is the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment is, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

62. Q. What is required in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man (Zec 8:16), and of our own (1Pet 3:16; Act 25:10) and our neighbor’s good name (3 Jo 1:12), especially in witness-bearing (Pro 14:5, 25).

63. Q. What is the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment is, “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

64. Q. What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment forbids all discontentment with our own estate (1Co 10:10), envying or grieving at the good of our neighbor (Gal 5:26), and all inordinate emotions and affections to anything that is his (Col 3:5).

65. Q. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A. No mere man, since the Fall, is able in his life to keep the commandments of God perfectly (Ecc 7:20), but daily breaks them in thought (Gen 8:21), word (Jam 3:8), and deed (Jam 3:2).

66. Q. Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?

A. Some sins in themselves, and by reason of various aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others (John 19:11; 1Jo 5:16).

67. Q. What does every sin deserve?

A. Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come (Eph 5:6; Psa 11:6).

68. Q. How may we escape His wrath and curse due to us for sin?

A. To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, we must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:16), trusting alone to His blood and righteousness. This faith is attended by repentance for the past (Act 20:21), and leads to holiness in the future.

69. Q. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace (Heb 10:39), by which we receive (John 1:12), and rest upon Him alone for salvation (Phi 3:9), as He is set forth in the Gospel (Isa 33:22).

70. Q. What is repentance unto life?

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace (Act 11:18), by which a sinner, out of a true sense of his sins (Act 2:37), and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ (Joel 2:13), with grief and hatred of his sin, turns from it to God (Jer 31:18-19), with a full purpose to strive after new obedience (Psa 119:59).

71. Q. What are the outward means by which the Holy Spirit communicates to us the benefits of redemption?

A. The outward and ordinary means by which the Holy Spirit communicates to us the benefits of Christ's redemption, are: the Word, by which souls are begotten to spiritual life, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Prayer and Meditation, by all of which believers are further edified in their most holy faith (Act 2:41-42; Jam 1:18).

72. Q. How is the Word made effective to salvation?

A. The Spirit of God makes the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word an effective means of convicting and converting sinners (Psa 19:7), and of building them up in holiness and comfort (1Th 1:6), through faith to salvation (Rom 1:16).

73. Q. How is the Word to be read and heard that it may become effective for salvation?

A. That the Word may become effective to salvation, we must attend to it (Pro 8:34) with preparation (1Pe 2:1-2), and prayer (Psa 119:18), receive it with faith (Heb 4:2), and love (2Th 2:10), lay it up in our hearts (Psa 119:11), and practice it in our lives (Jam 1:25).

74. Q. How do Baptism and the Lord's Supper become spiritually helpful?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper become spiritually helpful, not from any virtue in them, or in him who administers them (1Co 3:7; 1Pe 3:21), but only by the blessing of Christ (1Co 3:6), and the working of the Spirit in those who by faith receive them (1Co 12:13).

75. Q. What is Baptism?

A. Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ (Mat 28:19) to be to the person baptized a sign of his fellowship with Him in His death, and burial, and resurrection (Rom 6:3; Col 2:12), of his being engrafted into Him (Gal 3:27), of remission of sins (Mar 1:4; Act 22:16), and of his giving up himself to God through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life (Rom 6:4-5).

76. Q. To whom is Baptism to be administered?

A. Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess repentance towards God (Act 2:38; Mat 3:6; Mar 16:16; Act 8:12, 36-37, 10:47-48), and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and to none other.

77. Q. Are the infants of those who are professing believers to be baptized?

A. The infants of those who are professing believers are not to be baptized, because there is neither command nor example in the Holy Scriptures for their baptism (Exo 23:13; Pro 30:6).

78. Q. How is baptism rightly administered?

A. Baptism is rightly administered by immersion, or dipping the whole body of the person in water (Mat 3:16; John 3:23), in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, according to Christ's institution, and the practice of the apostles (Mat 28:19-20), and not by sprinkling or pouring of water, or dipping some part of the body, after the tradition of men (John 4:1-2; Act 8:38-39).

79. Q. What is the duty of those who are rightly baptized?

A. It is the duty of those who are rightly baptized to give up themselves to some particular order and Church of Jesus Christ (Act 2:47; Act 9:26; 1Pe 2:5), that they may walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (Luk 1:6).

80. Q. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ; in which, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to His appointment, His death is shown forth (1Co 11:23-26), and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporeal and earthly manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace (1Co 10:16).

81. Q. What is required of the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?

A. It is required of those who would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body (1Co 11:28-29), of their faith to feed upon him (2Co 13:5), of their repentance (1Co 11:31), love (1Co 11:18-20), and new obedience (1Co 5:8), lest coming unworthy, they eat and drink judgment to themselves (1Co 11:27-29).

82. Q. What is meant by the words "until he come," which are used by the Apostle Paul in reference to the Lord's Supper?

A. They plainly teach us that our Lord Jesus Christ will come a second time; which is the joy and hope of all believers (Act 1:11; 1Th 4:16).

5. Guidebook for Baptist Churches

By: Samuel Jones

Introduction and History

This document is a reprint of the historical “Treatise on Church Discipline” written by Samuel Jones in 1797, for The Philadelphia Baptist Association. It will serve as a very useful guide for biblical practice among local churches. While the language reflects the historic nature of this document, the truths contained in it are timeless.

Care has been taken to update some words and phrases no longer commonly used in the English language and to present the truths in a manner that is in harmony with BMA doctrine. Also, some inapplicable portions have been removed. Otherwise, this treatise remains as originally written.

Chapter 1: Of a Gospel Church

1. Ekklesia, the word in the original language for assembly,¹ signifies to be called out of; that is, a gospel church consists of such persons, as have been called out of a state of nature into a state of grace, called with an effectual calling, called out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God’s dear Son, or are judged in love to be so called. Rom 1:6, 7; 8:30; 1 Cor 1:2; Eph 4:1; Heb 3:1; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 2:9.
2. The word “church” sometimes means the whole body of the believers and is commonly called the Kingdom or Family of God, but is not to be understood as a “universal” or “invisible” body. Eph 1:22, 23; 5:23; Col 1:18, 24.
3. But the church, of which we now write, means a number of disciples, saints, or believers, that have been baptized, and united together in gospel fellowship, and is called a local church. “Were baptized,” Acts 2:41. “Tell it unto the church,” Matt 18:17. “The church that is in their house,” Rom 16:5. “That the church may receive edifying,” 1 Cor 14:5. “Churches of the saints,” 1 Cor 14:33. “The churches of Asia,” 1 Cor 16:19. “The church that is at Babylon,” 1 Pet 5:13.
4. A particular or local church is not parochial, as comprehending all of the same parish; nor diocesan, as if one pastor might have several flocks;² nor

yet provincial, for there were many churches in Judea, Gal 1:22. Galatia, 1 Cor 16:1. Macedonia, 2 Cor 8:1., much less national.

5. A number of believers are united together into a particular or local church by an act of mutual confederation. "Gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God," 2 Cor 8:5.

6. Whether the requisite number should be twelve or thirteen, because our blessed Lord and his disciples, at the first celebration of the Lord's supper, made that number, or whether three will be sufficient, because of the promise in Matt 18:20, may be doubtful: but there ought to be so many, as to fulfill the purpose of that holy institution.

7. When such a number is found in any place, they ought to propose among themselves, or others may propose it to them, to be constituted a local, visible church.

8. For this purpose it will be necessary to appoint a time and place when they are to meet fasting. One minister or more from sister churches should be present to assist and to preach on the occasion. Acts 8:14, 11:22.

9. After a suitable sermon has been preached, the acting minister, being furnished with a list of the names of the candidates, and they standing before him, is to interrogate them: respecting their desire to be constituted a Gospel church, their knowledge of, and satisfaction with each other's qualifications, and their purpose and resolution to walk together in church relation, in love to one another, and in obedience to the requirements of Christ in the Gospel, together with such other questions as will involve the leading particulars of a church covenant; and after they have given their assent to the whole, the church covenant³ is to be read to them, which they are then, or afterward, to sign, and the minister pronounces them, in the name of the Lord Jesus, a regular (biblical) Gospel church, giving them, or their representative, the right hand of fellowship, and wishing them prosperity in the Lord. Is 44:5; Amos 3; Acts 11:23; 2 Cor. 6:14, 9:13.

10. It will be understood, that prayers and singing ought to be introduced in their proper places through the whole, and then a suitable address to the constituted church, with a benediction, will close the solemnity.

11. It is this mutual consent, confederation, and union of persons into one body, as a particular church, that makes that church distinct from any other church, and that makes the members of it members of that church more than of any other. "Onesimus, who is one of you; Epaphras, who is one of you." Col 4:9, 12. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ." Rom 12:5.

12. Such particular churches have full power and authority to transact all their own affairs, independent of any other church or churches: such as to

choose their own officers, receive members, exercise discipline among themselves, exclude members, if need be, and, in general, do everything that concerns them as a distinct religious body. Matt 18:17; 1 Cor 5:2; 2 Thess 3:6, 14; Acts 1:5, 23; 6:3; 15:4; 21:22.

13. No church, however, can be independent of Christ, who is the head of the body, and who, while he has committed the executive power to His churches, has retained the legislative in His own hands, or rather, has enacted, by Himself or His apostles, all the laws that are necessary, and the churches must take heed how they execute the same, as they will answer it to their Lord and Master. "One is your Master, even Christ. Hear ye Him." Matt 18:5; 23:8. "There is one lawgiver." James 4:12.

14. A particular or local church, constituted as above, is said to be a church essential, but not complete, while destitute of officers. These were either extraordinary or ordinary; the first comprehending apostles, prophets, and evangelists; and the other, bishops, or ministers or elders, and deacons; to which some add elders.

Chapter 2: Of Ministers

1. The names or titles appropriated to those officers in the New Testament, are either such as seem to belong to them, in virtue of their office, as common names, while they have not taken the charge of any particular or local church, and then they are called teachers or preachers. Acts 13:1; 1 Cor 12:28; Rom 10:14; or they are such as arise from their taking the charge of some church, and then they obtain relative titles and are called Pastors. Eph 4:11. Overseers or bishops, Acts 20:17, 28. Elders, 1 Tim 5:17. Stewards, 1 Cor 4:1. Ministers, Col 4:7. 1 Tim 4:6.

2. The qualifications for this office are clearly pointed out, both in a positive and negative way, natural, moral, and evangelical. Luke 21:15; 1 Tim 3:2, 6; Tit 1:5, 9; 2 Tim 2:24; 3:15, 17; Acts 28:24; Rom 9:3; 11:14.

3. To this office, persons must be called: First, of God, styled the inward call, which is a zeal for the glory of God in the salvation of the souls of men, and a strong desire to be made useful in that way, with a persuasion of God's designation of the person for the office. This is the voice of God in his conscience. Is 49:5; Jer 1:5; 23:21; Heb 5:4; 1 Cor 9:16, 17; Rom 10:15. Secondly, they must be called of a church, whose duty it is to look out for useful gifts; and when they have reason to hope that they discover some appearance thereof in any, they should move such to the trial of their gifts; or the person whose mind is impressed may offer himself, 1 Tim 3:1.

4. If, after anyone has been on trial some time, the appearances are promising, the church ought to give him a license,⁴ for the exercise of his

gifts abroad, his encouragement, further improvement, and to obtain the opinion of others concerning his gifts. "Lay hands suddenly on no man," 1 Tim 5:22.

5. After he has been on trial a longer or shorter time, according to circumstances, the church should proceed to encourage him more fully with, and confirm him in, the ministerial office, by ordination.

6. The essence of ordination consists in the call of the church, in their voting in his favor, and designating him by said vote to the ministerial work, which power it was necessary should be placed somewhere, with a view to maintain order that no person who deems himself called and qualified for the office might enter it without the approval of others, and this power was placed in the church. But nevertheless, it is expedient and necessary, in order to give the designation weight and solemnity, that there should be a public and formal procedure, when we install a person in the ministerial office, Acts 14:23; Mark 3:14.

7. For this purpose, having called one or more ministers to their assistance and all met fasting, a sermon should be preached suited to the occasion. Then, after seeing the person's license, and the vote for his ordination, one of the ministers should interrogate him respecting his call of God, his motives, his doctrinal knowledge, his soundness in the faith, and his resolution to persevere with diligence. Having given satisfaction, he is desired to kneel, and the ministers present lay their hands on his head, accompanied with suitable words, and one prays. Then he rises up, and they address him in terms of congratulation, bid him a welcome to take part with them of the holy ministry, and give him the right hand of fellowship. After this, a charge is delivered, and prayer, with singing, having been introduced in their proper places through the whole, a benediction closes the solemnity. "With the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, or eldership," 1 Tim 4:14. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting," Acts 14:23. "Lay hands suddenly on no man," 1 Tim 5:22.

