

VITAL QUESTIONS FOR FAITH AND MINISTRY

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Conversion and Call

1. Describe your conversion experience

“Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” — I Corinthians 6:10-11 (NKJV)

The above verses from Paul remind me of my conversion moment, or should I say conversion process. I received Christ at a Key Life event held at the Winsted United Methodist Church where my family was attending at the time. I was 9 years old. The event was held in February of 1976, it was the day before Valentine’s Day and I will never forget that date (I even wrote it in the journal I had at the time and the only thing that appears in that entire book). But was that the time that Christ really became number one? I would have to answer truthfully—No. Then in 1992, I left CT and moved down to Florida and took a job as an Art Director. If I look back on my life and the places I have been brought, God was laying His ground work for a life of sharing, teaching and speaking that I would not have grasped whole heartedly when I was less mature. The move to Florida although sad to move away from family, I know now it equipped me to do what I am doing now, speaking to you about my testimony. When I moved, I knew only one person, my best friend’s mom and I stayed with her until I got an apartment. He called me to be involved with a group of Young Adults (ages 25-40) called the Olympians, who served in the Methodist church I first attended when I moved to Florida. This group was a band of close friends meeting for bible study, fellowship, encouragement and fun. Often we would serve the needs of the church community through visitation or shopping for those who could not get out and about on a regular basis. We also took upon the task of creating a unique Christmas program, which was part theatric, where we presented with the children as playing part in the nativity. Moving outside that group, I have had the experience of leading the adult Sunday education class happening within that church. Then, my two years as Lay Leader within the same body. Shortly after that I moved into my new home, which was a bit farther away and that was my time to say now that I am away from family it might be the time to test how God could watch over me although I did not really serve Him?

I can relate to the prodigal son or even Lot when they looked at the greener pastures leaving their belief behind even though being brought up under the promises of God. As with most starry-eyed entrepreneurs, it was easy to get busy and walk away from the church or any place that holds them accountable. That included me, so there was a time when I let the party life of the Miami area be where I wanted to be and be where I was needed. I had lots of so-called friends, I could put on some of the best parties, I could get up the next morning and go through a day of work and no one would know the difference. Really, who cared if my friends and I could down a dozen martinis, drive home after that and sleep with whoever we were with that night. But in my heart I knew that was not right. But the company you keep often tells where you are heading. I lived my life for myself and no one else. So, although I felt convicted in the way I was living my life, I kept Christ a bay to not alienate myself. I had exchanged obediently following Jesus for money. I had exchanged following Jesus for a career that brought me notoriety. I had exchanged following Jesus for a house that I upgraded. I exchanged following Jesus for friends that could party. These things I thought were good became my gods. It then all came to a head one evening where I was out drinking and drove home and no sooner had I got in the door of my house that it seemed like all the past alcohol that I had drunk in my life revisited and redecoreated my bathroom. This was what I thought would be my lowest point. I knew my life and my attitude toward God had to change. I collapsed on my bed crying out to God to help me and if He would I would make it back to church, with one stipulation; the church had to be close by. No matter how dark it gets; no matter how prominent evil appears, God’s voice beckons for us to come out of the darkness and follow His

light. In 1 Peter 2:9 it states; *“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”*

He kept His promise and I had to keep mine and prepare for a change. I absorbed everything and anything from the Word of God at the new church I attended. I drew closer to Christ through studying His Word and in prayer which now and am better able to discern His will in every situation. I had began to make new friends, I got involved with the Adult Ministry at Calvary Chapel and listened to Pastor Bob talk about baptism being a way to outwardly show the death of our inwardness. I knew I was baptized as a baby. I don't remember it, but I was, my parents have the certificate to prove it! The church had many other times of baptism and yet on this one Saturday morning after going out for breakfast, the car seemed to point its way North and then East to take me to the Pompano Beach parking lot, where awaiting me in the Atlantic Ocean was a team of pastors and assistants, that spoke with the people there individually. One by one, they were telling of what they will be giving up when they “die” to themselves, and what they will gain when they re-emerge as a new being in Christ. I went into the warm sun-lit water, not wanting to cry, but ended up having streams of water flowing from my eyes. I recognized that day was a day that changed me forever. It brought Christ closer to me, knowing full well He took all the partying, the drinking, the sex and washed me clean. And as I arose from the depth of the sea, I felt peace, love and a weight lifting off my soul. I would say it was this moment where I allowed Jesus Christ to be Lord of my life.

