

Articles of Faith

Seven Pillars Church of Praise International, Inc.

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Of Seven Pillars Church of Praise International, Inc., also referred to in this document as “SPC”.

1. ONE GOD

There is but One true living God. The One God manifests Himself in three distinct rivers, entities, or persons. These three are revealed as The Father, the Son (or Word), and The Holy Ghost.

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” 1 John 5:7

Even though God manifests Himself as “three,” He is but One.

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 2:5

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one LORD.” Deuteronomy 6:4

2. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

The Holy Bible is God’s Word to humankind. All sixty-six books are inspired by God and were spoken and written by men of God who were moved upon the by Holy Ghost. All Scripture, both Old and New Testament, provide mankind with a road map of God’s Purpose and destiny for His creation.

“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.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:19-21

God’s word is infallible, inerrant, perfect, holy, pure and immovable. The Word of God has already been tested and tried and therefore the words written within its pages can be trusted as undeniable and unquestionable eternal Truth.

*“As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.” **Psalm 18:30***

3. THE DIETY AND HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is called ***The Son of Man*** and ***The Son of God***. He is both human and Divine.

Son of Man Matthew 8:20, Mark 8:31

Son of God 1 John 5:10, Mark 15:39

*“For unto us a child is **born**, unto us a son is **given**.” **Isaiah 9:6***

The child that was *born* was the Son of Man, whereas the son that was *given* was the Eternal Son of God, the Christ.

The Divine eternal Christ, The Word of God, is from, and of, eternity. He is the only begotten Son of the heavenly Father. He co-existed with God the Father as the Divine Word.

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” **John 1:1-2***

*“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” **John 1:14***

The Divine word of God, God’s Son, the Christ, took upon Himself human flesh, conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, so that He could become the redeemer of all mankind. Through Him and the sacrificial offering of Himself eternal life was granted mankind.

*“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.” **Matthew 1:23-25***

4. THE CREATION, FALL AND REDEMPTION OF MANKIND

a. Creation

Creation was brought into existence by God, for God. He created all things for the purpose of manifesting Himself, or making Himself known.

*“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” **1 Corinthians 8:6***

*“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” **Revelation 4:11***

b. Fall of Mankind

Mankind was created by God in a perfect state of existence; in the image and likeness of God.

*“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” **Genesis 1:26***

However, man fell from this place of perfection by disobeying the commands that God had explicitly given him. Please read the third chapter of Genesis for the complete story of the fall of mankind. Through man’s disobedience to God sin entered the human race causing all human life to be subject to sin.

*“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” **Romans 5:12***

Mankind became sinners **by birth** and sinners **by deed**.

*“Behold, I was **shapen in iniquity**; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” **Psalms 51:5***

*“For **all have sinned**, and come short of the glory of God.” **Romans 3:23***

Without the redemptive work of Jesus Christ on Calvary’s cross, and His resurrection, mankind would forevermore be lost and damned in his sin.

*“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” **Romans 6:23***

c. Redemption of Mankind

God did not leave mankind in his fallen state and condition, but provided a means of eternal redemption through the sacrificial blood offering, the death and resurrection of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

*“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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” **John 3:16-17***

*“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” **John 14:6***

*“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” **1 Timothy 2:5***

Salvation through Jesus Christ is obtained by believing with the heart and confessing with the mouth.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” **Romans 10:9-11**

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” **Romans 6:23**

Salvation through the shed and resurrected blood of Jesus Christ is a free gift of God obtained only by faith and confession. Salvation cannot be bought or obtained by merit, works or deeds of righteousness. It is a gift of God’s unearned favor, or His Grace.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” **Ephesians 2:8-9**

5. MANKIND’S CALL TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH / THE FOUNDATION

All living things have a command from God to grow. All human life, animal life, plant life; whatever comes from a seed and is brought to birth, must grow. This is also applicable in the spiritual realms. We are born again by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God. (**1 Peter 1:23**). Hence our spiritual life also needs to grow from the seed stage to that of full maturity. (**Ephesians 4:13**)

*“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow **thereby...**”*
1 Peter 2:2

God has granted mankind a threefold spiritual foundation upon which to build his spiritual life and grow. These gifts are given to provide mankind with complete sanctification as he grows in the nature and likeness of Christ.

