

### **The Doctrine of Revelation**

I believe that the God of all creation desires to make himself known to all mankind. Because man is finite, and God is infinite, if man is to know God it must come about by God's revelation of himself. Revelation is the concept of unveiling, revealing, or uncovering that which was previously hidden, so that it can be known. God therefore reveals himself to mankind, as He sees fit, and in His time (Matt.16:17; Gal.1:11-12; Rom.16:25-26). I believe that God reveals himself in a general way to all mankind, by the creation of the natural world, and the creation of man to name two. The impressive grandeur of creation declares the glory of God (Psalm 19:1-6), as well as His invisible qualities and divine nature (Rom. 1:20). The purpose is without a doubt to communicate himself to us. Since this revelation from God is universal, and He has made it plain to us, we all are accountable to God and are without excuse (Rom 1:19, 20b).

I affirm the fact that God has revealed himself in special revelations in the past. He revealed himself to Moses in the form of the bush, and audibly (Ex.3:4), to Isaiah in vision (Isa.6:1-8), and to Paul, who saw a great light (Acts 9:3-4). God has also revealed himself dramatically in the person and life of Jesus Christ, who is the exact representation of God (Heb.1:3). The purpose of these revelations was to communicate to men God's divine purpose for Israel, and in the life of Christ, His purpose for all mankind.

God reveals himself in His Word, the Bible. I believe that the Bible is in fact the very Word of God. This fact is self-evident from a historical standpoint, in that the unity of the Bible could only be the work of God given the diverse authors, languages, and time span in which it was written. I affirm the Bible to be inspired of God, by which the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon the authors rendered their writings to be an accurate record of revelation, or God's own words (2Pet.1:20-21). This inspiration of Scripture is complete, in all of the parts, equally (2Tim 3:16). I believe that the Bible is inerrant, meaning true and without error in all that it affirms (Jn.17:17). Because the Bible is inspired, and inerrant, it has authority to require our obedience (Deut.26:16-19, 2Thess.1:8), and it has the power to change our lives (Josh.1:8). The Bible was written in the common language of the people so that it would be clear, and the fundamentals of faith understandable (Deut.30:11-14). The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation, yet many details are difficult for us to grasp. As a result, I believe that the Holy Spirit, working in our hearts, illuminates the Scriptures to us, in order for us to understand them and apply them to our lives (Jn.16:13; 1Cor.2:10; 2Tim.2:7). The Bible is also completely sufficient as the rule for life and righteousness. I also affirm that the sixty-six books of the Bible are the true, authoritative, and complete canon of Scripture (Luke 24:27).

### **The Doctrine of God**

I believe that there is only one God (Deut.6:4; Isa.44:6, 46:9), who chose to reveal himself to mankind, first to Adam, and then He chose the nation of Israel to be His treasured possession (Deut.7:6). God is a personal

God who is involved in His creation and He desires to have fellowship with each person, (Psalm 100; 1Cor.1:9; 1Jn.1:3). God is immanent, that is, active within creation, human nature, and all of history (Am.3:6; Prov.5:21; Matt.18:20). All creation is sustained through His Spirit (Job.34:14-15), and God works throughout the events of the universe to accomplish His perfect purpose (Isa.46:10-11). I believe that God is transcendent by which I mean that He is separate from and independent of His creation. God is superior to all creation in every way (Isa.55:8-9) and dwells in the heavens looking down upon the earth (Isa. 57:15).

I believe that God is an infinite, and all-knowing Spirit (Jn.4:24), perfect in all His attributes (Matt.5:48), one in essence (Deut.6:4), existing in three Persons. God possesses various attributes that constitute who he is. They are the very characteristics of His nature. These attributes can be divided into two classifications, incommunicable, i.e., those attributes which belong only to God, and communicable attributes being those that God possesses infinitely, but we humans have in a finite sense. The incommunicable attributes would include God's self-existence (Ex.3:14; Jn.5:26), His self-sufficiency, in that He has within himself all that is required to be God (Rom.11:33-36). God's nature is infinite in that he is without limitation or restriction, as well as eternal, not limited in his existence by time (Ex.3:14; Jn.1:1; 5:26). I believe that God possesses omnipresence, not limited in his existence by space (Ps.139:7-8; Jer.23:23-24). These attributes are immutable, in that God can not change his attributes or essential nature (Mal.3:6).