8. The ministers ought to give him a certificate of his ordination.⁵

9. We should now proceed to treat the duties of the ministerial office. But although a person, in virtue of his ordination, is fully installed in the office, and has a right to discharge every part of it, when called thereto, yet while he remains only a teacher or preacher, and is not connected with any church as their pastor or minister, he can have but little to do besides preaching. It will, therefore, be proper to defer the confederation of the duties of the pastoral office until we have dealt with his acquiring that title, by means of taking the oversight of some church, which will greatly enlarge his sphere of action.

Chapter 3: Of Deacons

1. The business of deacons originally, in the church of Jerusalem, was very extensive, for the church consisted of thousands, and had all things common, Acts 2:41, 44; 4:32; 5:14. But, through a change of circumstances in the church, their work is now brought to a different sphere.
2. They are to take charge of meeting the outward, or physical, needs of the church, particularly to serve tables: Acts 6:2-3. The Lord's Table, 1 Cor 10:21. that of the poor, and the minister's table. They are therefore to see that the members of the church contribute to all necessary uses, according to their abilities, 1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 9:7.
3. Their qualifications are set down in Acts 6:3; 1 Tim 3:8, 13.
4. The manner of executing their office is with impartiality or simplicity, cheerfulness, compassion, tenderness, and faithfulness, Rom 12:8.
5. They are to be set in the office by ordination, much after the same manner as ministers, Acts 6:3, 6.
6. By the faithful discharge of their office, they purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith, 1 Tim 2:13.

Chapter 4: Of Calling a Minister

1. A person having been regularly ordained a minister of the gospel, as we have seen in Chap. 2, he is qualified to become a pastor or minister of any pastorless church.
2. This is done in consequence of a call and invitation of some church, and his acceptance of the call on the terms proposed, or such as they may agree upon. Calling of him to preach, ordaining of him, and his being even a member of said church, is not sufficient, there ought to be a mutual agreement between him and the church, whereby he becomes theirs, and they become his. Col 1:7.
3. How unanimous the church ought to be in the choice and calling of a minister, it may be hard to say. On the one hand, a bare, or even a large majority, will not be sufficient, while on the other hand, a unanimous vote may not always be obtained, and, perhaps, in some cases, may not be absolutely necessary. The more unanimous, however, the better.
4. The congregation also is not to be neglected in this business. For, as their good is to be kept in view, and as part of the support is expected to come from them, it ought to be known, that the person proposed to be called gives general satisfaction. 1 Tim 3:7; 3 John 12.

5. In calling a minister, having appointed a time and place, and invited pastors from one or two of the sister churches of like faith and order to assist, and to witness the transaction, one of the ministers, after praying and singing, should preach a suitable sermon. Then he, or another of the council, is to put such questions to the minister to be settled, and to the representative of the church appointed for that purpose, as will draw from each of them promises to fulfill their respective parts of the covenant and agreement between them, upon which he pronounces him, in the presence of God and of the whole assembly, to be the pastor and overseer of that church, and said church to be his flock and charge. Then the settled minister and representative of the church give each other the right hand of fellowship, with expressions of mutual joy and congratulation.

6. After this, a charge should be delivered to the practicing minister, Col 4:17. [sic.] and his church; and then prayer, singing, and a benediction, will close the service.

7. The transactions of the day, and particularly the terms of the agreement between the called minister and the church, should be entered at large on the records of the church.

8. Some may say that so much formality in the business, with witnesses, is unnecessary, and that a private agreement between the parties is sufficient. But as a public form of marriage is indispensable; so the above is expedient and useful, as might be shown were it necessary.

9. The duties incumbent on the pastor of a church, are many and great, and blessed is he who is found faithful therein.

10. He is to exercise love, care, tenderness, watchfulness, and diligence, in all the duties of going before, feeding and defending the flock, the sheep and the lambs, the strong, the weak and diseased, John 21:15, 17; Acts 20:29; 1 Pet 5:2; Jer 3:15.

11. He is to preach in season and out of season, attend funerals, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, take the lead in church government, visit the flock, particularly the sick, pray for and with them, catechize the young, and defend the faith: besides the duties of prayer, of the study, and his frequent calls abroad, to visit and supply the destitute, settle differences, attend at ordinations, associations, etc.

"And who is sufficient for these things," 2 Cor 2:16.

Chapter 5: Of Dissolving the Connection Between Pastor and His Church

1. The connection between a pastor and his church is very binding, not unlike that between man and wife, and, like that, it should not be dissolved for every cause.
2. An obvious and material breach, however, of the contract between them, will justify a separation.
3. To which we may add one cause more; i.e. when variance, disagreement, animosity, and ill-will, take place between them, or between him and many of them, to such a degree as to preclude a rational prospect of his future usefulness among them.⁶
4. In this case it will not be very material, as to the separation, who may be to blame. Nor will a majority, even a large one, in the minister's favor, make it prudent for him to continue, any more than it would justify his first settlement, among them, Acts 22:18.
5. As a pastor in such circumstances should not to stay among them in support of a party, neither ought he to run away from them nor yet should they use harsh measures with him: but matters of difference ought to be first accommodated in the best manner they can, that they may part in love so far as may be.
6. For this purpose, it will be necessary to call a council from a neighboring church or churches of like faith and order, the very same, if they can be had, as were witnesses of the settlement.
7. At this meeting, peace and accommodation of all matters of variance should be labored after, that the pastor may be dismissed and recommended in as respectful a manner as circumstances will admit, in order that his character may not suffer publicly more than need be, nor his usefulness elsewhere be prevented.
8. Should the church prove resistant, and in their ill-humor, refuse to give the pastor such a character and dismissal as he deserves, the council may and ought to give him, from under their hands, a brief statement of matters of difference, together with their opinion, and such a recommendation as they can answer for to God and their own consciences.
9. If appropriate, public worship may close the meeting.

Chapter 6: Of the Duties of Members to Their Pastors

1. The members of churches owe all their duties in a way of obedience to the will of God revealed in his word.

2. These are to be performed in love to our Lord Jesus Christ, John 14:15; who is the great prophet, priest, and king of His churches, unto whom all power in heaven and earth is given, Matt 28:18; our law-giver, Is 33:22; the head of his church, Eph 1:22; and who is to be honored, John 5:23; and obeyed in all things as God, over all, blessed forever, Rom 9:5.

3. All church members, therefore, are under the strictest obligations to do and observe whatsoever Christ has instructed them, in particular the duties they owe to their ministers.

4. They ought to pray for them, that God would assist them in and bless their labors, Eph 6:19; Col 4:3; 1 Thes 5:25; 2 Thes 3:1; Heb 13:18; and that he would support them under all their trials and afflictions, 2 Thes 3:2.

5. They ought to obey them in the exercise of every part of their official authority, according to the word, Heb 13:17.

6. They ought to treat them with respect and esteem, 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Thes 5:12, 13; Phil 2:29; Gal 4:15; 3 John 9, 10.

7. They ought to stand by them in their trials, afflictions, and sufferings, 2 Tim 1:15; 4:16; 1 Cor 16:10; 1 Tim 5:19.

8. They ought to contribute towards their livelihood, that they may apply themselves to the extensive duties of their office, Acts 6:2, 4.

9. Pastors of churches have a divine right to their support if the church is able to give it without being oppressed, or so far as they are able, than which nothing is more manifest in the New Testament. "For the workman is worthy of his meat," Matt 10:10; Luke 10:7. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" 1 Cor 9:11. "Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they who wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so has the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel," 1 Cor 9:13, 14. "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things," Gal 6:6; See 1 Tim 5:17, 18.

10. These passages of Scripture are so unequivocal and clear, that no one can evade their force.

11. Mr. Hooker well observes, that "they who will not pay their ministers would not pay anyone his due, could they refuse with the same temporal impunity." Everyone knows that those who will not do justice farther than the law compels them are destitute of an honest principle.

12. Nothing but ignorance of his duty, or covetousness and want of principle, or both, can induce him to neglect or refuse paying; and a covetous brother should be expelled from the church, and kept no company with, 1 Cor 5:11.

13. When a people neglect their duty in regard to the support of their minister, they are not only willful neglecters of the divine law, but must otherwise be great losers, both as they forfeit a right to the divine blessing, as also because their minister will be less capable of, and prevented from, serving them to the same advantage, Gal 6:6, 7; 2 Cor 9:6-8.

14. This support of the minister should not be done in the way of charity, or alms, but as a matter of right; and, if the people are able, it ought to exceed his bare necessity, that he may be able to be exemplary in acts of hospitality, 1 Tim 3:2.

15. If any church and congregation are not able to give their minister a comfortable support but are willing to do what they can towards it, it will perhaps be duty, at least very commendable, in the minister, to forego a part of his right, rather than leave them and apply himself to some business to make up their deficiency, 1 Cor 9:12.

Chapter 7: The Duties of Members Towards Each Other

The principal of these are the following:

1. Love one another, John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 17; Rom 12:9, 10; 13:8, 10; Gal 5:15; 1 Pet 1:22.

2. Avoid everything that tends to lessen love and make disagreeable impressions, Gal 5:26. Concerning this, they should avoid whispering and backbiting, 2 Cor 12:20; evil speaking and suspicions, James 4:11; 1 Tim 6:4; tattling and being busybodies, 1 Tim 5:13.

3. No one should indulge reluctance in himself towards another, but immediately make known to the other his grievance and suspicion: and when he discovers reluctance in another, he should inquire after the reason of it, Matt 5:23, 24; Eph 4:26.

4. Bear with one another, Matt 18:21, 22; Rom 15:1; Gal 6:2.

5. Promote peace and harmony, Eph 4:3; Rom 14:19; 1 Thes 5:13.

6. Advance one another's spiritual benefit and edification, 1 Cor 14:26.

7. Watch over one another for good and admonish one another when occasion requires, but in much love and tenderness, Rom 15:14; 2 Thes 3:15.

8. Exhort and stir up one another to a diligent attendance on the means of grace, Heb 10:25; Acts 2:42.

9. Stir up one another to zeal in holy living, and in supporting the gospel.

10. Relieve the necessities of the poor, Matt 25:40; John 12:8; Rom 12:13; 15:26; Gal 2:10; Deut 15:7, 11; 1 Cor 16:1, 2; 1 John 3:17. No good reason can be given why a church should refuse the assistance which the good and wholesome laws of the land offer.

11. In the last place, they should not go to law with one another if matters can be accommodated in the church, or by reference, 1 Cor 6:1-7. Although the law always has justice in view, justice is not always within its reach. A Christian should never take advantage against anyone, especially not a brother. But by leave of the church, recourse may be had to the civil law.

Chapter 8: Of Admission of Members

1. We have already observed that every particular or local church has full power and authority to transact all its own affairs for its well-being, independent of any other church or combination of churches.

2. The chief part of church power, exercised under Christ, and according to the rules of the gospel, is demonstrated in four ways; the choice of their own officers, the admission of members, governing of them, and finally, their exclusion when they prove unworthy of a place in the house of God. Rom 14:1; Acts 2:41; I Cor 5:13.

3. Admission is either out of the world or from other churches.

4. When persons are wrought upon and turned to the Lord, under a real work of conviction and conversion, it will be their duty to offer themselves for baptism and give themselves members of some gospel church that may be near them, with whom they may walk in fellowship and enjoy the privileges of the house of God, appointed for their nourishment and growth in grace. Acts 2:38; 2 Cor 8:5.

5. To this end it will be proper for the candidate to acquaint the minister or pastor beforehand of his desire, which is commonly done, so that the minister, after conversing freely with him, may either encourage or discourage.

6. There is no doubt but that every gospel minister has a right, in virtue of the commission, to baptize all suitable people who request baptism, and afterward the church may receive them on the testimony of said minister, or on their giving of their religious testimony.

7. But, since the church has a right to obtain full knowledge of the experience, religious principles, and moral conduct of those that offer themselves for membership and forasmuch as it is edifying, and tends to excite and increase Christian fellowship, to hear persons declare what the Lord has done for them, Ps 66:16, and also, as it may be of use to administer the holy ordinance of baptism in a more open and public way it will be better for persons to be examined in the first instance before the church, either on the day of preparation before communion, or at any other time, and then baptized.

8. The prerequisites for baptism and admission into the church are salvation, soundness in the faith, and a godly life.

9. Knowledge of the first will be best obtained by letting persons declare in their own way the gracious dealings of the Lord with them, such questions being put occasionally as will assist and lead them on. 1 Pet 3:15. The second should be confined to the essentials of doctrine. Rom 14:1; 15:7. And we attend to the last, as the necessary fruit, without which their pretension to religion must be vain. Titus 2:12, 14; 3:8.

10. In admitting persons to baptism and then into the church, all precautions should be attended to, and carefulness used, that we open not the doors too wide on the one hand, nor on the other keep them too closed. Zech 4:10; Matt 12:20; Is 26:1-6. Particularly, when they give in their religious experience, seek to discover whether they have been convinced of righteousness as well as of sin; whether they have only felt the power of the law, or have also discovered the glory of the gospel. John 16:8.