The Apostle Peter revealed the threefold foundation on the day of Pentecost and upon the establishment of the New Testament church.

*“Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and **be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the **Holy Ghost.**”* **Acts 2:38**

a. REPENT. Sanctification through the **Blood.**

*“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.” **Hebrews 13:12***

A repentant soul is washed clean and sanctified by the shed blood of Jesus.

b. WATER BAPTISM. Sanctification through the **Water**.

*“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” **Eph 5:26***

*“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” **John 17:17***

Baptism by water, and the ongoing washing of the waters of Truth, sanctify the believer. The power of water baptism is in the name of Jesus, the name that has all power in heaven and in earth.

*“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.” **Matt 28:18-19***

- **Be baptized in the name of Jesus.**

The ordinance of water baptism shall be done in the name of JESUS by immersion in water.

*“Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and **be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the **Holy Ghost**.” **Acts 2:38***

- **Phillip baptized in Jesus’s name.**

*“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” **Acts 8:12***

- **Saints in Samaria were baptized in Jesus’s name.**

*“For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” **Acts 8:16***

- **Gentiles commanded to be baptized in the Name of the Lord.**

*“And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” **Acts 10:48***

- **Paul re-baptized the Ephesus Christians in the name of the Lord Jesus.**

*“When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus”. **Acts 19:5***

- **Baptism is about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.**

*“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” **Rom 6:3-6***

Jesus commanded His disciples to go and baptize **in the Name** of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He mentioned “name” in the singular. There is a Name that unifies the three in one; that Name is Jesus.

*“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.” **Ephesians 3:14-15***

*“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” **Colossians 2:9***

c. HOLY GHOST. Sanctification through the **Spirit**.

*“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit...” **1 Peter 1:2***

The believer is sanctified by the burning fires of the Holy Ghost within his/her heart.

*“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the **Holy Ghost and with fire.**” **Luke 3:16***

On the day of Pentecost, the believers in the upper room experienced the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning the baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. **Acts 2:1-4**

This experience was evidenced by the speaking in other tongues.

*“And these signs shall follow them **that believe**; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall **speak with new tongues.**” **Mark 16:17***

Paul laid hands on believers and they spoke in tongues.

“And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” Acts 19:6

God gave gifts to the church, one being diversities of tongues.

*“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.”
1 Corinthians 12:28*

There are tongues of men and of angels.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” 1 Corinthians 13:1

Unknown tongues are not for the benefit of speaking to other men, but rather for the edifying of the believer.

*“For he that speaketh in an **unknown tongue** speaketh not unto men, but unto God: **for no man understandeth him**; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown **tongue edifieth himself**; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.”
1 Corinthians 14:2-4*

*“For if I pray in an **unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful**. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”
1 Corinthians 14: 14-15*

The threefold foundational experiences are gifts God has given and are three experiences that the believer must have to be able to grow and build his or her spiritual life.

The **BLOOD, FIRE and WATER** are God’s **sanctifying gifts**. Each one of these gifts were given as an initial experience in our spiritual journey. But when these gifts are used daily, by faith, the body, soul and spirit are sanctified. Upon these gifts of sanctification, we build the spiritual tabernacle (or temple) within our hearts.

*“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
1 Thessalonians 5:23*

“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification...” 1 Thessalonians 4:3

As the believer repents daily through prayer, confession, and applying the blood of Jesus by faith, as he uses the waters of truth, the Word of God, to wash His mind, and as he fans the fires of the Holy Ghost through praying in the spirit, his threefold being is sanctified wholly and preserved blameless.

6. THE AUTHORITY OF GOD

God is the Supreme Ruler, Magistrate, Master, Lord and King over all His creation. Mankind is His created subjects. The very first commandment God gave His chosen people establishes this Truth.

"I am the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:2

All other commands, and the total authority of God over His subjects, are based on the first commandment. Above all, God establishes His Lordship over all He has formed and created.

*"For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: **I am the Lord; and there is none else.**" Isaiah 45:18*

He is head over all things to the church.