God's communicable attributes include his intellectual omniscience, that God knows all that is knowable (Matt. 11:21, Ps.139:1-4, Isa.42:9), His wisdom which is an application of His infinite knowledge (Ps.104:24; Rom.16:27), and His truth in that God knows all things as they are, and He cannot lie (Jn.14:6; 1Jn.5:20; Tit.1:2).

I believe that there is only one God, who exists eternally in three persons- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is God (Isa.44:6-8), the Son is God (Jn.8:58), and the Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4), and each one, as God is equally deserving of worship (Rev.4).

Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (Jn.10:30; 14:9).

The third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is a divine person, eternal, possessing all the divine attributes. He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Acts 5:3-4; 1Cor.12:4-6; Heb.10:15-17). As to the working relationships of God's eternal purpose, the Father authors and is the source of all things. The Son brings them to pass and is the agent of their being affected. The Holy Spirit makes them known and applies them. Some works of God are related more particularly to one person than to another. For example, the Father is the Creator of all things (Isa.45:18), the Son is the Redeemer of the human race (Rom.3:21-24), and the Spirit sanctifies those whom God has chosen (Rom. 15:16).

I believe that God is at work in the world to bring about His perfect purpose that has been planned from all eternity (Ps.139:16; Eph.1:11), and this plan includes the salvation of mankind (2Tim. 1:9). God will also accomplish this plan without fail (Isa.14:24,27; 46:10). God's permissive will permits his moral creatures to make

a variety of choices that may be amoral, immoral, or moral. God knows the choices that will be made, including the evil actions, and may, if he chooses, intervene to cause a different choice to be made. God does actively cause the precise decision that is made in some cases to fulfill his purpose (Gen.50:20). I believe that God does, from eternity past elect many people to be saved (2Thess.2:13; 2Tim.1:9), and predestines them to respond to the knowledge of the truth (Eph.1:4-5). I believe that the gospel must be given to the all the unsaved so that those who are predestined may hear the truth (Rom.10:14-15).

I believe that God created all that there is, and He did so out of nothing (Ps.33:9; Isa.45:18). God created the universe and all that is within it for His good pleasure (Rev.4:11), and continues to act in such a way as to preserve in existence that creation (Neh.9:6; Col.1:17; Heb.1:3). I also believe that God is actively involved in the world to bring about events to fulfill his ultimate purpose. This includes the events of nature (Ps.135:5-7) as well as national governments (Prov.21:1). The extent of God's control over these matters is absolute, and complete.

### **Doctrine of Angels, Demons and Satan**

I believe that angels are created beings (Ps.148:5; Col. 1:16), that do not procreate (Matt.22:30). Angels are by nature spirit beings (Heb.1:14), and are holy (Mark 8:38). Angels have great power (2Ki.19:35), and they cannot die (Lk.20:36). Angels are elected by God (1Tim.5:21), and even though glorious in their appearance, they are not to be worshiped (Rev.19:10).

The ministry of angels is that of servants (Rev.22:9). In relationship to God, angels' primary ministry is to worship (Rev.5:8-13) and praise Him (Isa.6:3). They rejoice in what God does (Job 38:6-7), and they proclaim God's Word (Lk.1:26-38).

In relation to Jesus' life, angels ministered to Him in the desert after being tempted by Satan (Matt.4:11), and strengthened Him in the garden of Gethsemane (Lk.22:43).

In relation to humanity, angels announce impending judgments on the unrighteous (Rev.14:6-7) and inflict judgement on them (Rev.16:1), and will separate the righteous from the unrighteous (Matt.13:39-41). For believers, angels aid in winning people to Christ (Acts 10:3), they serve those who will inherit salvation (Heb.1:14), and they are present at death (Lk.16:22).