11. When the church is generally satisfied with the parties' confession and testimony of conversion, they are, after being baptized, to be received into the church as members.

12. In doing this, the Minister, after a brief introduction, enquires whether they will watch and be watched over, give and receive admonition and reproof as occasion may require, keep their places in the church, contribute according to their abilities towards all necessary uses, and in all things walk in a professed and willing subjection to the commands and institutions of Christ in the gospel which having promised he gives them the right hand of fellowship, bids them a welcome among the disciples, prays, and leads in a suitable hymn. 2 Cor 8:5; Acts 2:41; 2 Cor 6:14.

13. If the case of the applicant is doubtful, his baptism, and consequently admission, had better be deferred: but this should be done with much tenderness and suitable encouragement when there are some hopeful appearances.

14. When any member's residence is, in providence, removed to a distance from the church whereof he is a member, and more convenient to attend with another church of the same faith, he ought to apply to the church of which he is a member, for a letter recommendatory and dismissive to the church closer to him, and the church whereof he is a member ought to give him such a letter if he is in good standing among them, directed to the church to which he is dismissed, and said church ought to receive him unless they should have good reason to refuse. Rom 16:1; Acts 9:26, 27; 18:27.

15. It is a good general rule that persons ought to be members of such churches as are nearest to them—a local church; for they cannot otherwise so well enjoy the benefit of membership nor perform the duties that arise out of church relation.

16. There may be, however, cases that will make against this rule, particularly when persons plead greater benefit to themselves, in a church more remote; and they ought to be attended to, provided the other church be not too remote; for edification is the first object of church relation, and their entering into the relation at first was a voluntary act; nor should a church be made a prison wherein to confine people against their will.

17. It is certain there can be no dismission to the world; and it is doubted whether it would be regular for a church to dismiss to another church with which it can hold no communion: but in this case, it may give a few lines signifying the person's character and standing with them.

Chapter 9: Of Church Censures (Discipline)

1. Church censures or matters of discipline are properly but only two: admonition or rebuke, and excommunication; for suspension in most cases, is rather a delay or postponement of censure.

2. Admonition and rebuke are nearly synonymous. The first is of the nature of advice, entreaty, warning, 1 Cor 10:11; Acts 27:9; 2 Thes 3:15; 1 Tim 5:1; Titus 3:10. The other carries in it more of reprehension, severity, and authority, Lev 19:17; Luke 19:39; 2 Tim 4:2; Titus 2:15.

3. Admonition or rebuke is either private or public.

4. Private admonition is when the offense, whether against God or more especially against a particular person, is private and not much known, Rom 15:14; Luke 17:3.

5. In this case, the offended brother is not to divulge the matter, but to go to the offender and endeavor in a tender, friendly manner, to convince and reclaim his brother. If he succeeds, and the offending brother shows signs of

repentance, and promises amendment, the matter is to end there. But if not, the offended brother is to take one or two of the brethren with him, such as he shall judge most likely to positively influence his brother. If this admonition also should take no effect, the matter is to be brought before the church, Matt 18:15, 17.

6. This rule holds good, let the offense be of ever so heinous a nature, provided it be private.

7. When it is brought before the church, after the charge is proved, should he deny it, the minister is to admonish, and endeavor in the spirit of meekness to reclaim the offender, 1 Tim 5:20; Titus 1:13. Should this prove ineffectual, and the offender continue obstinate and impenitent, the church is to proceed to higher acts of censure, and, in some cases, if he is penitent, as we shall see in the 17th verse, Matt 18:17.

8. Should any private matter be brought into the church before the previous steps have been taken, the person that brings it in ought to be severely reproofed and admonished, and that publicly before the church, for his irregular and injurious conduct therein: yet nevertheless, the church must now take it in hand, forasmuch as it will then be no longer private, but will require public satisfaction.

9. Public admonition or rebuke also takes place in regard to public offenses of a less heinous nature, but unseemly in Christians, and unworthy of their vocation, Rom 14:22; Matt 5:22; 1 Cor 8:12.

10. Suspension is to be used when a person, under the first admonition or rebuke in the church, proves unrepentant. For since there is to be a second admonition, Titus 3:10. He ought, while we are waiting to see the effect of the first, to be put under suspension and debarred the privileges of the church, Rev 2:21.

11. When a charge is brought into the church against a person, if he denies it, and witnesses are not at hand, or some other circumstances make it inconvenient for the present to discuss the matter, it will be necessary to lay him, in the meantime, under suspension from the Lord's table, until the matter can come to a hearing, Lev 13-14.

12. Suspension is also used when the offense is not sufficiently great, or is not yet ripe for the great sentence of excommunication. Such is not to be accounted as an enemy, but to be exhorted as a brother; in union, though not in communion. 2 Thes 3:6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15.

13. To the above three cases, wherein suspension is to take place, we may add a fourth, and that is, when a person is called in question for some high offense, for which he ought to be excommunicated, it is thought that if there

are strong signs of genuine repentance, the infliction of the sentence ought to be dispensed with, yet nevertheless, the guilty person ought to be suspended from communion for a time, as a testimony of the church's indignation against every species of wickedness, and in vindication of the honor and glory of God. Thus, the Lord appointed concerning Miriam, that she should be shut out of the camp seven days, and then received in again, Num 12:14, 15.

14. The last and highest act of church censure or discipline is excommunication, to which recourse must be had when previous censures have not their due effect in bringing persons dealt with to repentance, provided the matters for which they are under dealing with the circumstances of aggravation during the course of said dealing manifestly involve immorality or heresy.⁷

15. Acts of immorality include not only the particulars of the 10 Commandments, but also the commands, appointments, institutions, and ordinances contained in the New Testament; for a breach of any positive injunction, or requirement of divine authority, must involve in it a breach of morality.

16. There should be care taken, however, not to make forced constructions of implicit immorality, as for instance, to charge a person with transgressing the rule in Heb 10:25, and breach of covenant, because he neglects his place, attends worship elsewhere, and perhaps with those of a different persuasion, but pleads greater edification, and perhaps, conscience,⁸ lest we should act the part of Diotrephes. 3 John 10.

17. When a member is found guilty of some gross act of immorality, and which is notorious and scandalous, the church should proceed to this censure in the first place, without the previous steps of admonition and reproof, in order to vindicate the credit of their holy profession and to manifest their abhorrence of such abomination, 1 Cor 5:1, 2, 7, 13; 1 Tim 5:24.

18. Such as are heretical in their principles, denying some essential doctrine, or holding and teaching such as may be unsound and scandalous, come under the notice of this ordinance, Gal 1:6-7; compared with chap 5:12; 1 Tim 1:19-20; 6:3-5; 2 Tim 2:16-18; Rev 2:14, 15, 20; 2 Cor 2:6.

19. The charge being sufficiently proved in the opinion of the church, and they having determined on the person's exclusion and set the time for that purpose, the minister is to lay open the seriousness of the offense or error, with the aggravating circumstances thereof, and the scandal such a one is become to religion; he is to apply the particular places of scripture, that may be pertinent to the case in order to charge make the offense known to the

conscience of the offender, if present, and that others also may fear; he is to explain the nature and results of the discipline, expressing the solemn sense of himself and church on this awful occasion; and then he is, in the presence of the church, to cut off and seclude such an offender by name from the union and communion of the church, so that he is not henceforth to be looked upon, deemed or accounted a brother, or a member of such a church, until God shall restore him again by repentance, for which they pray.

20. This exclusion is an authoritative putting of such a person out of the church to keep it pure, and in order to his being humbled and broken under a sight and sense of his sins, and where there are signs of this he ought to be restored, 2 Cor 2:6-8.

21. When a person about to be excommunicated believes he has been treated unfairly by the influence of people or otherwise, he has a right to insist on a council being called from a neighboring church or churches of like faith and order, and the church ought to agree to it and allow him the choice of one half of the council.

22. If the church should refuse to call in a council, and cut the person off, or should they do it contrary to the advice of the council, the person aggrieved may lay a statement of his case before the Association, who may appoint a council, and if the church should refuse to admit of a rehearing before said council, or should refuse to abide by the decision of the council, the Association may bring said church under dealing, and, if the church continues obstinate, a neighboring church may receive the aggrieved person into their communion.¹⁰

23. In transacting church business, it is not to be expected that unanimity will always prevail: Some will, at times, be in the minority. These have sometimes taken offense and declined to keep their places in the church for a while. This is very wrong and irregular. For suppose a church does ever so wrong, yet any individual, after bearing his testimony against it, has done his duty, and cleared his conscience, and ought, therefore, to keep his place, except in case of material defection from the faith. It has been thought by good men that our Lord communed with Judas, though he knew at the time what he was.

24. Although a church may refuse a person when he requests membership if they have good cause to suspect that he is not truly religious, yet they have no right to exclude him afterward upon the like suspicion. They may, at first, judge in his favor, but cannot afterward reverse the sentence. Excommunication is only for immorality or heresy. As for their dying away, or seeming to die away in religion, the rule is, "Let them grow together until the harvest," Matt 13:30.

25. There ought to be meetings of business every month, two months, or quarterly, and not do all their business on days of worship, lest something should happen that might discompose the minds of some, and so unfit them for the holy communion next day.

26. Every church should keep a book of records and enter therein all their transactions, that it may at any time afterward be known what was done and how it was done.

Chapter 10: Of the Fellowship and Communion of Churches

1. Local churches of the same faith and gospel order, so far as is necessary to communion as they have all drunk into and of one and the same Spirit as they are branches of one and the same body, and hold to one and the same head and as they have one Lord, one faith, and one baptism they, therefore, may, and ought to, have and enjoy fellowship and a friendly relationship together, as occasion may require and opportunity serve, in the discharge of those relative duties which may tend to the mutual benefit and edification of the whole. 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 4:5; John 17:20, 26; to mention a few.

2. They should be ready to assist one another, when required, in difficult cases.

3. Such as have ministerial gifts to spare should be ready and willing to supply such as may be destitute. Song of Solomon 8:8.

4. Admit one another's members of good standing to visiting communion, when the opportunity may serve.

5. Dismiss and receive members to and from one another.

6. They should assist one another with money as well as advice, if need be, and in general perform all acts of kindness towards each other, as neighboring, though distinct families or branches of the one great family and household of faith.

7. And lastly, they have fellowship and communion together, for their mutual benefit, in the social duties of an association.

Chapter 11: Of an Association

1. An Association consists of delegates or Messengers from different particular or local, visible churches, who have agreed to associate together, at stated times, to promote their own interest and the good of the common cause.

2. This practice is recommended by the reason of things, the spirit of religion, and apostolic practice, Acts 15.

3. The meeting thus of churches by their delegates is of special use to gain acquaintance with, and knowledge of one another, to preserve uniformity in faith and practice, Phil 3:16, to detect and discountenance heresies, to curb licentiousness in the wanton abuse of church power, to afford assistance and advice in all difficult cases, to contribute financial aid when necessary, to make appointments of supplies for struggling churches, and every way advance and secure the interest of religion, and strengthen and draw closer the bonds of union and fellowship.

4. Other churches, besides those that enter at the original constitution, may be admitted, on making an application and giving satisfactory evidence in regard to their faith and practice, regular order and good standing.

5. The delegates thus assembled are, properly speaking, only an advisory council. They are not armed with coercive power to compel the churches to submit to their decisions, nor have they any control over the acts or doings of the churches. Every church still remains independent.

6. Nevertheless, the associated body may exclude from their connection any church that may act as an unworthy part. Indeed, it would be absurd to examine churches at their admission, if afterward they are to be continued in the connection, let their principles and practice be what they may.

7. Let it not be thought that this power of the association over the churches in connection with it disannuls or destroys the independence or autonomy of those local churches: for if any church of the associated body should become unsound in their principles, or act irregularly and disorderly, and will not do what may be just and right such a church will still remain an independent church, though an unorthodox and irregular one; but it would be inconsistent and wrong in the association to suffer such a church to continue among them, since they would hereby become partakers of their evil deeds. The association can take nothing from them but what it gave them. This, in such circumstances, it certainly may and ought to do.

8. From what we have said, as well as from considering, that the union of churches in an association is a voluntary act. Being a voluntary union or association, like the voluntary union of members into a church, it follows that every church stands in the same relation to its association as a member does to his church, and therefore is examined in the same manner on admission.

Hence:

9. Complaints may be received by the association against any church belonging to it, especially when the complaint is brought in by another church. Hence also,

10. The association has a right to call any delinquent church to account, whether for malicious abuse of its power towards or over any of its members, neglect of attendance at the association, disregard of those things recommended to them, or any material defect in principle or practice; and if satisfactory reasons are not given, therefore, nor repentance, then to exclude them.