2. Describe your call to ministry

About twelve years ago, I moved back to the Northeast to be closer to family while still trying to “earn” my way up the ladder of success in the world's eyes. God brought me low and yet I still did not want to hear about His call for me. I became involved in my church through building and maintaining their web site and online communications, I felt that I was able to use my marketing skills while serving the Lord, a good merge of both my love of design and my love for God—and so I thought. Then during one Tres Dias weekend, God brought to mind all those people, be it friends, acquaintances, business associates, you name it that I had contact with over my lifetime and I fell so short in sharing what Christ could do for them and yet I heard the Lord say the time is not over to offer them the story of God's love. What happened next, I would not have guessed, well, I had an inkling that God was calling me to ministry, but was reluctant to answer right away. One day, a friend brought to church an image that represented the 7 billion people on the planet. And out of those 7 billion only 33% of the people in the world consider themselves Christian. God whispered, where does that leave the rest of them? What can you share with them?

I took steps to become a Certified Lay Servant within the Methodist church allowing me to preach at a variety of churches and minister on the fringes without committing fully if things didn't work out. Other people recognized God's call upon my life. When I gave my sermon in front of the governing board of UM Servants, their written comments from all of them were identical, “Have you ever thought about being a pastor?” I had, but that would require training and I felt I wasn't ready to go back into the classroom as a student. Then, at one point someone asked me a simple question concerning my role as lay minister, he asked, “Is this going to get you to where God is calling you?” Everyone seemed to know the journey that God had in mind for me, except me.

I can relate to a short testimony of Gilbert Meilaender when he wrote, “It is only by hearing, answering and participating in the divine calling that I can come to know who I am. We are not who we think we are; we are who God calls us to be.” I finally decided to not hinder the call but to take action. I applied for seminary while I still worked and was accepted, God also provided the funding and I have earned my MDiv while doing ministry and performing in my marketing position. The program at Bethel Theological Seminary has proven to be God's perfect will for my life in answering His call in becoming an ordained minister. My passion is to teach and build others up in the Word of God so that they can be loyal followers of Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Until I had really surrendered everything over to Jesus and put Him above all else in my life, I did not know the joy and satisfaction that comes when you go all-in for Him.

Theology

1. Do you believe in scriptural inerrancy, and what do you mean by the use of that word? How does your conviction impact your teaching and preaching?

I believe in the inerrancy of Scripture. The term inerrancy is a delicate term to concretely attribute to these writings. I would define inerrancy much more in line with infallibility. The concept of these writings as being “not liable to deceive” is a more accurate translation. The Scriptures make no false or misleading statements about God, faith, practice, and salvation. Inerrancy means that the Scriptures are without error, but I must recognize that there are portions that may be more difficult than others to interpret correctly. Therefore any error may result on the part of human interpretation and not Divine author intentions. How this may impact our preaching is the inerrancy, the infallibility of the Word of God is God speaking directly to His people, “Thus says the Lord” and realize the pastoral role must be taken seriously in the interpretation of God’s word for His people today.

- *“This truth gives them confidence that they have eternal life, which God—who does not lie—promised them before the world began.”* (Titus 1:2)
- *“God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?”* (Num. 23:19)
- *“Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David.”* (Psa. 89:35)
- *“God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged.”* (Heb. 6:18)

2. How do you understand the terms “verbally inspired” and “infallible” to mean?

I believe that Scripture is the inspired Word of God. I believe God authored and breathed His life into the Scriptures. Verbal inspiration is not dictation. Nor is it trance-like writing. How I would define verbal inspiration is that although the author’s words were their own, while at the same time God directed the author’s lives, the words they used were also His words too. God moved through the human writer to ensure the integrity and accuracy of His word would stand true. Infallibility is the belief that the Scriptures as a variety of written texts are not liable to deceive, falsify, or mislead statements about God, faith, practice, and salvation.