I believe that Satan and demons are fallen angels, created by God and have the same characteristics, (except holiness) as unfallen angels. The sin of arrogance, and conceit resulted in Satan's fall (1Tim.3:6), who is the ruler of the demons (Matt.25:41). Satan has great power and seeks to destroy the faith and spiritual growth in the believer (Eph.6:10-16), and deceives unbelievers by promoting idolatry (Rev.9:20) and performing false signs and wonders (Rev.13:12). Demons work to advance Satan's goals. Demons can possess unsaved people and control them, afflicting both mental and physical torment with great power (Mark 5:1-5).

### **The Doctrine of Humanity and Sin**

I believe that man was a deliberate, planned creation of God (Gen.1:26-27), physically from the dust of the earth (Gen.2:7), and that God himself breathed into Adams nostrils the breath of life and he became a living being (Gen.2:7). God was also the creator of the first woman, who was formed from the rib of Adam (Gen.2:21-23), and God pronounced the created nature of this pair as very good (Gen.1:31).

I believe that humans are made up of two distinct, and separable substances, material\immaterial, or body and soul (Gen.2:7; Matt.10:28). God is the creator of both parts, but does so through the means of human reproduction (Isa.42:5; Jer.1:5 compare to Zech.12:1).

I believe that man was created in the image of God and according to His likeness (Gen.1:26-27). But the Bible does not directly indicate what the exact nature of this "image" might be. All men possess this "image" (Gen.9:6; 1Cor.11:7). I believe that the "Image" is the amazing ability, and awesome responsibility to make visible the invisible characteristics of our Creator.

I believe that sin was present in the universe before the Fall of Adam and Eve and that Satan originally sinned against God (Jn. 8:44; 2Pet.2:4). Sin entered the human race polluting an otherwise good creation in the Garden of Eden (Gen.3). The nature of the original human sin stemmed from the deception by Satan to Eve to violate God's command (Gen.3:1-5). The essence of the sin was three-fold: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life which are all urges to be independent of God.

I believe that sin distorted and marred this "image of God" within humans and that the image is in need of restoration and renewal (Rom.8:29; Col.3:10). This distorted nature from Adam is passed to each person by their parents causing all to sin, and all to die (Rom.5:12,15,17,18). This sin nature has affected every part of us (total depravity) rendering us totally unable not to sin (Eph.2:1-3; Rom.3:10-18,23), and in this marred condition, we are totally unable to do anything to ultimately please God (Rom.5:6; 6:16; 7:23; Heb.11:6).

I believe that sin is essentially rebellion against God, and the desire to be independent from Him, manifesting itself in worldly behavior (1Jn.2:16). God has condemned sin (Gen.2:17; Rom.8:3), and pronounced that the wages of sin is death (Rom.6:23).

### **The Person and Work of Christ**

I believe that Jesus Christ, the second person of the trinity, is God (Jn.1:1-4,14; 5:18; 8:58). He was the creator in the beginning (Col.1:16-17), and thus existing before his birth in Bethlehem (Isa.7:14; 9:6-7; Lk.10:18; Jn.5:26). I believe that in the incarnation, Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity, but nothing of the divine essence, laying aside His right to the full privileges of deity and assumed the place of the Son in human form, yet never divesting himself of His divine attributes (Phil.2:5-8; Col.2:9; Jn.5:19-20, 30). I believe that Jesus represents full humanity and full deity in indivisible oneness (Micah 5:2; Jn.14:9-10; Heb.2:17). His humanity came as the result of a "virgin conception" by the power of the Holy Spirit, and he was born to the virgin Mary in Bethlehem (Lk.1:26-38). I believe that Jesus was tempted in every way in which we are tempted but He did not sin (Heb.4:15; 1 Pet.2:21-22; Jn.8:29). Even though no sin was found in Him, He was tried and convicted of blasphemy and sentenced to death. Jesus Christ was crucified and He died on the cross (Lk.23:46; Rom.5:8). By

the power of God, Jesus was raised to life after three days in the tomb in the same physical body (Jn.2:19-21; Lk.24:39; Acts 2:24). After appearing to the apostles, and being seen by more than 500 others, Jesus ascended into heaven (1Cor.15:5-6; Acts 1:9). Today, Christ is exalted and seated at the right hand of God (Rom.8:34; Col.3:1). I believe that Jesus Christ will return to earth and judge the nations (1Thess.4:13-18; Rev.20).