11. At the first formation of an association or afterward, there should be a set of rules, conditions, and regulations drawn up, as the ground on which the churches agree to associate together.

12. For the maintenance of good order, the associated body when met should choose a Moderator to regulate and bring forward what is to come before them, and to preside in their deliberations as also, a Clerk, to take minutes of their proceedings.

References and Additional Information

¹In 1805 this treatise was reprinted in Lexington, KY by T. Anderson. The only change was in the first line. The 1805 edition removed the beginning Greek word “Ecclesia” and simply read “The Greek word, in the original, for Church” and then it goes on as the 1798 edition read.

²We learn from history that a church never thrives unless the minister lives among them. The practice of pluralities may suit the minister’s pride, and save the pockets of the churches, but starves their souls.

³The Church Covenant (See below, after licensure and ordination letters)

‘Licensure and Ordination Letters:

To all people to whom these presents shall come;

_____ Baptist Church sends greeting. The bearer hereof, our beloved brother, being a man of good moral character, real piety, and sound knowledge of divine things and having been called to the exercise of his ministerial gifts, whereof we have now had considerable trial, both in private and public we have judged him worthy and do therefore hereby license and authorize him to preach the Gospel wherever he may have a call not doubting, but that in due time circumstances will lead on to a more full investiture of him in the ministerial office by ordination. In the meantime, we recommend him to favor and respect, praying the Lord may be with and abundantly bless him.

Done at our meeting at _____

Church clerk signature _____

Date: _____

⁵ _____ church on the date _____ ,
at the influence of the Baptist church of aforesaid, for the purpose of setting
apart, by solemn ordination, Brother _____ to the
sacred office of the ministry and being, by sufficient testimonials, fully
certified of his moral character, real piety, and found knowledge in divine
things, as well as ministerial gifts and abilities, whereof we had otherwise
due knowledge: WE DID THEREFORE, on the said day in the presence of
said church, and a full assembly met, solemnly ordain and set apart, to the
said sacred office of the ministry, by the imposition of hands, prayer, and
other rituals among us in that case in use, the said bearer, our worthy and
reverend brother whom we therefore recommend, as such, to favor and
respect.

Signatures of ordaining council:

Date: _____

“See Joshua Thomas’s History of the Baptists in Wales, p. 169.

“It is thought that Matt 18:17 and 1 Cor 5:3, 5 refer not to excommunication.

Church Covenant

We, whose names are under written, being desirous to be constituted a
church of Jesus Christ, in this place, and having all due knowledge of one
another in point of a work of grace on our hearts, religious principles, and
moral characters, and being desirous of enjoying the privileges that
appertain to the people of God in a church relation, do, in the name of the
Lord Jesus, voluntarily and freely give ourselves up to the Lord, and to one
another, according to his word, to be one body under one head, jointly to
exist and act by the bands and rules of the gospel, and do promise and
engage to do all things, by divine assistance, in our different capacities and
relations that the Lord has commanded us, and requires of us: particularly to
deny ourselves, take up our cross, follow Christ, keep the faith, assemble
ourselves together, love the brethren, submit one to another in the Lord,

care one for another, bear one another's burdens, endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and, finally, to honor, obey and maintain them that may have the rule over us in the Lord.

This is the Covenant we solemnly enter into, in the fear of God, humbly imploring the Divine assistance and blessing that we may be built up and established to the glory of God, the advancement of the Redeemer's interest, and the comfort and edification of our own souls, through the infinite riches of free grace, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord: and now, to the only wise God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be worship, honor, power, glory, dominion, and obedience rendered, now and evermore, Amen.

Done at _____ Baptist Church

In the county of _____ and the state of _____

on the _____ day of _____ in the year of our blessed Lord and Savior, _____.

Section 2

Helps for Pastors

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1. Sunday Morning Worship Service

By: Jordan Tew

The Ministry of the Church—Her mission is evangelizing sinners by preaching the gospel (Matt. 28:19; Luke 24:45-47), baptizing those who believe (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 35-38), and maturing them by instruction (Matt. 28:20; Acts 2:42) and discipline (Matt. 18:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-5).

(BMA Doctrinal Statement: Section IX, Part F)

There is no denying the significance and centrality of corporate worship in the life of a local church. While a congregation may gather at any time for worship and ministry, the Lord's Day is Sunday, and churches must maintain the significance of the Sunday worship service.

We understand that God has marked off a day each week which is to be dedicated to worshiping God and resting from physical labor and commercial endeavors. Consider the words of Exodus 20:8-10a, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God..." Since the resurrection of Jesus, Christians, led by the apostles who were empowered by Christ, have observed the Lord's Day each Sunday in keeping with the resurrection celebration (John 20:1, Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10).

The Scriptures teach us how significant the believer's devoted and regular participation in the weekly worship service of the local church is. Hebrews 10:24-25 states, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Finally, let us consider what must take place when the congregation meets to worship each week. Obviously, the preaching, teaching, and reading of God's Word and the Gospel are essential. We must also consider the mandatory nature of properly administering Baptism and observing the Lord's Supper, the singing of praises unto God, prayer, the cheerful giving of tithes and offerings, and serving others on the Lord's Day. Likewise, we must practice church discipline biblically when needed.

The New Testament provides clear instructions on and examples of these things. Scripture must dictate both the content and practices of the Sunday worship service. Worship services must be ordered according to God's Word. May we strive to be biblical in all we do!

A Typical Order of Worship Sunday Morning Worship Service

1. Welcome
2. Scripture Reading by Pastor
3. Pastoral Prayer
4. Congregational Singing
5. Congregational Singing
6. Congregational Singing
7. Congregational Scripture Reading
(Congregation reads a passage aloud together)
8. Prayer
9. Congregational Singing
10. Offertory Prayer
11. Offering
12. Sermon
13. Prayer
14. Benediction in Scripture and/or Song

2. The Lord's Supper

By Dr. Charley Holmes

The Lord's Supper is the sacred sharing of the bread of communion and the cup of blessing by the assembled church (Acts 20:7) as a memorial to the crucified body and shed blood of Jesus Christ (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). Both ordinances (baptism and Lord's supper) must be administered by the authority of a New Testament church (Matt. 28:18-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

(BMA Doctrinal Statement: Article IX, Section D)

Jesus Christ, being Head of the church, has ordained two practices for His church. These practices are the “ordinances” of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (or Communion). While Baptism is a visible testimony to the local church of one's salvation through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Lord's Supper stands as a memorial to the atoning work of Jesus, also accomplished by His death, burial, and resurrection. As we consider the importance of this blessed ordinance, we must keep a few important details in mind.

First is the authority of the Lord's Supper.

The ultimate authority over the church, her ordinances, and worship is Christ Himself. Christ has entrusted the observance of the Lord's Supper to local, visible churches. The Lord's Supper is to be administered under their authority, which is ultimately under the authority of Jesus and His Word, the Bible.

Second is the proper participant in the Lord's Supper.

Christ did not give His ordinances to the world, an organization, or a para-church ministry. He gave His ordinances to His church. Therefore, the only proper participants are members of a local, scriptural church, who have been properly baptized (believer's baptism by immersion), and are in good standing (not under church discipline).

There is great danger in taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner (1 Corinthians 11:27-32), which is why one must examine themselves prior to receiving the Lord's Supper to ensure they are truly in the faith and that they are not living in unrepentant sin towards God or another believer.

Third is the proper observance of the Lord's Supper.

The proper observance of the Lord's Supper involves two elements—unleavened bread and the cup. The bread symbolizes the broken body of Jesus and the cup symbolizes the shed blood of Jesus (Luke 22:14-20). The outcomes of this ordinance are threefold: 1. Remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice, 2. Worship of the Savior, and 3. Proclamation of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Only that which is taken directly from Scripture is to be permitted in the observance of this ordinance. The church does not have the authority to add to or take away from the biblical mandate of remembering Christ's death.

Helps for preparing the congregation to observe the Lord's Supper:

Preaching: It is helpful to the congregation for the pastor to preach about the significance of the Lord's Supper. Too often, this ordinance is merely "tacked onto" the end of a worship service. It would, therefore, be beneficial to the members of the church to learn about the ordinance, the proper observance of it, and the theological and practical implications of it from the pulpit. Some pastors may take a few weeks to cover these truths leading up to the observance, while others may preach about this on the day it is observed. That is the pastor's decision to make. However, it should be noted that the people in each church will be blessed to have heard solid, biblical preaching about the Lord's Supper as they prepare to partake of it.

Prayer: The Bible makes it clear that the Lord's Supper is not to be taken in an unworthy manner (1 Cor. 11:27). Therefore, it is very important that a time of prayer be set aside prior to observing this ordinance. Many churches observe this time in the moments leading up to the eating of the bread and drinking of the cup. This is a good practice to follow. In this time of prayer, confession of sin can be made, thanksgiving for Christ's broken body and shed blood can be given, praise to God can be offered, and intercession for the lost souls and/or wayward church members who are not present can be made. All these things weigh heavy on the heart during this time of observing Christ's sacrifice. There is, perhaps, no better time to pray about these matters.

Participation: It is the sacred duty of every member of the local church to participate in the observance of the Lord's Supper—as long as one is physically able to do so. It is wise for the pastor to emphasize the importance of participation in the Lord's Supper by each church member.

Order of Service for Lord's Supper Worship Service

1. Welcome
2. Prayer
3. Congregational Singing
4. Scripture Reading
5. Congregational Singing
6. Responsive Reading (Question 80, Doctrine Review Questions)

-Q. What is the Lord's Supper?

-A. The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ; in which, by giving and receiving bread and the cup, according to His appointment, His death is shown forth, and the worthy receivers are...made partakers of His body and blood with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

7. Prayer to confess sin to God

-At this time, it would be helpful to read the Ten Commandments and ask the congregation if they are fulfilling the two greatest commandments—loving the Lord and loving their neighbors.
8. Partaking of The Lord's Supper
9. Prayer of Thanksgiving
10. Congregational Benediction

Suggested Scripture Passages and Hymns

Suggested Scripture Passages:

- Exodus 12:1-30
& John 1:29
- Isaiah 53
- Psalm 22
- Matthew 26
- Mark 14
- Luke 22
- John 6
- 1 Corinthians 11
- Hebrews 9
- Revelation 5

Suggested Hymns:

- Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed
- Amazing Grace
- At The Cross
- Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy
- Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
- Holy, Holy, Holy
- Power in the Blood
- There is a Fountain
- Victory in Jesus
- When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

How to Administer the Lord's Supper

The simplest pattern to follow is found in **Mark 14:22-26**.

1. Distribute the bread (Some churches have deacons do this, while others have the pastor serve).
2. Read: *“And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body”* (v.22).
3. Pastor says a prayer thanking Jesus for His broken body.
4. Congregation then eats together.
5. Distribute the cup(s) as with the bread.
6. Read: *“And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God”* (v.23-25).
7. Pastor says a prayer thanking Jesus for His shed blood.
8. Congregation then drinks together.
9. Congregation sings benediction together (v.26).

3. Baptism

By Dustin Wisely

The Ordinances of the Church—Her two ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer as a confession of his faith in Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:4) and is prerequisite to church membership and participation in the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41-42)...Both ordinances must be administered by the authority of a New Testament church (Matt. 28:18-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

(BMA Doctrinal Statement Section IX, Part D)

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances sovereignly instituted by God for the benefit of the local church.

Baptism is a means of grace: Both church ordinances serve as a means of grace to believers either through identifying with Christ in baptism or remembering Christ through the Lord's supper. Neither ordinance, however, contains within itself the power to save anyone, as they are both works. They serve as a means of grace by drawing the regenerate closer to Christ through reflecting on (Lord's Supper) and identifying with (baptism) Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

The Proper Reason for Baptism: Baptism is a holy ordinance in which immersion in the water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit signifies our being joined to Christ and our sharing the benefits of the covenant of His grace, and our privilege to be the Lord's servant (Romans 6:3-5, Matthew 28:19).

The Proper Participant for Baptism: Baptism is only to be administered to professing Christians who have repented of their sins and submitted themselves to the authority of Jesus Christ through faith in his victorious death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 8:12, 10:47). Because of this fact and in light of the clear teachings of Scripture, infant baptism in any form is not to be administered. All Christians are to be baptized, as this is a command from God himself (Matthew 28:19).

The Proper Administration of Baptism: Since baptism is an ordinance of the local church, only a local church body has the authority to administer the ordinance of baptism (Acts 2:41).

The Proper Mode of Baptism: Scripture is clear that baptism is to only be applied through immersion (the follower being fully submerged in water) to signify the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. No other mode is found in scripture (John 3:23).

The Proper Name in which to Baptize: In accordance with Jesus' command, it is clear that baptism is to be in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. No other baptism is to be administered under the authority of the church (Matthew 28:19).