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Ephesians 1:22

"Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all." 1 Chronicles 29:11

He is Head of the church.

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Colossians 1:18

7. THE CHURCH / THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

God Himself established His church. The word CHURCH simply means to be called out, a gathering, an assembly of worshippers.

God has called people from all walks of life, various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and different economic levels in society to be joined together as His church. He has gathered them together for one common purpose; worship to His Holy Name. This is what a church is. A gathering of believing worshippers who gather to praise and worship God according to His Word and Pleasure.

Jesus proclaimed that He would build His church on the revelation of who He, Jesus, was not on a doctrine or around a philosophy or the personality of a mortal man. He promised that the gates of hell would not prevail against his church, His body, His people.

*“And Simon Peter answered and said, **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.** And Jesus answered and said unto him, **Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**” **Matt 16:16-18***

The church is the representation and manifestation of the body of Christ in this world in which we live, and it is the embodiment of the Word of God.

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”
Romans 12:5

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” **1 Corinthians 12:27**

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.” **1 Corinthians 12:12**

The day of Pentecost saw the establishing of the New Testament church. The church was born in the “fire” of the Holy Ghost in the upper room after the ascension of Jesus.

*“Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord **added to the church** daily such as should be saved.”* **Acts 2:47**

The Purpose, Ministry and Functions Within the Church

a. The Manifestation of the Body Of Christ

God ordained His church. He set it up, He ordered its function, He adds to His church as He will, He is the Head and final authority of His church and He only is the one who has purposed His church, or ordained it with a purpose. The church of Jesus Christ was not set up to be a show. It was not set up to be a means of entertainment. The church does not exist for the purpose of elevating any man or any theology or doctrine of man. The church was ordained by God to be the visible manifestation of the Son of God on earth. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” **Colossians 1:18**

“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.” **Colossians 1:24**

b. The Upholder/ Pillar of Truth

The church of Jesus Christ is a pillar and ground upon which Truth is up-held, established, projected and portrayed. (Acts 2:1)

“But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” **1 Timothy 3:15**

c. A Place of Worship and Prayer

The church, the body of Christ, the gathering together, is to be a place of worship and prayer.

“Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” **Hebrews 2:12**

“And he taught, saying unto them: Is it not written, my house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.” **Mark 11:17**

d. Ministry to Those in Need

The church is to be a minister to those in need as the hands, feet, mouth, heartbeat and loving deeds of Christ.

“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**

“If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.” **1 Timothy 5:16**

e. To Reach the Lost

The church is called by God to reach the world lost in sin.

“Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” **Acts 2:47**

“And he said unto them: Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
Mark 16:15-16

f. Uphold and Honor the Sanctity of Marriage and the Institution of the Family.

The very first miracle Jesus Himself performed was at a marriage feast. (John 2:1-9). God Himself joined Adam Male and female together in the sanctity and union of marriage between husband and wife, male and female. (Genesis 2:21-24) It is the ministry of the church to also uphold, encourage, perform, and strengthen the sanctity of marriage union between a man and a woman.

Marriage:

Seven Pillars Church of Praise International, Inc. believes in the sanctity of the marriage union between **one man** and **one woman** as defined in the Holy Scriptures:

- The holy institution of marriage is between one man and one woman, rooted and founded upon God's creation of man and woman in His image. This holy institution is also seen in the relationship between Christ and His Church (Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:22,23).
- God created the first marriage as a sacred covenant relationship between one man and one woman for the purposes of procreation, companionship, and dominion over creation in keeping with the covenant relationship God himself established with His own creation (Genesis 2:15-24; Romans 1:16-32).
- Jesus blessed a marriage celebration between a man and a woman with His presence and His first public miracle, thereby affirming the traditional definition of marriage as a cornerstone of every culture and community (John 2:1-11); and further that He advised those who are for congenital or psychological reasons unable to enter into marriage (i.e. between a man and a woman) to remain single and therefore celibate (Matthew 19:4-12).
- Society historically has embraced this traditional definition of marriage, eschewing all other unions as unnatural, inappropriate, and anti-social, and has advocated the family unit of husband and wife and their children as the chief building block of society (Leviticus 18:22-30, Psalm 127: 3-5; Romans 1:16-32; I Corinthians 7:1,2; Hebrews 13:4).
- SPC recognizes that marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. Marriage will be valid and legal at the completion of a religious ceremony performed by a licensed or ordained minister in the presence of at least two witnesses.
- Accordingly, this Church, its pastors, staff and members will not participate in same sex unions or same sex marriages, nor shall its property or resources be used for such purposes.
- Any couple that desires to be married in this church, must voluntarily attend a pre-marital counseling program. This program will be developed by the Senior Pastor/President, the Board of Directors, and the Ministerial Team. The Senior Pastor/President and/or the Board of Directors has the authority to modify the pre-marital counseling program as needed.