Jesus Christ held three distinct offices during the incarnation and presently in His exaltation, as a prophet because He speaks for God (Jn.8:26-27; Heb.1:2), a priest to intercede and offer a sacrifice (Heb.4:14; 7:25-28; 10:14), and a king whose kingdom will never end (Lk.1:32-33; Jn.18:37).

I believe that in order for God to redeem mankind, sin must be removed and the standards of the law be fully met in each individual. Christ's death on the cross is the atonement for sin (Rom.8:1-4; 1Pet.2:24; 3:18). Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary (Jn.10:15), vicarious in that sinners receive the benefit (Rom.5:8), substitutionary in that He took our place (Isa.53:6; Gal.3:13; Heb.9:28; 2Cor.5:21), and propitiatory in that He satisfied God's wrath (Eph.5:6-8; Heb.2:17; 1Jn.2:2; 4:10). I believe that Christ has redeemed us (Gal.3:13; 1Cor.6:19; Rev.5:9), reconciled us to God (Col.1:21; 1Pet.3:18), and that God's intent in the atonement is to judge sin, while at the same time save the sinner. The extent of the atonement is unlimited, but the human acceptance is limited, being made effective only by faith in Christ (Jn.1:29; 3:16; Heb.2:9; 1Tim.2:6). God has provided this atonement because of His great love for us (Jn.3:16; Rom.5:8).

### **Doctrine of the Holy Spirit**

I believe that the Holy Spirit is a member of the triune Godhead, being co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father and the Son, (Acts 5:3-4; 1Cor.3:16 compare to 1Cor.6:19). The Holy Spirit also possesses the attributes of a person, (1Cor.2:10-11; 12:11; Gal.5:22-23), and therefore should not be considered as an impersonal force from God.

The Holy Spirit has been at work in God's plan from the beginning of creation (Gen.1:2), and was active in the Old Testament. The Spirit's work in the OT was an empowerment ministry. He empowered prophets (1Chron.12:18), judges (Jud.3:10), rulers (1Sam.16:13), and craftsmen (Ex.31:3), enabling them to perform their appointed task. The ministry of the HS in the OT was selective, mostly temporary, and task oriented (1Chron.12:18; Ex.31:3; 1Sam.16:14).

The Holy Spirit was also very active in the life of Jesus from the beginning. The conception of Jesus was a direct result of the work of the Holy Spirit, (Lk.1:35), who was also a visible manifestation at Jesus' baptism (Matt.3:16). Jesus proclaimed the presence of the Holy Spirit in his life (Lk.4:18-21) as a testimony to his identity. Jesus also taught by the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1-2), and was given the ability to go to the cross by the Spirit (Heb.9:14). The resurrection of Jesus was completed in part by the work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:11). The apostles received the HS who taught and reminded them (Jn.14:26) guided them, and told them of the future things (Jn.15:13), and also empowered them for bold testimony (Jn.15:26-27; Acts 2:1-41).

The Holy Spirit works in the world among unbelievers to convict them of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness and judgement (Jn.16:8-11). In the lives of believers, the HS works regeneration (Titus 3:5), dwells in us (Jn.14:17; Rom.8:1-17; Eph.2:21; 1Cor3:16) and fills us (Eph.5:18). Baptism of the HS brings the individual into the body of Christ (Lk.3:16; 1Cor.12:13) and filling of the HS refers to the believer yielding control of his life to the Spirit, by taking on the characteristics of the Spirit (Eph.5:18; Gal.5:22-23). Believers receive gifts from the HS to be used for the benefit of the body (Eph.4:12).