The Responsibility of those Rightly Baptized: To visibly join oneself to a biblical church and place oneself under the authority of that church, to the end of following God in His commandments and rightly worshiping God in the fellowship of the church and the administration of the ordinance of the Lord's supper (Acts 2:47).

Suggested Scriptures:

- Matthew 3:16
- Matthew 28:19-20
- Luke 3:21-22
- Acts 8:36-38
- Romans 6:3-5
- Galatians 3:27-28
- Ephesians 4:4-6
- Colossians 2:12-13
- 1 Peter 3:21

Suggested Hymns:

- How Firm a Foundation
- Lift High the Cross
- Come thou Fount
- Blessed Assurance
- In Christ Alone
- Be Thou My Vision

How to administer Baptism

1. Bring the candidate for baptism before the church to affirm their profession of faith. (This can be done in several ways: A public sharing of their testimony, an affirmation of doctrines, or a simple affirmation of their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.)
2. Prayer of Commitment. (This can be prayed by a minister, family member, friend, etc.) This prayer should contain an appeal for God to give the candidate faithfulness in their pursuit of God and also an appeal to give the church faithfulness to minister to the candidate for baptism.
3. Immerse the candidate fully under the water.
4. As you are immersing, say, “I baptize you, my brother/sister, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”
5. A prayer of thanksgiving can be said after the baptism is completed.
6. A hymn can be sung either in anticipation of the baptism or in response to the baptism.

4. Ordination

By Charles Johnson

The Officers of the Church—Pastors and deacons are the permanent officers divinely ordained in a New Testament church (Phil. 1:1). Each church may select men of her choice to fill those offices under the leading of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:1-6; 20:17-18) according to the divinely given qualifications (1 Tim. 3:1-13).

(BMA Doctrinal Statement: Article IX, Part E)

The following information on purpose, qualifications, and procedures is designed to assist in the ordination of men to the offices of pastor and deacon within the local church. You will find the ***Licensure and Ordination Preparation Exam*** in Appendix A.

Pastor Purpose and Qualifications

Purpose of the Pastor:

The purpose of the pastor is to lead the local church in the areas of preaching, teaching, administering the ordinances (Baptism and Lord's Supper), and providing pastoral care. He is the shepherd of the church under the authority of Christ. Churches may have one or multiple pastors, depending on God's providence (1 Timothy 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:2, 1 Peter 5:1-4).

Qualifications for the Pastor:

The qualifications for a pastor are specifically outlined in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. These qualities include the following:

- A pastor must be blameless (not perfect), having a consistent and godly reputation among the believers;
- A pastor should be the husband of one wife;
- A pastor must be prudent and alert to oversee a flock;
- A pastor must have the ability to teach others the Word of God;
- A pastor must be sober-minded—abstaining from the abuse of alcohol and drugs and practicing biblically-informed reasoning;
- A pastor must not be greedy or covetous;
- A pastor must rule his own house well and orderly;
- A pastor should not be a novice in the faith but should show experienced judgment and maturity.

While local churches have the authority to ordain and call pastors, they do not possess the authority to ordain men to ministry that do not meet the biblical qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9.

Ordination Procedure for Pastor

When a church calls a man as pastor who has not been previously ordained, the calling church may send a request to the pastor candidate's church of membership requesting his ordination. An alternative method would be for the calling church to organize her own formal ordination service. It is a standard procedure to invite ordained men from churches of "like faith and order" to participate in the ordination. This will help others in the local and nearby associations become more familiar with the new pastor. The date, time, and purpose of ordination should be given on the invitation.

At the beginning of the ordination procedure, all present for the service usually meet in the sanctuary, while all ordained men are invited to retire to a separate room to organize the ordaining council (also called a "presbytery").

The moderator or moderator pro tem of the host church should call the ordaining council to order and call for an opening prayer. He should then lead in the election of an ordaining council moderator. The elected moderator will then direct the business of the ordaining council.

It is customary to honor any requests the candidate has made for ordaining council positions in the service.

Besides the moderator, the following should be elected or designated:

- ***Clerk*** – to record minutes of the ordination proceedings; these should be read when the ordaining council reconvenes in the worship center;
- ***Someone to formally introduce*** the candidate to the ordaining council. This person should be quite familiar with the one to be ordained;
- ***Someone to question (examine)*** the candidate concerning his salvation, call to ministry, and doctrine. The ordaining council may also pose questions;
- After the questioning and the ordaining council is satisfied with the answers, ***someone from the ordaining council should be designated to offer a motion*** to recommend to the local church to proceed with the ordination;
- The ***local church should then vote to authorize*** the ordaining council to continue with the ordination;
- ***Someone should be elected to lead an ordination prayer.*** This individual should kneel with him during this prayer; the other members of the ordaining council should also assemble and kneel for prayer around the candidate;

- Following the ordination prayer, ***each member of the ordaining council can lay hands on the candidate*** as he continues to kneel. A brief prayer should be offered and words of encouragement may also be shared. After each ordaining council member lays hands on the candidate, he should sign the ordination certificate as a witness to the event;
- ***Someone should be elected to preach a sermon*** and give a charge to the candidate. The man being ordained or the ordaining council may do this.
- After the message, it is customary for the ordaining church to present a Bible to the newly ordained man and spend time in fellowship with one another.

Deacon Purpose and Qualifications

Qualifications for the Deacon

The qualifications for a deacon are outlined in I Timothy 3:8-13.

- Deacons are to be the husband of one wife and to have their houses in order.
- He should be morally honest and pure.
- He should also be Spirit-filled and sensitive to the Spirit's leadership.
- Deacons are to serve and provide for the material needs of the church, provide for the pastor, and care for widows and fatherless children.

Purpose of the Deacon:

The purpose of deacons in New Testament Churches is to serve others. They are to assist pastors by taking pressure and time required for special components of the Lord's work off pastors so the pastors' time may be given to prayer and proper preparation of the study of God's Word (Acts 6). Deacons are never to rule over a church. They have no more authority than any other member, but they do have more responsibility. They should not be referred to as a "board" of deacons since it may imply deacons have some ruling authority or power over the church (Acts 6, 1 Timothy 3:8-13).

Ordination Procedure for Deacon

Deacons should be selected by a church on an as-needed basis among qualified men in the church. Candidates for the office of deacon are selected by the church. Qualities to consider: include those found in Scripture in Acts 6 and I Timothy 3. Potential deacons should be men who are faithful and exemplary in their attendance, stewardship, and willingness

to serve our Lord and others and have proved themselves over an appropriate course of time before being considered.

It is generally a good rule to set aside deacon candidates for a period of time before their ordination. This may be a set time (perhaps 3 to 6+ months) for the congregation to determine the candidate meets the biblical qualifications **before** ordaining these men. Refer to the ***Ordination Preparation Exam*** in this book for help with this.

It may prove helpful for the deacon candidate to assist established deacons during this time as a sort of apprentice. This person could possibly be led in visiting widows, home-bound individuals or even assisting the pastor in administering the ordinances during this training time.

The deacon ordination procedure, or order of service, is similar in order to pastoral ordination.

Order of Service for Ordination Service

1. Reading of minutes from ordaining council meeting
2. Introduction of the candidate
3. Examination of the candidate
4. Motion from the ordaining council to the local church to move forward with the ordination
5. Vote by the church to authorize or cease the ordination
6. Ordination prayer
7. Laying of hands on the candidate by ordaining council
8. Ordination sermon
9. Time of fellowship

5. Wedding Service

By Richard Smith

Marriage—God created Adam and Eve and joined them together as husband and wife. Marriage is the union of one man and one woman according to the Divine Plan of God (Genesis 2).

(BMA Doctrinal Statement, Article III, Section D)

One of the honors of being a pastor is being asked to officiate a couple's wedding. Weddings are to be a joyous occasion, celebrating love and commitment that reflects Jesus' love for the church. Weddings, however, can become complicated quickly. This is why you need to know your standards and the church's policies on who and how weddings will be held before you agree. Sadly, the days in which we live make it prudent for the church to establish, in writing, a clear definition of marriage being between a man and a woman. Set a time to meet with the couple to go over some important details.

Here is a list of things that should be discussed:

- Since they are asking you, a minister of the Gospel, you would assume they are seeking to have a Christian ceremony. Do not assume that and clarify it first. Ask to hear each of their personal testimonies of how they came to Christ and their intention to have a Christian marriage.
- Pastors must not marry believers to unbelievers. Also, it is not wise or profitable to marry a couple if both the man and woman are not of like faith and/or order.
- Take time to learn their current living arrangement and whether either person has previously been married or divorced. Depending upon their answers, there may be a need for further counseling.
- Discuss the Biblical principles and church policies regarding marriages to be officiated or held at the church building.
- Premarital Counseling: Do you or the church require premarital counseling? Many pastors and churches require couples to complete a Bible-based premarital course. Make sure you have a course ready or a counselor you trust to recommend.
- Schedule the date, time, and any rehearsals for the wedding (Be sure and check your personal calendar as well.)
- Explain any legal qualifications from the state and local county.
- Discuss plans for the reception.
- Pray with the couple.

Wedding Ceremony

Welcome:

Welcome to this joyous occasion as we celebrate the love God has placed in the hearts of _____ and _____ for each other.

Today, _____ and _____ will commit their lives to be husband and wife in Christian marriage before God and this church. Your presence adds to their joy. Thank you for being here. (You may be seated.)

Giving of the Bride:

Marriage is God's design. It is the first and holiest institution ordained by God. God Himself gave the first bride away. Genesis 2:18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." The Giving of the Bride is more than tradition. The scripture declares it at the very first wedding in Genesis, and Jesus repeated it in the Gospels, "For this cause, a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife" (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). The giving of the Bride declares the Biblical instructions to leave and cleave.

Who gives this woman to be married to this man? (Her mother and I.)

Sermon

Prayer for Marriage

Vows to Each Other:

I, take you _____, to be my wedded wife.

To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love and to cherish 'till death do us part. And hereto I pledge you my faithfulness.

I _____, take you _____ to be my wedded husband.

To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love and to cherish 'till death do us part. And hereto I pledge you my faithfulness.

Unity Ceremony (optional):

It is at this time you may add any additional elements the couple requests, such as praying together, lighting a unity candle, a special song, etc.

Exchanging of the Rings:

Having made these vows, _____ and _____ have chosen to exchange rings as a sign and seal of their commitment. (May I have the rings?) Though rings are small, they are significant. They are a visible sign of the marriage covenant. Made of precious metal, they remind us that love is not insignificant or common. Made in a circle, the rings' design tells us that love must never come to an end. As you wear these rings, may they be a constant reminder of the promises you are making today.

_____ will you take this ring and place it upon the third finger of _____ left hand and repeat after me. "I give you this ring as a symbol of my love; and with all that I am and all that I have, I honor you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

_____ will you take this ring and place it upon the third finger of _____ left hand and repeat after me. "I give you this ring as a symbol of my love, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Pronouncement of Marriage:

You have come before God, family, and friends and consented together in Christian marriage. Having joined hands, vowed before God and to each other, sealed your commitment with the giving and receiving of rings, in accordance with laws of the state of _____, I now pronounce, _____ and _____ are husband and wife. What God has joined, let no man separate!

You may kiss your bride.

Introduction Married Couple:

It is now my honor to introduce Mr. and Mrs. _____

Recessional and music begin

Closing Remarks

Dismissal

Wedding Order of Service

1. Welcome
2. Giving Away of Bride
3. Sermon
4. Prayer
5. Vows
6. Unity Ceremony (Candle, Prayer, Song, etc.)
7. Exchanging of Rings
8. Pronouncement of Marriage
9. Kiss
10. Introduction of Married Couple
11. Recessional
12. Closing Remarks/Dismissal

Suggested Scriptures for the Wedding Service

- Genesis 2:20-25
- Mark 10:6-9
- Ephesians 4:1-6
- Ephesians 5:22-33
- 1 Peter 3:1-7
- Colossians 3:12-19

6. Funeral Service

By Randy Crudgington

Heaven is the eternal home of the redeemed (John 14:1-3), who, in their glorified bodies (1 Cor. 15:51-58), will live in the presence of God forever (1 Thess. 4:17) in ultimate blessing (Rev. 21, 22). Hell is the place of eternal punishment and suffering (Luke 16:19-31) for the devil, his angels (Matt. 25:41), and the unredeemed (Rev. 20:10-15).

(Article XI, Section D, BMA Doctrinal Statement)

Before the funeral:

When death inevitably marches into a family, the pastor has an excellent opportunity to provide pastoral care to the grieving family. There is, perhaps, no greater opportunity to comfort others and communicate the Gospel than during a time of grieving.

It is during this time the pastor has an opportunity to become the hands and feet of Jesus as both he and his church mourns with those who have experienced loss. It is important that the minister makes a timely response to contact the grieving family. Every situation is unique, and the minister can often provide needed experience and guidance, as well as pastoral counsel.