Family:

The family is an important part of the life and activity of the church. A natural family is a picture of the spiritual family. The body of Christ, the church, is called a family.

*“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.” **Ephesians 3:14-15***

The family and the home should be a place of love and refuge for husband, wife and children, and indeed all extended family members. Just as the body of Christ, the church, is to be a place of solace so should the family and the home be a safe place of solace and peace.

God has placed an order of authority in the family for the purpose of guidance, leadership, and safety. God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of the man, man is head of the woman, and together, man and woman, rule, or guide, the family.

*“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” **1 Corinthians 11:3***

Sexual Identity:

SPC believes that our gender is divinely appointed and given by God. SPC welcomes every single person regardless of gender, sexual identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, and/or socioeconomic background. We will show love and acceptance to every individual that comes in through our doors. However, SPC will uphold, promote, and enforce our belief of marriage between one man and one woman according to the Holy Scriptures and as described above. Likewise, any member, volunteer, employee, leader or board member that identifies him/herself with a gender other than the one given at birth, must comply with our religious beliefs in regards to sexual identity and must use the church’s facilities and any church assets accordingly. The gender will be defined by the church as that which was given to the individual at birth.

*“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; **male and female** created he them.” **Genesis 1:27***

This applies to all members, volunteers, employees, and directors of SPC.

g. Giving in the Church

There are Various Types of Financial Giving Mentioned in the Bible

1. Tithes

The word tithe means a tenth. God’s Word declares that one tenth of all we earn is God’s and is owed him. The Word teaches that we should bring our tithe to the storehouse or church from which we are being fed the Bread of Life.

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove

me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Malachi 3:8-10

In the New Testament, Jesus agreed that the Pharisees should be paying their tithes.

“But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” Luke 11:42

Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek.

“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.” Genesis 14:18-20

2. Offerings / Freewill

Offerings are different from the tithe. The tithe is one tenth, but offerings are gifts given to God in addition to the tithe. God’s Word clearly states that we should give him freewill offerings, but no specific amount is mentioned. They are called freewill offerings because it is up to the giver to hear from God and to obey Him in this area of offering and give freely and willingly.

“And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.” Luke 21:1-4

3. First Fruits

Israel was to bring the first fruits of all crops to the Priest in the house of the LORD. There is no specific amount or percentage they were to give, just the first corn to harvest, or the first bushel of wheat, etc.

“The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God.” Exodus 34:26

“The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.” 2Timothy 2:6

Jesus Christ was the First Fruits of the dead.

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” 1 Corinthians 15:20

The Bride standing on Spiritual Mount Zion is the First Fruits unto God and the Lamb. They were the ones that grew and ripened to full maturity while here on the earth.

*“These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the **firstfruits** unto God and to the Lamb.” **Revelation 14:4***

4. Alms / Gifts to the Poor

Giving alms to the poor, or helping people in a time of need that cannot help themselves should be part of a Christian’s every day experience. Jesus admonishes us not to give alms to receive credit or glory from men, but rather to do it in secret, giving it as unto the Lord.

This church is committed to help those in the community who are in need according to what is established in the Benevolence Policy of the SPC Corporate Policies.

*“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.” **Matthew 6:1-4***

Jesus makes it clear that when we help or give unto the least among us, we are doing it unto God (**Matthew 25:31-46**).

5. Missions

God also wants his people to have the burden for missionary work and give to this cause, not only in our own communities, but in other areas of the world.