### **The Doctrine of Salvation**

I believe that God bestows common grace to all people. However this common grace does not lead to salvation in that it does not overcome our total depravity. I believe that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, and the merit of His shed blood only (Jn.1:12; Eph.1:7,2:8-9; 1Pet.1:17-19). I believe in the unconditional election of believers by God before the foundation of the world (Eph.1:4-5; 1Pet.1:1-2). God calls all people to himself (Matt.11:28), but to the elect He gives an effectual calling of irresistible grace that results in the salvation of that person (Matt.16:17; Jn.6:44,65; Rom.8:29-30; 11:29). As God bestows His effectual calling of irresistible grace, regeneration of the person occurs.

I believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit whereby the individual's spirit is enlivened and completely changed in it's moral and spiritual nature, making it a new creation to be conformed to the image of God (2Cor.5:17; Eph.4:24; Tit.3:5). This enlivening of the spirit leads to conversion.

I believe that conversion necessarily involves both repentance (turning from sin) and faith (turning to God in Christ) (Acts 3:19; 20:21). Genuine conversion is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit (Eph.2:10).

I believe that justification before God is an act of God (Rom.8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Isa.55:6-7; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 2Cor.7:10). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or good works from man (Rom.3:20; 4:6) and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ (Col.2:14; 1Pet.2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1Cor.1:30; 2Cor.5:21; Rom.8:4).

I believe that through faith in Christ we become the adopted children of God (Jn.1:12) and as sons, we are heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ (Rom.8:15-17). All these events may occur simultaneously.

I believe that once a genuine conversion has taken place, the individual is brought into a union with Christ and his new position is "in Christ" (Jn.14:20; Rom.8:1). As part of this union, Christ comes "into the believer" (Rom.8:10; Gal.2:20).

I believe that a genuine believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification, and is declared to be holy (2Cor.5:21). This is positional sanctification and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. Positional sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (2Thess.2:13;

1Pet.1:2). Progressive sanctification is also the work of the Spirit with the participation of the believer, by which the believer is being increasingly renewed into the likeness of Christ (1Thess.4:3; Phil.2:12-13).

I believe that all genuine believers once saved are kept by God's power and are secure in Christ forever, based on God's faithfulness, and not man's performance (Jn.10:26-29; Phil.1:6; 1Cor.1:8-10; 2Cor.1:21-22; 1Pet.1:4-5).

I believe that genuine believers, at the resurrection of their bodies, undergo complete and final perfection in holiness of the whole person, being altogether conformed into the likeness of Christ (1Cor.15:50-54; 1Jn.3:2).

### **The Doctrine of the Church**

I believe that the universal church is made up of all those who have placed their faith in Christ, and are then immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the Church (1Cor.12:12-13). The purpose of the church is to glorify God (Eph.3:21), by building itself up in the faith (Eph.4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2Tim.2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:42; 1Jn.1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19, Acts 2:38-42), and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matt.28:19; Acts 1:8).

I believe that the one, supreme authority for the church is Christ (Col.1:18-20), and that the church is called the body of Christ, receiving from Him, who is the Head, direction, wisdom, leadership, and nourishment (Eph.4:15-16; 5:23). The Holy Spirit is present within each believer (Jn.14:17; 2Cor.1:21-22), and is therefore present in the church. The Church then is to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. In doing that, He gives the Church spiritual gifts. First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Eph.4:7-12), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ (Rom.12:5-8; 1Cor.12:4-31; 1Pet.4:10-11).

