

## ***ABBREVIATED STATEMENT OF BELIEFS***

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I believe that there is one God, and that He is absolutely sovereign over the creation He made. He is personal and loving in His relationship with mankind, but righteous and just in His expectations of them. He has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I believe that Jesus is the one and only Son of God, that He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died a physical death, was bodily resurrected, has ascended to heaven, and is currently there interceding for His people. One day He will physically return for His church.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, revealing God to mankind, drawing people to Christ, convicting them of sin, and empowering them for service. According to His sovereign choice, He equips believers for service through the granting of spiritual gifts for ministry. He is the One in whose power we serve.

I believe that God has revealed Himself in His Word, the Bible. It is our guideline for living, and it is the unique revelation of His ongoing interaction with His people. It is absolute truth. The Bible is ultimately interpreted through the life and message of Jesus (Matthew 5:22-44; Hebrews 1:1-2).

I believe that mankind was made in the very image of God, but when given the choice to obey or disobey God he chose disobedience. There is a propensity, a tendency, toward sin inherent in every human heart, and each of us will eventually choose our way over God's. At that point when we know the difference between right and wrong and choose wrong, we appropriate the guilt for our sin and fall under sin's judgment and in need of God's forgiveness and redemption.

I believe that, because all have sinned, every person stands in need of God's salvation. Salvation includes the redemption of the whole person, and is offered freely by God to all who accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. It is the free gift of God, and cannot be earned by good works or human effort. It is the responsibility and privilege of every believer to lovingly share the good news of this salvation with all who have not yet experienced it for themselves.

I believe that the church is the Body of Christ. Its physical presence is seen in local autonomous bodies of baptized believers united by faith in Jesus, who gather together for worship, prayer, instruction, encouragement, mutual accountability, and community, and who share the good news of salvation with those who are outside the church. Spiritual unity is to be expressed among Christians by love for one another across ethnic, cultural, national, socioeconomic, generational, gender, and denominational lines. The Lord's Supper and baptism by immersion are practices of the New Testament church which are observed in obedience to Jesus' instructions, but are not necessary for salvation.

I believe that, in His own time and in His own way, God will bring the world to its appropriate conclusion. Jesus will return physically and visibly, the dead will be raised, and all mankind will be judged. The unrighteous will be sentenced to eternal punishment in Hell, and those declared righteous in Jesus will dwell forever in heaven with God. No one knows the day or the time of Jesus' return, except God.

I believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's picture of the union between Christ and His church, and it provides for the man and the woman united in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.