*“And the gospel must first be published among all nations.” **Mark 13:10***

The very heartbeat of God beats for the whole world.

*“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 3:16***

The great commission given by Jesus to His disciples was a command to go into all the world.

*“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 28:19-20***

When Jesus departed from this earth and ascended into heaven, He promised to send the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost gives us the power to be witnesses, to go and share, to stand as a testimony of His grace and to shine the Light of Jesus into the darkness of a sin sick world.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Every one of us has our world: **Jerusalem**, our back yard and town, **Judea**, our county or state, **Samaria**, our country and nation, and the outermost **parts** of the earth – the entire world. Wherever God has called you to be a light, that’s where you need to shine. We are all missionaries and witnesses unto the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

“For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.” Acts 13:47

We are commanded to:

- a. **GO**.....be active, work, testify, shine
- b. **TEACH**....teach who Jesus is, teach salvation
- c. **BAPTIZE**....lay a solid foundation
- d. **DISCIPLE**....train, make disciples

This is the mandated mission to Christian believers and to the church.

8. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH

True spiritual leadership is not one of authoritarianism or rulership, but rather of example and servitude. The only true authority and ruler in the church is the authority of Jesus Christ given and administered through His Word and Spirit by His appointed ministers.

There are five Word ministries given to the New Testament church to lead the body of Christ.

*“And he gave some, **apostles**; and some, **prophets**; and some, **evangelists**; and some, **pastors and teachers**; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-12*

The purpose of the fivefold ministry given to the church was basically threefold:

- Perfecting and equipping of the saints
- Work of the ministry

- To edify the body of Christ

God does not leave the church without leadership. However true leadership is not first and foremost the administration of authority but rather that of example. The most effective way to lead is by example. This is how Jesus Himself led His disciples.

*“For I have **given you an example, that ye should do as I have done** to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, **the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.**” **John 13:15-17***

*“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, **leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.**” **1 Peter 2:21***

*“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in **word**, in **conversation**, in **charity**, in **spirit**, in **faith**, in **purity.**” **1 Timothy 4:9***

- **Leadership is servitude.**

*“And whosoever will **be chief** among you, let him **be your servant**: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” **Matthew 20:27-28***

The word “minister” literally means to serve, to wait upon, a servant, to wait on tables to offer food and drink, to provide, to take care of. This is what it means to “have a ministry,” to serve!

- **Pastors**

Each local church shall have a pastor/teacher. The word pastor means *shepherd, tend to the flock, feed, rule, companion, friend*. God has ordained for shepherds to lead, feed, oversee and govern His flock with the Word of God.

SPC and its Board of Directors reserve the right to ordain and license those who are considered qualified as “Ministers of the Gospel”. Likewise, SPC reserves the right to revoke such licenses as deemed necessary or if any minister has engaged in any of the Prohibited Activities described in the Bylaws Article XII or Article VII, section 1 under “removal”.

*“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you **overseers**, to **feed the church of God**, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” **Acts 20:28***

*“And I will give you **pastors** according to mine heart, **which shall feed you** with knowledge and understanding.” **Jeremiah 3:15***

- **The Gifts of the Spirit**

God has given spiritual gifts to His church for the purpose of edifying, building, comforting, leading and ministering to His people. All these gifts belong within the governance and leadership of the church.

“Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.” 1 Corinthians 14:12

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.” 1 Corinthians 12:4

There are basically eighteen gifts of the Spirit:

1. Word of **wisdom**: 1 Cor. 12:8; Luke 6:9
2. Word of **knowledge**: 1 Cor. 12:8; Luke 18:22
3. **Faith**: 1 Cor. 12:9; Acts 3:6
4. Gifts of **healing**: 1 Cor. 12:9, 28; Acts 28:1-10
5. Working of **miracles**: 1 Cor. 12:10; Acts 6:8
6. **Prophecy**: 1 Cor. 12:10; 1 Thess. 5:20-21; Eph. 4:11
7. **Discerning** of spirits: 1 Cor. 12:10; Luke 8:29
8. **Tongues**: 1 Cor. 12:10; Acts 19:6
9. **Interpretation** of tongues: 1 Cor. 12:10; 14:13-33
10. **Helping**: 1 Cor. 12:28
11. **Administration**: 1 Cor. 12:28; Acts 6:2-3
12. **Grace**: Rom. 12:6; Eph. 3:7; 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10-11
13. **Ministry/service**: Rom. 12:7; 2 Tim. 1:16-18
14. **Teaching**: Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11-14
15. **Encouragement**: Rom. 12:8; Heb. 10:24-25
16. **Giving**: Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 13:3; Acts 4:32-35
17. **Leadership /Ruler**: Rom. 12:8; Acts 13:12
18. **Mercy**: Rom. 12:8; Luke 5:12-13