I believe that the formation of the Church, the body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47), and is separate from the nation of Israel. God is not finished with Israel yet (Rom.11:25-26), and Israel will ultimately be brought into the fellowship of God's universal program (Rom.11:24). The mystery of the Church is the Jew/Gentile union, once divided by the Law, now united in Christ (Eph.3:5; 9-10; Rom.16:25-26; Eph.2:11-16). Those who are believers in Jesus Christ, and who have placed their faith in God are also Abraham's seed, and he is the father of the faithful (Rom.4:12, 16). The people of God are now the ones who love and obey Him, and believe in Him (1Jn.3:1-10; Rom.6:16-18; 2Cor.6:16). The church is the manifestation of the kingdom or reign of God, which is found wherever God rules in human hearts, and wherever His will is done (Jer.31:31-34; 2Cor.1:21-22).

I believe that the local church is a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of people who are born again believers (Eph.2:11; 3:6). The local church is to be characterized by being members of one spiritual body, in complete submission to Christ, the Head, carrying out His purposes (Eph.4:15-16). The purpose

of the local church is the same as the universal church. The church can be autonomous with the congregation recognizing qualified spiritual leaders guiding them under the ultimate leadership of Christ (Rev.2-3).

I believe that the church has a biblically described organization with the supreme authority for the church being Christ (1Cor.11:3). The church leadership, gifts, order, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the congregation are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers) (Eph.4:11), and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1Tim.3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9). These leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Tim.5:17-22), and the congregation is to submit to their leading (Heb.13:7, 17).

I believe that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). The baptism is to be by immersion for those who are born-again (Acts 8:36-39). The baptism is the outward testimony of the believer showing his inner identification with Christ. Baptism is the identification by faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Christ, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Rom.6:1-11).

I believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should always be preceded by solemn self-examination (1Cor.11:28-32). I believe that the elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ.

### **The Doctrine of Last Things**

I believe that every individual will physically die as a result of Adam's sin (Gen.3:19; Rom.5:12-14; Heb.9:27). This death does not involve loss of immaterial consciousness (Rev.6:9-11), and upon death the soul of the believer passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Lk.23:43; Phil.1:23; 2Cor.5:8). There is a separation of the soul and the body, and for the believer, this separation will continue until the rapture (1Thess.4:13-17) which initiates the first resurrection (1Cor.15:35-44, 50-54). Until that time, believers in the intermediate state will be judged (2Cor.5:10) and will remain in joyful fellowship with Christ (2Cor.5:8). I believe that upon death, the soul of the unbeliever enters a conscious state of torment and punishment (Lk.16:19-31; 2Pet.2:9), after which the soul and the resurrection body will be united (Jn.5:28). They will then appear at the Great White Throne Judgement (Rev.20:11-15), be condemned, and thrown into the lake of fire (Matt.25:41-46), and cut off from the presence of the Lord (2Thess.1:7-9).

I believe in the personal, bodily return of Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation (1Thess.4:16-17; Titus 2:13; Rev.3:10), and this event is imminent, in order to remove His church from the earth (Jn.14:1-3; 1Cor.15:51-53; 1Thess.4:15-5:11).

I believe that immediately following the removal of the church from the earth, the tribulation period begins when the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon the unbelieving world for a period of seven years, (Dan.9:27, 12:1; Matt.24:21-22; Rev.6), and these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to earth (Matt.24:27-31, 25:31-46). At that time, the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be resurrected



to rule with Christ and the living will be judged (Dan.12:2-3; Rev.20:4-6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Dan.9:24-27; Matt.24:15-31, 25:31-46).

I believe that after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matt.25:31; Lk.1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11) and establish His Messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth (Rev.20:1-7). During this time, the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and the nations of the earth (Ezek.37:21-28; Dan.7:17-22; Rev.19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Dan.7:17-27; Rev.20:1-7). I believe that the kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Isa.65:17-25; Ezek.37:21-28; Zech.8:1-17) to restore them to the land which they lost due to their disobedience (Deut.28:15-68). This time of Christ's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness and long-life (Isa.11, 65:17-25; Ezek.36:33-38), and will end with the release of Satan (Rev.20:7).