Proper time should be spent by the minister to plan the funeral. Services that are well-planned take time to honor the deceased, comfort the bereaved, and glorify the Lord. A good minister will take time to craft the memorial service with a well-thought-out design so as to transition smoothly from recognizing the accomplishments of the deceased to finding true comfort in the gospel of the risen Lord. Take care to neither preach a man into heaven nor condemn him to eternal condemnation. The minister is only a representative of Christ and has no authority to judge a man's eternal place, however convinced he may be.

A good guideline is to honor what is honorable and offer comfort from the gospel of Christ. One should never break the bread of life without an exhortation to faith in Christ Jesus. A tender and clear gospel presentation is necessary, no matter the circumstance. As a messenger of the Lord, the minister should craft his message to clearly point to the true rest found only in Christ Jesus and remain available to all who would believe.

Orders of service for the funeral and graveside

Funeral:

1. Invocation, Scripture Reading
2. Welcome, Eulogy/Obituary
3. Hymn/music
4. Message
5. Hymn/music
6. Benediction

Graveside:

1. Scripture Reading
2. Committal
3. Prayer
4. Scriptural Benediction (May also end in prayer).

Suggested Scriptures:

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- Romans 8:31-39
- Isaiah 57:1-2
- Psalm 23
- John 14:1-3
- John 11:25-26
- Ecclesiastes 3:1-4
- 2 Corinthians 1:3-5
- Philippians 1:21-23
- Job 19:23-27
- Matthew 11:28-30
- Romans 6:3-10
- Philippians 3:20-21
- Isaiah 41:10
- Psalm 34:15-22

Suggested Hymns:

- A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
- Because He Lives
- His Eye Is On The Sparrow
- I am Thine O Lord
- It Is Well With My Soul
- Jesus Paid It All
- What A Day That Will Be
- Just As I Am
- Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior
- Sweet By and By
- Rock Of Ages
- Victory In Jesus

After Funeral Care:

Following the funeral is a critical time for those who have lost a loved one. Ministry does not end when the graveside service is over. This is a time and good opportunity where the minister truly can shepherd those in the shadow of death. A simple call or a visit can offer invaluable encouragement to the bereaved. A wise minister will encourage the proper Sunday school class, ladies' group, or godly widower to contact those who may need a godly and healthy distraction from an empty home.

A person knowing that they are not forgotten and that someone else is aware of their pain and praying for them can produce an incredibly uplifting experience for a grieving heart. It is during this time that a minister and his church body can be the arms of a risen Savior, comforting and encouraging souls that are weary and heavy-laden.

Remember these words from Scripture: *“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world”* (James 1:27).

Appendix A

Ordination and Licensure Preparation Exam

Ordination to the Gospel ministry is very important. This exam will help men prepare for ordination or licensure to Gospel ministry and may also be used to prepare deacons for ordination. Upon surrendering to ministry, it would be helpful for the candidate to be given this list of things to study several months before his ordination or licensure.

It would be very helpful if the candidate could meet regularly with their pastor and work through these questions together. Through studying for and completing this exam, both the candidate and the church will have a stronger understanding of the biblical qualifications for a pastor, good doctrine, and the personal character required of those who serve in Gospel ministry.

Candidates for ordination should use their Bibles to answer the following questions. It will also be helpful to consult a few doctrinal works to help locate answers. This book includes the ***BMA Doctrinal Statement (Appendix B)***, the ***New Hampshire Confession (Chapter 3)***, and ***Doctrine Review Questions (Chapter 4)***, which are all very good resources.

Testimony and Qualifications:

1. Give an account of your conversion to Christ.
2. Give an account of your call to the ministry.
3. Do you believe the Scriptures provide all we need for our beliefs and practices (sufficient)?
4. Please explain the following qualifications of the pastor taken from 1 Timothy 3:1-7
 - a. Blameless
 - b. The husband of one wife
 - c. Having good behavior
 - d. Hospitable
 - e. Able to teach
 - f. Not given to wine
 - g. Not a striker
 - h. Not greedy
 - i. Rules his own house well
 - j. Not a novice
 - k. Having a good reputation with those outside the church
5. Do you meet these qualifications?
6. Are you the husband of one wife?
7. Is your wife supportive of your call to ministry (if married)?
8. Are you a good and godly husband (if married)?
9. Are you a good and godly father (if applicable)?

10. Do you live in a way that honors Christ in both public and private?
11. Do you pay your debts?
12. Are you needlessly argumentative or divisive?
13. Do you give yourself to prayer and study of the Word of God?
14. Do you love Jesus with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?
15. Do you love your neighbor as yourself?
16. Do you seek to fight against sin and temptation in daily life?
17. Do you share the Gospel with other people?
18. Do you have a desire to disciple others?

Doctrine:

1. Do you affirm the BMA Doctrinal Statement Confession? (See Appendix B)
2. Do you believe the Scriptures are both perfect and authoritative?
3. Do you believe the Scriptures are sufficient?
4. Explain, biblically, why the Scriptures are closed (that is, there is no other Scripture or new revelation of God outside of the Bible).
5. What things does God's Word teach us about how we are to worship Him?
6. Explain why we should avoid worship practices not found in Scripture.
7. How many gods are there?
8. Describe the Trinity.
9. Recount the biblical account of creation.
10. Do you believe the Genesis account of creation to be true?
11. Explain what the fall is and how it impacts the whole world.
12. Discuss the virgin birth and why it is important.
13. Explain, biblically, Christ's divinity and humanity.
14. Explain Christ's life, death, and resurrection.
15. Explain the significance of Jesus' literal, physical death and resurrection.
16. What does atonement mean, and why is it important?
17. What is the Gospel?
18. Speak about God's sovereignty and man's responsibility in Salvation.
19. What does "saved by grace" mean?
20. Define faith and repentance.
21. What is regeneration?
22. What is justification?
23. What is sanctification?
24. What is glorification?
25. What are perseverance and eternal security?
26. What is the church?
27. What is the Lord's Day, and why should we honor it?

28. What does it mean that the church is a “local, visible body of baptized believers?”
29. Who may join a church?
30. What is baptism?
31. Explain, biblically, why baptism is for believers only.
32. Explain, biblically, why only baptism by immersion is proper.
33. Who may be baptized?
34. Does baptism save?
35. What is the Lord’s Supper?
36. Who may partake of the Lord’s Supper?
37. Is the Lord’s Supper actually Christ’s body and blood or a memorial to His sacrifice?
38. Does partaking of the Lord’s Supper save?
39. What is the role of the pastor according to Scripture?
40. What is the role of deacons according to Scripture?
41. What is the role of the congregation according to Scripture?
42. Explain the biblical pattern of church discipline.
43. Explain, biblically, the importance of missions both locally and globally.
44. Discuss the value and role of women in the church.
45. Describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
46. Explain why the charismatic gifts (tongues and healing) are no longer in use.
47. Explain, biblically, the fact there are no apostles today.
48. Explain, biblically, the fact that the Holy Spirit indwells all believers from the moment of regeneration.
49. How many sexes did God create?
50. Explain, biblically, why homosexuality, transgenderism, and any sexual behavior outside of marriage is sin.
51. What is the biblical definition of marriage?
52. What are the biblical provisions for divorce?
53. When does life begin for the unborn?
54. Do you believe Jesus will physically and visibly return?
55. What will Jesus do when He returns?
56. Discuss the resurrection of the dead.
57. What are Heaven and Hell?

Bible Knowledge:

1. Have you read the entire Bible?
2. Do you read Scripture regularly?
3. What are the books of the Old Testament?
 - What books are the Law/Pentateuch?
 - What books are History?
 - What books are Poetry?

- What books are the Major (longer books) Prophets?
- What books are the Minor (shorter books) Prophets?
- 4. What are the books of the New Testament?
 - What books are the Gospels?
 - What book is History?
 - What books are Paul's Epistles (letters)?
 - What books are General Epistles (letters)?
 - What book is Prophecy?
- 5. What are the 10 Commandments?
- 6. What are the covenants?
- 7. What is the Great Commission?
- 8. Know the biblical accounts of these characters:
 - Old Testament- Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Ruth, Jonah, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, Saul, Solomon, David, Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; and
 - New Testament- Jesus, the Apostles, Barnabas, Stephen, Paul, Timothy, James, Pharisees, Sadducees, Apollos, Priscilla and Aquila, Titus, and Philemon.

Answer Key for Exam

Testimony and Qualifications:

- Give an account of your conversion to Christ.
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Give an account of your call to the ministry.
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you believe the Scriptures provide all we need for our beliefs and practices (sufficient)?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Please explain the following qualifications of the pastor taken from 1 Timothy 3:1-2
 - Blameless
 - (Above reproach, of good reputation)
 - Husband of one wife
 - (Not divorced and/or faithful to his spouse—literally a “one-woman man”)
 - Sober
 - (Not intoxicated, not given to drunkenness, someone who is temperate in all aspects)
 - Hospitable
 - (Kind to strangers and guests)
 - Able to teach
 - (Gifted by God to teach effectively)
 - Not given to wine
 - (Not a drunkard)
 - Not a striker
 - (Not contentious, a fighter or brawler—peaceful)
 - Not greedy
 - (Not a lover of money)
 - Rules his own house well
 - (Providing leadership by example to his beloved family)
 - Having children in subjection
 - (That his children obey him under his godly and tender leadership in the home)
 - Not a novice
 - (Not a recent convert to the faith)
 - Having a good reputation with those outside the church
- Do you meet these qualifications?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Are you the husband of one wife?

- Answer will depend on the man.
- Is your wife supportive of your call to ministry (if married)?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Are you a good and godly husband (if married)?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Are you a good and godly father (if applicable)?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you live in a way that honors Christ in both public and private?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you pay your debts?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Are you needlessly argumentative or divisive?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you give yourself to prayer and study of the Word of God?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you love Jesus with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you love your neighbor as yourself?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you seek to fight against sin and temptation in daily life?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you share the Gospel with other people?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
- Do you have a desire to disciple others?
 - Answer will depend on the man.

Doctrine:

1. Do you affirm the BMA Doctrinal Statement? (See Appendix B)
 - Answer will depend on the man.
2. Do you believe the Scriptures are both perfect and authoritative?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
3. Do you believe the Scriptures provide all we need for our beliefs and practices (sufficient)?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
4. Explain, biblically, why the Scriptures are closed—that is, there is no other Scripture or new revelation of God outside of the Bible.
 - Both the Old and New Testaments attest to the truthfulness and authority of the Scriptures, being written by inspiration of the Spirit. While God spoke in various forms throughout history, His final revelation to us was His Son, Jesus Christ. The canon of Scripture is closed. (Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:21; Proverbs 30:5-6; Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18-19).

5. What does God's Word teach us about how we are to worship Him?
 - God's Word teaches us that we are to worship Him in spirit and truth through songs, hymns, spiritual songs, the reading and preaching of the Word, the teaching of sound doctrine, the fulfillment of the Great Commission, the giving of tithes and offerings, and living a life that glorifies Him (John 4:24; Ephesians 5:19; 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Timothy 4:13; Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; 1 Corinthians 10:31).
6. Explain why we should avoid worship practices not found in Scripture.
 - Since God's Word is sufficient and authoritative, His instructions on how we should worship Him are the final authority on worship practices. Things not found in Scripture cannot be confidently done, and it is wise to avoid them altogether. (Leviticus 10:1-3; Psalm 24:3-6)
7. How many gods are there?
 - There is only one God.
(1 Timothy 2:5; Isaiah 44:6; Deuteronomy 6:4)
8. Describe the Trinity.
 - The Trinity is one God in Three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, all being equal, distinct, yet one God. (Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; John 1:1)
9. Recount the biblical account of creation.
 - God created everything in 6 literal days. (Genesis 1; Hebrews 11:3)
10. Do you believe the Genesis account of creation to be true?
 - (Answer will depend on the man.)
11. Explain what the fall is and how it impacts the whole world.
 - The fall is when mankind fell from innocence into sin. Since Adam's fall, every person is born a sinner except Jesus Christ. (Genesis 3; Romans 3, 5)
12. Discuss the virgin birth and why it is important.
 - According to Scripture, Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary's womb. Jesus was born of a virgin. Jesus is fully God and fully man. Because of these facts, Christ is the perfect Mediator between God and men. (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18, 23; 1 Timothy 2:5)
13. Explain, biblically, Christ's divinity and humanity.
 - Jesus Christ, being God in the flesh, was fully God and fully man. (John 8:24; Galatians 4:4; 2 John 1:7; Colossians 1:15)