9. THE RAPTURE AND THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST / THE FINAL JUDGEMENT

“Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? 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.” Acts 1:11

Just as Jesus was taken into heaven on the day of His ascension, so also shall he return once again in the clouds of Glory at His second coming. His second coming is not to be confused with the rapture. At the rapture of the overcoming church Jesus does not come to the earth, but His saints meet Him in the clouds.

▪ **Rapture**

*“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” **1 Thes. 4:16-17***

*“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” **Luke 21:36***

▪ **Second Coming**

At Jesus’ second coming, every eye shall see Him. He comes with power and great glory.

*“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”
Luke 21:27*

*“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.” **Revelation 1:7***

Jesus returns at His second coming as The King of kings, and Lord of lords!

*“And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” **Revelation 19:16***

At His second coming Jesus will redeem His people, Israel, destroy the anti-Christ and the false prophet, and establish the one thousand years of His reign of peace, known as the millennium.

*“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”
Revelation 19:20*

▪ **The One-Thousand-Year Millennial Peace Reign of Jesus Christ**

When Jesus returns at His second coming, after the tribulation period, He will establish His thousand-year reign of peace on earth after the great battle of Armageddon. His Bridal army will follow Him, and together they will wage war upon the anti-Christ and the armies of the earth that have gathered together to fight against God’s chosen people and Christ and His Bride.

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.-- His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth

the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

*And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.” **Revelation 19:11-21***

Jesus and His Bridal army will conquer the Antichrist and his followers as well as Lucifer (known as Satan, the Devil, the Serpent and the Dragon). Lucifer will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years and Christ will reign in peace upon the Earth, which has been cleansed and purified of all the corruptions of evil (Zechariah 14:3-4, Revelation 20:1-3).

The millennial time period is also known as the “seventh day,” or the day of rest. This last day of time, so to speak, is the Sabbath day where creation will experience the peace and rest that only God can give (2 Peter 3:7; Isaiah 4:2-6; Isaiah 32:17).

The 1000 year millennial Reign of Jesus Christ will be a time of peace, rest, blessings and prosperity throughout the entire Earth (Isaiah 65:20-15; Isaiah 11:6-9; Isaiah 35:1-10; Amos 9:13-15).

▪ **The Final Resurrections and Judgment**

There are two coming resurrections recorded in God’s Word. The first resurrection takes place in two phases.

1. First Resurrection

Phase One:

Overcoming Saints Resurrected. Alive and Remaining Overcomers Raptured.

*“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17***

God will catch away, or Rapture, His overcoming Church just prior to the 3 ½ year Tribulation period. The non-overcoming Christians will be left behind to go through the Tribulation period. The parable of the 10 virgins shows this clearly to us.

*“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” **Matthew 25:1-13***

Phase Two:

Resurrection of Tribulation Overcomers Who Gave their Lives for Their Testimony

*“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” **Revelation 20:4***

The first phase of the first resurrection will herald in the great tribulation which will prevail on the earth under the reign of the Anti-Christ for three and a half years.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Daniel 9:24-27

*“But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under **foot forty and two months.**”*

Revelation 11:2

*“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there **a thousand two hundred and threescore days.**”*

Revelation 12:6

*“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue **forty and two months.**” **Revelation 13:5***

2. The Second Resurrection

The second resurrection includes all the dead, both believers who were not overcomers at death, and all those who lived on the earth and did not believe.