I believe that following the release of Satan, after the thousand year reign of Christ, Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them for battle against the saints and Jerusalem, where Satan and his army will be destroyed by fire from heaven (Rev.20:9). Satan will then be thrown into the lake of fire (Matt.25:41; Rev.20:10), and Christ will judge all unbelievers (Jn.5:22), will resurrect the dead and judge all at the Great White Throne Judgement. The unbelievers will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matt.25:41). The believers will enter the eternal state of glory with God in a new earth (Rev.20:15, 21-22), dwelling in the New Jerusalem, enjoying fellowship with God and one another forever (Jn.17:3; Rev.21-22).

## **Personal Statements**

**1. Your doctrinal beliefs:** Please see attached doctrinal statement.

**2. The nature and role of the church and the place of Christianity among world religions.**

I believe that the local church is a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of people who are born again believers (Eph.2:11; 3:6). The local church is to be characterized by being members of one spiritual body, in complete submission to Christ, the Head, carrying out His purposes (Eph.4:15-16). The purpose of the local church is the same as the universal church. For Old Testament believers, their ultimate purpose was to be a light to the Gentiles (Isa.42:6-7) by being a holy people unto the Lord (Lev.20:7). For New Covenant believers, the role of the church is to be a light to unbelievers by making disciples and teaching them to observe all that the Lord commanded (Matt.28:19-20). Additionally, the church is to be a worshipping community of believers (Jn.4:23) and a place where believers are equipped for ministry service to the Lord (Eph.4:11-12).

Christianity is separate and distinct among world religions in that Christianity is not a religion. Religion of all types is nothing more than man's attempts to garnish God's or (their god's) favor by seeking to be a good person or performing religious rituals. The goal being that their good works and deeds outweigh the failures and in the end, some type of salvation is granted. Christianity is not a religion rather it is a

relationship with God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is completely by grace through faith in Christ (Eph.2:8-9, Rom.3:20).

**3. Your views on the following doctrines:** Please see attached doctrinal statement.

I believe the Charismatic movement contains many heart-felt genuine believers who love the Lord passionately. I find it disturbing however that many of their core principles are based on a very faulty hermeneutic. Their insistence that all genuine believers speak in tongues as the evidence of their conversion is based on their understanding of the Book of Acts. They believe Acts is to be interpreted as prescriptive, describing what must happen to all Christians in all places at all times. Rather, I believe the Book of Acts is to be interpreted as descriptive, which is merely describing what happened (Acts 1:1 cites the “former account” which implies that this book is a second “account of what happened”). I also find the focus on the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit distract from the person of Christ and holy living in obedience to Him. I disagree with many in the charismatic movement who believe that our salvation is easily lost (see main doctrinal statement), as well as an “emotionally based” worship service focusing on supposed spiritual gifts rather than Jesus Christ.

**4. Your view of the relationship of the local church to the denomination and other bodies.**

While I believe that the local church is an autonomous body of believers led by Jesus Christ (see main doctrinal statement), I also affirm an important relationship between the local church and the denomination. The denomination is a critical support system for the local church in providing leadership, training, clergy standards, doctrinal standards, missionary endeavors, as well as serving the local church in the biblical resolution of disputes and disciplinary matters. The local church needs this support system to function within the denominational conference as a whole, and to cooperate with other like-minded and doctrinally similar churches and denominations to carry out the purpose of the church.

**5. Why do you desire membership in the CCCC?** I am seeking membership in the CCCC because I recently accepted the call to be the pastor at First Congregational Church in Kulm, ND. I believe with all my heart that the Lord called me to this position, moving me from California to Kulm to lead this church. The leaders of this church in Kulm also believe the Lord led them to call me to this ministry. I believe the main way that the CCCC can help me is to maintain the doctrinal purity in the Statement of Faith despite the cultural pressures in these times. I have two very close friends in pastoral ministry, one in the ELCA, and the other in the Episcopal Church. Both are agonizing their denomination’s doctrinal slide in accepting openly homosexuals into the clergy. Both, thankfully have maintained their commitment to biblical authority in the churches they lead, but have suffered immensely. In the same way, I can help the CCCC by my firm commitment to biblical authority, the CCCC statement of faith, and the direction of the Conference.