14. Explain Christ's life, death, and resurrection.
 - Jesus literally and physically lived, died, and rose from the dead. (1 Corinthians 15:3-5)
15. Explain the significance of Jesus' literal, physical death and resurrection.
 - Jesus' redemptive work was not figurative but literal. His life, death, and resurrection were actual. (John 1:14; John 19:33)
16. What does atonement mean, and why is it important?
 - Atonement is the satisfaction of God's wrath and covering of one's sin—an atoning sacrifice. (1 John 2:2; Hebrews 9:12; Isaiah 53:5)
17. What is the Gospel?
 - The Gospel is the good news that Jesus saves sinners by grace through faith in Him alone (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 1:11-14).
18. Speak about God's sovereignty and man's responsibility in Salvation.
 - God is completely sovereign in the salvation of sinners, while man has a true responsibility to repent of his sin and believe the Gospel. While seemingly contradictory, these biblical truths are harmonious in a way beyond our comprehension (John 3:16, 6:35-40; Ephesians 1:4-5).
19. What does "saved by grace" mean?
 - This means salvation is wholly dependent upon the grace of God and not by our works or merits (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).
20. Define faith and repentance.
 - Faith is a true trust in and dependence upon God. Repentance is the turning away from sin and to Christ. Both of these things require the grace of God.
21. What is regeneration?
 - Regeneration is being born again. It is a gracious work of God whereby He delivers undeserving sinners from sin and its results (Matthew 1:21; Ephesians 2:8-9).
22. What is justification?
 - Justification is an act of God's grace, where He pardons our sin and accepts us as righteous in His sight through the imputed (given to us) righteousness of Jesus (Romans 3:24; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:19, Galatians 2:16).
23. What is sanctification?
 - Sanctification is the process of growing in grace and truth, being molded more and more into the image of Christ,

- beginning at the moment of salvation (2 Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 4:24; Romans 6:10-11).
24. What is glorification?
- This is the final outcome of our salvation when sin is completely done away with in our lives, and we are with Christ forevermore (Romans 8:30; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 John 3:2).
25. What are perseverance and eternal security?
- Perseverance speaks of our progression and continuance in the faith by the protecting hand of Almighty God. Eternal security speaks of our inability to be lost again to sin and unbelief after having been truly born again. Saved people are protected and held forevermore by God's grace (John 10:28-30; Romans 5:1-2,5, 14:7; 1 John 5:13; 1 Peter 1:5)
26. What is the church?
- The church is a local, visible body of baptized believers united under the authority of God's Word, serving Him, worshipping Him, and properly observing His ordinances (Acts 2:41-42, 16:5; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
27. What is the Lord's Day, and why should we honor it?
- The Lord's Day is Sunday, and believers are to honor the Lord, particularly on this day, by worshipping Him and resting from work and worldly endeavors. Before the resurrection of Christ, the Sabbath was observed on Saturday, but after His resurrection, it is observed on Sunday and is called the "Lord's Day" (Exodus 20:8; John 20:1; Acts 20:7; Revelation 1:10).
28. What does it mean that the church is a "local, visible body of baptized believers?"
- The church is a real and tangible body. It is not imaginary, unbounded, or invisible. The church is a particular group of people.
29. Who may join a church?
- Any person who professes Jesus as Lord and Savior may join a local church upon being scripturally baptized (Acts 2:41).
30. What is baptism?
- Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water. It serves as an outward sign to the church body that a person has been inwardly born-again by the Spirit of God through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. This ordinance was

- given by Jesus to His churches (Matthew 3:16, 28:19; Acts 8:38; Romans 6:1-4).
31. Explain, biblically, why baptism is for believers only.
 - Baptism is a church ordinance, not given to the world. In Scripture, baptism is given to those who profess faith in Christ (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41; 1 Corinthians 12:13).
 32. Explain, biblically, why only baptism by immersion is proper.

The definition of baptism is to submerge in water, and the witness of Scripture supports this practice. There is no other mode (i.e., pouring or sprinkling) observed in Scripture (Matthew 3:16, 28:19, Acts 8:38, Romans 6:1-4).
 33. Who may be baptized?
 - Only those who make a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ may be baptized. This excludes infants (Acts 2:41).
 34. Does baptism save?
 - Baptism does not save, but those who have been saved are to be baptized. Baptism is an ordinance for the church. Scripture does not teach salvation by works or ordinances.
 35. What is the Lord's Supper?
 - The Lord's Supper is an ordinance. It was given by Jesus to His church to serve as a reminder of the great sacrifice of Jesus' body and blood for the salvation of believers. It is the supreme act of worship, encourages believers, and serves as an opportunity for revival of the soul through remembrance of Christ's sacrifice and self-examination (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11).
 36. Who may partake of the Lord's Supper?
 - Any born-again, scripturally-baptized person who is a member in good standing of their church may partake (1 Corinthians 10:16, 1 Corinthians 11:27-32).
 37. Is the Lord's Supper actually Christ's body and blood or a memorial to His sacrifice?
 - No. The bread and cup serve as a memorial to Christ's body and blood (John 6:53, 63).
 38. Does partaking of the Lord's Supper save?
 - Partaking of the Lord's Supper does not save but is an ordinance for the church (Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5).
 39. What is the role of the pastor according to Scripture?
 - The pastor is to labor according to the Great Commission, equip the saints for service, preach the Word, reprove, rebuke, exhort with complete patience, do the work of an

- evangelist, and shepherd the flock (Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 4:12; 2 Timothy 4:2-5; 1 Peter 5:2).
40. What is the role of deacons according to Scripture?
 - The deacons are to be servants of the church and helpers of the pastor. Deacons do not have authority over the pastor or congregation but do have more responsibility than most members (Acts 6:1-7).
 41. What is the role of the congregation according to Scripture?
 - The role of the congregation is to work to fulfill the Great Commission, obey and submit to their leaders (pastors), serve the Lord, provide for their pastor, draw near to God, encourage other believers in love and good deeds, assemble together regularly for corporate worship, and participate in church discipline (Matthew 28:16-20; Hebrews 13:17; Ephesians 4:12-16; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Hebrews 10:22-25; Matthew 18:15-20).
 42. Explain the biblical pattern of church discipline.
 - “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:15-20).”
 43. Explain, biblically, the importance of missions both locally and globally.
 - The Great Commission serves as the mandate for both local and global missions. Churches should labor to see the Gospel spread all over the world through evangelism and discipleship, and they should financially support these efforts (Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 4:34-37; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15).
 44. Discuss the value and role of women in the church.
 - Women, like men, are made in the image of God and are of equal value. However, men and women have different

roles in God's plan. Women may serve the Lord in many ways except in the roles of pastor, deacon, or in the teaching of men. (1 Timothy 2:11-12; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)

45. Describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - The Holy Spirit draws unsaved sinners to Jesus, convicts believers of sin, regenerates lost souls, sanctifies believers in the Lord, helps believers pray, guides believers into all truth, teaches believers spiritual truths, empowers His people to serve Him, and gives hope and joy to God's people (John 6:44; John 16:8-9; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Romans 8:26-27; John 16:13, 14:26; Ephesians 3:16; Romans 15:13).
46. Explain, biblically, the fact that the Holy Spirit indwells all believers from the moment of regeneration.
 - All believers are saved by the power of the Holy Spirit, filled with the Holy Spirit, and kept by the Holy Spirit from the instant of conversion and forevermore (Ephesians 1:13; 2 Corinthians 5:5; Titus 3:5-6).
47. Explain, biblically, the fact there are no apostles today.
 - The qualifications for apostleship were having been chosen directly by Christ and having witnessed the resurrected Christ (Mark 3:13; Acts 1:22-24). Paul was the last to meet those qualifications (Rom. 1:1). It is not possible, therefore, as some claim, for there to be apostles in the church today.
48. Explain why the miraculous gifts (tongues and healing) are no longer in use.
 - God gave the miraculous gifts to the Apostles to help establish the ministry of the early church and spread the Gospel. Since the death of the apostles, these gifts have ceased. God still works miracles despite the absence of these gifts (Acts 2:4-11, 4:10, 4:16; 1 Corinthians 13:8, 14:22).
49. How many sexes did God create?
 - God only created natural man and natural woman (Genesis 1:27)
50. Explain, biblically, why homosexuality, transgenderism, and any sexual behavior outside of marriage is sin.
 - All sexual practices and behaviors outside of the context of biblically defined sexes and relationships are perversions of God's design for sexuality (Genesis 1:27; 2:24; Deuteronomy 22:5; 1 Corinthians 6:18-19; Hebrews 13:4).

51. What is the biblical definition of marriage?
 - The biblical definition of marriage is one man and one woman united until death (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:6).
52. What are the biblical provisions for divorce?
 - Adultery or desertion by an unbelieving spouse are the two biblical provisions for divorce. In addition to these clear allowances, it can be inferred from Scripture that situations where a spouse (believing or unbelieving) has broken the marriage covenant through harsh sin, such as abuse or neglect (kinds may vary) of the other spouse and/or children, may also warrant divorce. Divorce should be the last course of action after attempts are made for biblical reconciliation (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 5:32; 1 Corinthians 7:15; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:7).
53. When does life begin for the unborn?
 - Life begins at conception. (Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 139:13-16; Luke 1:44).
54. Do you believe Jesus will physically and visibly return?
 - Answer will depend on the man. (Refer to Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7)
55. What will Jesus do when He returns?
 - Jesus will judge the living and the dead (2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5).
56. Discuss the resurrection of the dead.
 - When Jesus returns, all of the dead will be raised bodily, each in his own order: the righteous dead in “the resurrection of life” and the wicked dead in “the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:24-29; 1 Cor. 15:20-28).
57. What are Heaven and Hell?
 - Heaven is the place believers go when they die, while Hell is the place unbelievers go when they die. Heaven is paradise, while Hell is a place of terror, suffering, and fire (2 Corinthians 5:8, Matthew 25:46).

Bible Knowledge:

1. Have you read the entire Bible?
 - Answers will depend on the man.
2. Do you read Scripture regularly?
 - Answer will depend on the man.
3. What are the books of the Old Testament?
 - 1. Genesis
 - 2. Exodus

- 3. Leviticus
- 4. Numbers
- 5. Deuteronomy
- 6. Joshua
- 7. Judges
- 8. Ruth
- 9. 1 Samuel
- 10. 2 Samuel
- 11. 1 Kings
- 12. 2 Kings
- 13. 1 Chronicles
- 14. 2 Chronicles
- 15. Ezra
- 16. Nehemiah
- 17. Esther
- 18. Job
- 19. Psalms
- 20. Proverbs
- 21. Ecclesiastes
- 22. Song of Solomon
- 23. Isaiah
- 24. Jeremiah
- 25. Lamentations
- 26. Ezekiel
- 27. Daniel
- 28. Hosea
- 29. Joel
- 30. Amos
- 31. Obadiah
- 32. Jonah
- 33. Micah
- 34. Nahum
- 35. Habakkuk
- 36. Zephaniah
- 37. Haggai
- 38. Zechariah
- 39. Malachi
- What books are the Law/Pentateuch?
 - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- What books are History?
 - Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther

- What books are Poetry?
 - Job, Psalm, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
- What books are the Major (longer books) Prophets?
 - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel
- What books are the Minor (shorter books) Prophets?
 - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
- 4. What are the books of the New Testament?
 - 1. Matthew
 - 2. Mark
 - 3. Luke
 - 4. John
 - 5. Acts
 - 6. Romans
 - 7. 1 Corinthians
 - 8. 2 Corinthians
 - 9. Galatians
 - 10. Ephesians
 - 11. Philippians
 - 12. Colossians
 - 13. 1 Thessalonians
 - 14. 2 Thessalonians
 - 15. 1 Timothy
 - 16. 2 Timothy
 - 17. Titus
 - 18. Philemon
 - 19. Hebrews
 - 20. James
 - 21. 1 Peter
 - 22. 2 Peter
 - 23. 1 John
 - 24. 2 John
 - 25. 3 John
 - 26. Jude
 - 27. Revelation
- What books are the Gospels?
 - Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- What book is History?
 - Acts
- What books are Paul's Epistles (letters)?

- Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
 - What books are General Epistles (letters)?
 - Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude
 - What book is Prophecy?
 - Revelation
- 5. What are the 10 Commandments?
 - You shall have no other gods before Me.
 - You shall not make idols.
 - You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
 - Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
 - Honor your father and your mother.
 - You shall not murder.
 - You shall not commit adultery.
 - You shall not steal.
 - You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
 - You shall not covet.
- 6. What are the covenants?
 - The Noahic Covenant
 - The Abrahamic Covenant
 - The Mosaic Covenant
 - The Davidic Covenant
 - The New Covenant.
- 7. What is the Great Commission?
 - And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ‘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. Amen’ (Matthew 28:18-20).
- 8. Know the biblical accounts of these characters:
 - Old Testament- Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Ruth, Jonah, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, Saul, Solomon, David, Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; and
 - New Testament- Jesus, the Apostles, Peter, Barnabas, Stephen, Paul, Timothy, James, Pharisees, Sadducees, Apollos, Priscilla and Aquila, Titus, and Philemon.