- All Non-Overcoming Believers

*“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” **John 5:28-29***

*“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.” **Revelation 20:5***

- All Remaining Dead Raised From Death, Hell, Sea and Dust for Final Judgment

*“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” **Revelation 20:13-15***

*“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” **Daniel 12:2***

*“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” **Revelation 20:11-14***

*“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” **John 5:28-29***

10. ETERNITY / PROPHETIC PAST AND PROPHETIC FUTURE

The self-existent infinite God brought forth, from Himself, eternity. Eternity simply means perpetual, without end. In essence, eternity has no beginning because eternity is God's perpetual, ever turning, everlasting Self (or Name) in motion. However, God Himself, through His own wisdom and counsel, set the wheels of eternity in motion. He set the wheels, the turning, the outward manifestation or revelation of His name in motion from eternity.

*"...thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy **name is from everlasting.**" **Isaiah 63:16***

*"I was set up **from everlasting**, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." **Proverbs 8:23***

This passage speaks of Wisdom, the Christ, the eternal Word. He was set up from the beginning of the manifestation of God's everlasting Name, or from eternity.

*"And he is **before all things**, and by him all things consist." **Colossians 1:17***

God's Son, the Word, was the first, before all. Nothing was before Him.

*"These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the **beginning of the creation of God.**" **Revelation 3:14***

*"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." **Proverbs 8:22***

Before God's works of old, of eternity, in the very beginning of Him *revealing* His Way, or His Will, Name and Purpose, He possessed, and erected and set up, His Son, Wisdom, the Word. All else came out of this first begotten revelation. From this initial "birth" all other perpetual wheels of motion began.

*"And he said unto me: It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." **Revelation 21:6***

The begotten Son is the beginning of all God's works of creation, from eternity to time. But He is also the end of all from time to eternity. All creative life will return to the origin – God. Ultimately, the Son will also subject Himself to His Father by placing Himself under His Father's feet, that God will be all in all as it was before anything was.

*"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." **1 Corinthians 15:28***

All things came from eternity, from God, and all will return to eternity. But the ultimate end will be that God be all in all, fill all, cover all, and surround all. Everything will once again be

gathered together to the Rock from where it all originated – God. All will once again be God!

*“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.” **Isaiah 51:1***

*“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might **gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.**” **Ephesians 1:10***

- **Eternity Past and Eternity Future**

There is a “past” eternity, and a “future” eternity as far as creation and time is concerned. Of course, eternity has not ceased to be due to time. Eternity has no divisions of time. Time is a small slice of eternity defined by seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, decades, centuries, and millenniums, as well as seasons. The end of time will bring all creation back to the beginning, or back to where it all started, back to the eternal God, back to eternity from where all things came.

In eternity, or in God’s eternal presence, there is neither past nor future. Everything is present in the “now.” Even the past, present and future of time are present with God in the now. The very name by which God revealed Himself to Moses proves this fact.

*“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” **Exodus 3:14***

*“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.” **John 8:58***

God is not the “I was,” or “I shall be.” He is the I AM, the ever present, the now! The arms of time on a clock revolve from one center point. At 1 pm there are many past hours, such as 11 am. There is also a future hour, such as 2 pm. Yet the starting point, the past, present and future revolve from never moves. This is the center of the clock, or the point time revolves around. This point is God. All things come from Him, are in Him, and shall return to Him.

*“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” **Ecclesiastes 12:7***

*“For of him, and through him, and to him, are all thing: to whom be glory forever. Amen.”
Romans 11:36*

The above verse from Romans declares that all things come from God, or are of Him, and exist by Him, or through Him, and will return to Him. Jesus Himself recognized this in His own earthly life and ministry.

“Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands (present), and that he was come from God (past), and went to God (future)...” John 13:3

God is the eternal Rock from which all existence originated. We, His creation, are hewn out of the Rock, and to the Rock we will return.

“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.”

Isaiah 51:1

- **In eternity future, all things will once again be in Him, The Origin.**

Time was birthed from eternity by the Eternal God, and time will end when creation once again is swallowed up in eternity. When time comes to an end, creation will simply be back to the beginning, back to the point all creation originated, back to God, the ever present “now,” the All in all.