Appendix B

Doctrinal Statement of the Baptist Missionary Association of America

I. God

There is one living and true God, the creator of the universe (Exod. 15:11; Isa. 45:11; Jer. 27:5). He is revealed in the unity of the Godhead as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, who are equal in every divine perfection (Exod. 15:11; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14).

A. God the Father is the supreme ruler of the universe. He providentially directs the affairs of history according to the purposes of His grace (Gen. 1; Ps. 19:1; Ps. 104; Heb. 1:1-3).

B. God the Son is the Savior of the world. Born of the virgin Mary (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:26-35), He declared His deity among men (John 1:14, 18; Matt. 9:6), died on the cross as the only sacrifice for sin (Phil. 2:6-11), arose bodily from the grave (Luke 24:6, 7, 24-26; I Cor. 15:3-6), and ascended back to the Father (Acts 1:9-11; Mark 16:19). He is at the right hand of the Father, interceding for believers (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25) until He returns to rapture them from the world (Acts 1:11; I Thess. 4:16-18).

C. God the Holy Spirit is the manifest presence of deity. He convicts of sin (John 16:8-11), teaches spiritual truths according to the written Word (John 16:12-15), permanently indwells believers (Acts 5:32; John 14:16, 17, 20, 23), and confers on every believer at conversion the ability to render effective spiritual service (I Peter 4:10, 11).

II. The Scriptures

A. The Scriptures are God's inerrant revelation, complete in the Old and New Testaments, written by divinely inspired men as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:21). Those men wrote not in words of human wisdom but in words taught by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:13).

B. The Scriptures provide the standard for the believer's faith and practice (II Tim. 3:16, 17), reveal the principles by which God will judge all (Heb. 4:12; John 12:48), and express the true basis of Christian fellowship (Gal. 1:8, 9; II John 9-11).

III. Creation

A. The World—God created all things for His own pleasure and glory, as revealed in the biblical account of creation (Gen. 1; Rev. 4:11; John 1:2, 3; Col. 1:16).

B. The Angels—God created an innumerable host of spirit beings called angels. Holy angels worship God and execute His will; while fallen angels serve Satan, seeking to hinder God's purposes (Col. 1:16; Luke 20:35, 36; Matt. 22:29, 30; Ps. 103:20; Jude 6).

C. Man—As the crowning work of His creation, God created humankind (male and female) in His own image (Ps. 8; Gen. 1:27; 2:7). Consequently, every person from conception is of inherent dignity and worth and merits the respect of all other persons (Ps. 51:5; 139:13-16; Gen. 9:6; Matt. 10:28-31; Jam. 3:9).

D. Marriage—God created marriage (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:23-24). Jesus Christ declared the Creator's intention for marriage to be the inseparable and exclusive union between a male and female (i.e., a natural man and a natural woman) (Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9; Rom. 1:25-27). Marriage testifies of the union between Christ and the church (Eph. 5:31-32).

IV. Satan

Satan is a person rather than a personification of evil (John 8:44) and he with his demons opposes all that is true and godly by blinding the world to the gospel (II Cor. 4:3, 4), tempting saints to do evil (Eph. 6:11; I Peter 5:8), and warring against the Son of God (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 20:1-10).

V. Depravity

Although man was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26; 2:17), he fell through sin, and that image was marred (Rom. 5:12; James 3:9). In his unregenerate state, he is void of spiritual life, is under the influence of the devil, and lacks any power to save himself (Eph. 2:1-3; John 1:13). The sin nature has been transmitted to every member of the human race, the man Jesus Christ alone being excepted (Rom. 3:23; I Peter 2:22). Because of the sin nature, man possesses no divine life and is essentially and unchangeably depraved apart from divine grace (Rom. 3:10-19; Jer. 17:9).

VI. Salvation

A. The Meaning of Salvation—Salvation is the gracious work of God whereby He delivers undeserving sinners from sin and its results (Matt. 1:21; Eph. 2:8, 9). In justification, He declares righteous all who put faith in Christ as Savior (Rom. 3:20-22), giving them freedom from condemnation, peace with God, and full assurance of future glorification (Rom. 3:24-26).

B. The Way of Salvation—Salvation is based wholly on the grace of God apart from works (Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:9). Anyone who will exercise repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved (Acts 16:30-32; Luke 24:47; Rom. 10:17).

C. The Provision of Salvation—Christ died for the sins of the whole world (John 1:29; 3:16; I John 2:1, 2). Through His blood, atonement is made without respect of persons (I Tim. 2:4-6). All sinners can be saved by this gracious provision (Heb. 2:9; John 3:18).

VII. Divine Sovereignty And Human Freedom

God's sovereignty and man's freedom are two inseparable factors in the salvation experience (Eph. 2:4-6). The two Bible truths are in no way contradictory, but they are amazingly complementary in the great salvation so freely provided. God, in His sovereignty, purposed, planned, and executed salvation in eternity while man's freedom enables him to make a personal choice in time, either to receive this salvation and be saved or to reject it and be damned (Eph. 1:9-12; 1:13, 14; John 1:12, 13).

VIII. Sanctification

All believers are set apart unto God (Heb. 10:12-14) at the time of their regeneration (I Cor. 6:11). They should grow in grace (II Peter 1:5-8) by allowing the Holy Spirit to apply God's Word to their lives (I Peter 2:2), conforming them to the principles of divine righteousness (Rom. 12:1, 2; I Thess. 4:3-7) and making them partakers of the holiness of God (II Cor. 7:1; I Peter 1:15, 16).

IX. Security

All believers are eternally secure in Jesus Christ (John 10:24-30; Rom. 8:35-39). They are born again (John 3:3-5; I John 5:1; I Peter 1:23), made new creatures in Christ (II Cor. 5:17; II Peter 1:4), and indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9; I John 4:4), enabling their perseverance in good works (Eph. 2:10). A special providence watches over them (Rom. 8:28; I Cor. 10:13), and they are kept by the power of God (Phil. 1:6; 2:12, 13; I Peter 1:3-5; Heb. 13:5).

X. Church

A. The Nature of the Church—A New Testament church is a local congregation (Acts 16:5; I Cor. 4:17) of baptized believers in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41) who are united by covenant in belief of what God has revealed and in obedience to what He has commanded (Acts 2:41, 42).

B. The Autonomy of the Church—She acknowledges Jesus as her only Head (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18) and the Holy Bible as her only rule of faith and practice (Isa. 8:20; II Tim. 3:16, 17), governing herself by democratic principles (Acts 6:1-6; I Cor. 5:1-5) under the oversight of her pastors (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24).

C. The Perpetuity of the Church—Instituted by Jesus during His personal ministry on earth (Matt. 16:18; Mark 3:13-19; John 1:35-51), true churches have continued to the present and will continue until Jesus returns (Matt. 16:18; 28:20).

D. The Ordinances of the Church—Her two ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer as a confession of his faith in Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:4) and is prerequisite to church membership and participation in the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41, 42). The Lord's Supper is the sacred sharing of the bread of communion and the cup of blessing by the assembled church (Acts 20:7) as a memorial to the crucified body and shed blood of Jesus Christ (Luke 22:19, 20; I Cor. 11:23-26). Both ordinances must be administered by the authority of a New Testament church (Matt. 28:18-20; I Cor. 11:23-26).

E. The Officers of the Church—Pastors and deacons are the permanent officers divinely ordained in a New Testament church (Phil. 1:1). Each church may select men of her choice to fill those offices under the leading of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:1-6; 20:17, 18) according to the divinely given qualifications (I Tim. 3:1-13).

Pastors (elders, bishops) are authorized to oversee and teach the churches under the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28; Heb 13:7, 17, 24; I Peter 5:1-4). Each church is responsible to follow them as they follow Christ (I Cor. 11:1; I Thess. 1:6; Heb. 13:17) and to provide a livelihood for them that they might fulfill their ministries (I Tim 5:17, 18; Phil. 4:15-18). Pastors are equal in the service of God (Matt. 23:8-12).

Deacons (ministers, servants) are servants of the churches and assistants to the pastors, particularly in benevolent ministries. Each church may select her own deacons according to her needs, and no church is bound by the act of another church in that selection (Acts 6:1-6).

[On April 26, 2006, the BMA of America adopted the following resolution, included here for clarification:

Whereas the Doctrinal Statement of the BMA of America, Section X, Item E, implies that the offices of ordained Pastor and Deacon are limited to men only and the majority of churches agree with that position, be it resolved

that the messengers of the BMA of America, meeting in Mobile, Alabama April 24-26, 2006, declare that the proper, biblical, and intended interpretation of Section X, Item E, is that the offices of Pastor and Deacon are limited to men only.]

F. The Ministry of the Church—Her mission is evangelizing sinners by preaching the gospel (Matt. 28:19; Luke 24:45-47), baptizing those who believe (Acts 2:41; 8:12, 35-38), and maturing them by instruction (Matt. 28:20; Acts 2:42) and discipline (Matt. 18:17, 18; I Cor. 5:1-5).

G. The Fellowship of the Church—She is free to associate with true churches in furthering the faith (II Cor. 11:8; Phil 4:10, 15, 16) but is responsible to keep herself from those who hold doctrines or practices contrary to Holy Scripture (Gal. 1:8, 9; I John 2:19). In association with other churches, each church is equal and is the sole judge of the measure and method of her cooperation (Matt. 20:25-28). In all matters of polity and practice, the will of each church is final (Matt. 18:18).

XI Civil Authority

Human government was instituted by God to protect the innocent and punish the guilty. It is separate from the church, though both church and state exercise complementary ministries for the benefit of society (Matt. 22:21).

Christians should submit to the authority of the government under which they live, obeying all laws which do not contradict the laws of God, respecting officers of government, paying taxes, rendering military service, and praying for the welfare of the nation and its leaders (Rom. 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13, 17; I Tim. 2:1, 2). They should vote, hold office, and exercise influence to direct the nation after the principles of Holy Scripture.

Civil authority is not to interfere in matters of conscience or disturb the institutions of religion (Acts 4:18-20), but it should preserve for every citizen the free exercise of his religious convictions.

Churches should receive no subsidy from the government, but they should be exempt from taxation on property and money used for the common good through worship, education, or benevolence.

XII. Last Things

A. Return—Our risen Lord will return personally in bodily form to receive His redeemed unto Himself. His return is imminent (I Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 22:20).

B. Resurrections—After Jesus returns, all of the dead will be raised bodily, each in his own order: the righteous dead in “the resurrection of life” and the wicked dead in “the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:24-29; I Cor. 15:20-28).

C. Judgments—Prior to the eternal state, God will judge everyone to confer rewards or to consign to punishment (Matt. 25:31-46; II Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15).

D. Eternal States—Heaven is the eternal home of the redeemed (John 14:1-3) who, in their glorified bodies (I Cor. 15:51-58), will live in the presence of God forever (I Thess. 4:17) in ultimate blessing (Rev. 21, 22). Hell is the place of eternal punishment and suffering (Luke 16:19-31) for the devil, his angels (Matt. 25:41), and the unredeemed (Rev. 20:10-15).

Addendum

NOTE: The following statements are not to be binding upon the churches already affiliated with this association, or to require adoption by churches petitioning this body for privilege of cooperation, or to be a test of fellowship between brethren or churches. However, they do express the preponderance of opinion among the churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of America.

1. We believe in the premillennial return of Christ to earth, after which He shall reign in peace upon the earth for a thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6).

2. We believe the Scriptures to teach two resurrections: the first of the righteous at Christ’s coming; the second of the wicked at the close of the thousand-year reign (I Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 20:6, 12-15).

We endorse the New Hampshire Confession of Faith as a representative compendium of what Baptists have historically believed through the centuries. This confession was consulted and provided a pattern and guide for the formulation of these doctrinal statements. As there are several versions and editions, we refer particularly to the edition in J. E. Cobb’s Church Manual third edition, published by the Baptist Publications Committee of Texarkana, TX.

Appendix C

Church Covenants

Classic Baptist Church Covenant

(Written by J. Newton Brown, mid-nineteenth century)

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

A Newer Baptist Church Covenant

Having, as we trust, been brought by Divine Grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

As members of _____ Baptist Church:

We commit to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, exemplary in our behavior, and to seek Christian unity by avoiding all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger.

We commit to strive for holiness in our lives, by refraining from any lifestyle choices that do not accord with Scripture.

We commit to trust the Bible alone as the perfect authority for our faith and practice, as it is perfect and without any error.

We commit to assembling together regularly for worship and fellowship in order to know God better, worship Him together, and encourage each other in godliness.

We commit to continue the ministry of this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines and to support the ministry of the church, as the Lord leads, through the regular and cheerful giving of tithes and offerings.

We accept the BMAA Doctrinal Statement and the New Hampshire Confession as a summary of our doctrine and practice, yet understand they are, by far, secondary to the Scriptures themselves.

We commit to give God glory in all things as a church body and in our personal lives.