*“Then **cometh the end**, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that **God may be all in all.**”*

1 Corinthians 15:24-28

Eternity future will see all of God’s creative works gathered together into one with God once again, as in eternity past, as the all in ALL.

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him...”

Ephesians 1:10

God was very active and productive in eternity past as He will continue to be in eternity future.

- **Wisdom / God’s Son, was brought forth in eternity past.**

“The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds

above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

Proverbs 8:22-31

▪ **The Father loved His Son in Eternity Past.**

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

John 17:24

▪ **God's Son was ordained in eternity past.**

"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

1 Peter 1:20

▪ **The Son of God was slain in eternity past.**

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Revelation 13:8

▪ **God's Wisdom was ordained in eternity past unto our glory.**

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."

1 Corinthians 2:7

▪ **We were chosen in eternity past.**

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

Ephesians 1:4

▪ **God determined the bounds of all nations in eternity past.**

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

Acts 17:26

▪ **God's purpose and grace were given to us in eternity past.**

"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."

2 Timothy 1:9

▪ **God promised eternal life in eternity past.**

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.”

Titus 1:2

▪ **God ordained our works in eternity past.**

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Ephesians 2:10

▪ **God’s future works were accomplished in eternity past.**

“For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.”

Hebrews 4:2

Man came from Eternity and it is most certain that we will go back to Eternity. There are three principle abodes where the redeemed will reside in Eternity.

1. The New City
2. The New Earth
3. The New Heavens

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

Revelation 21:1-2

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

Revelation 21:4

The unbelievers who never accepted Jesus Christ into their hearts, or whose names are not written in the book of life, will go into the Lake of Fire after their lifetime here on the earth.

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Revelation 20:14-15

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

Revelation 21:8

The Lake of Fire is not made of natural fire, neither is its purpose to burn or consume physical bodies or flesh. The Lake of Fire is kindled by the very breath of God and is a place of punishment and purifying of souls and spirits.

“For Tophet (fig. of Lake of Fire) is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.”

Isaiah 30:33

1.THE PURPOSE OF ALL THINGS

For thousands of years, many people from all over the world have searched for an answer to one of life’s biggest questions. What is the meaning or the purpose of my life, or life in general? To arrive at the answer man¹ must first ask: What is the purpose of God?

The purpose of all things, all creation, and all living creatures is God Himself. Creation, including mankind, does not exist on its own, or for its own purpose. God created all things for His Own purpose, pleasure and for His Name’s sake.

*“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were **created by him, and for him:** And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”*

Col 1:16-17

God has created man and all created things for the purpose of revealing Himself. The purpose of God is first and foremost revelation. He is a revealer. He is Word, Light, Life and Love.

*“That **men may know** that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah יהוה, art the most high over all the earth.”*

Psalms 83:18

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.”

Psalms 19:1

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse...”

Romans 1:20

The purpose, the will, or the pleasure of God is to reveal his Name or Nature and He did so through His creation. All things visible, including mankind, are to reveal a certain aspect of His Nature. He also revealed His loving, gracious and merciful nature to mankind by

¹ Throughout this text “man” and “mankind” are meant to refer to *all* humans including men, women, and children.

sending His son Jesus Christ to the cross of Calvary to redeem mankind from its sinful condition.

God revealed much of His nature or name to Moses on Mount Sinai. We see in this passage of scripture that He is a God that is merciful, gracious, longsuffering, full of Goodness and Truth, a preserver of bountifulness. He is also a forgiver of iniquities, transgressions and sins and is a just judge.

“And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.”

Exodus 34:5-7

The purpose of God is to make His name known, or to reveal His nature. Therefore, the purpose of man is simply to know God and to make Him known. We are not here on this earth to make ourselves known, but rather to make God and His nature known to all of humankind. Life is not about our pleasure, but rather about pleasing the LORD.

*“I delight to do thy **will**, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”*

Psalms 40:8

This concludes our Articles of Faith, but in no way does this conclude our search for and of God and His eternal will for mankind. We realize that we serve an infinite, Divine God and we only know a small portion about what there is to know about Him. These Articles of Faith are simply to be used as a reference and a bond of union for those that wish to join in fellowship with SEVEN PILLARS CHURCH OF PRAISE International, Inc.

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