- *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”* (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- *“Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.”* (Prov. 30:5)
- *“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* (Heb. 4:12)

3. What is your view of creation? How do you relate that view to your viewpoint regarding inerrancy?

I believe in God as originator, designer, maker of heaven and earth. God created all things. He spoke them into being. The greatness and wonderful goodness of God is illustrated in His creation of the universe and all that is within it. God’s first act of all of history is to bring us into existence, to create all things for His glory. Creation was God’s doing rather than a mere chance happening. How this statement relates to inerrancy is that the statement of God being Creator over all things is without error and is a truthful statement. Where I believe humanity has problems or seeks to find error are in the specified days of creation. One might ask, “Are they literal 24 hour increments?” My answer to this question would be rather lengthy in that even in the Scripture the timeframe is not a guarantee because in the original language, “day” has three different translations: a 12-hour timeframe (morning and evening); then, a 24-hour time frame (first day); and finally, day can be translated as a length of time. Therefore, my understanding is not the timeframe in which it occurred but the inerrancy of the words, “God said” and it was.

- *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”* (Gen. 1:1-5)

- *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”* (John 1:1-5)
- *“God said...”* (Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 29)

4. What is the difference between revelation, inspiration, and illumination?

Revelation

I believe that God chose to reveal Himself through His voice recorded in Scripture. The revelation of Scripture is not about things or ideas, but it is a self-revelation or self-disclosure of God Himself to humanity. The relationship of the “Word became flesh” (incarnation) and the written word of God are linked through the concept of revelation or unveiling of what God says to His people.

- *“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.”* (Heb. 1:1-2)
- *“These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”* (Luke 24:44)
- *“Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, ‘My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure’”* (Isa. 46:9-10)

Inspiration

The voice of God speaks as divine inspiration in regards to the past, present and future through human authors. God used people; their thoughts, experiences, backgrounds and personalities, to write His words. The words they chose were the words God had determined from eternity that they would use. The author’s words were their own, yet at the same time, because God had so directed their lives, they were His words too. Inspiration, then, is what God used to transmit to us the revelation contained in the Bible. And, it is a function of the Holy Spirit to use those words as a vehicle orienting humanity to the voice of God. Those who have ears let him hear what the Spirit is saying and God is revealing about His plan of redemption and recreation. The Holy Spirit brings to life the text— God’s speech acts or Divine inspiration— and prompts the spirit of believers to act as the hands and feet of Christ— His actual representation throughout the earth to form a unified body.

- *“When you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed in Him, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. He is the down payment of our inheritance, for the redemption of the possession, to the praise of His glory.”* (Eph. 1:13-14)
- *“And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.”* (Isa. 11:2)

Illumination

I believe the Holy Spirit illuminates the Scripture for humanity to understand and know the will and ways of God. Illumination refers to God’s work in the lives of believers to make us able to believe and understand the words of the Bible. This does not mean the Spirit gives us new revelation – rather He applies to our lives the truths contained in His existing revelation. The Spirit seeks to illuminate the mind of humanity through the recognition of sin. Through the spiritual discipline of study, God gives direction and understanding to the issues of life. He illuminates our path.

- *“But it is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding.”* (Job 32:8)
- *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”* (Psa. 119:105)
- *“The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”* (Psa. 119:130)
- *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. ‘He will*

glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.’ All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.” (John 16:13-16)

- *“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God.” (1 Cor. 2:12)*

5. How do you explain the expression: “Final authority for faith and practice”?

Final authority for faith and practice: Sola Scriptura

I believe that the Scriptures are the authoritative words of God that lead to life abundant. Scripture is not filled with a list of rules and regulations but is God speaking to humanity about Himself and a relationship He longs to have with each of His created beings. Scripture then becomes the guide by which we so order our lives. It becomes the authority by which we have a true and authoritative basis for our faith and are given understanding for how to live out that faith. However, I would define the authority of Scripture as that which is spoken to be truthful and trustworthy in the things God has planned for the community of God.

- *“For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.” (Psa. 33:4)*
- *“O Lord GOD, you are that God, and your words be true, and you have promised this goodness to your servant” (2 Sam. 7:28)*
- *“The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.” (Psa. 19:7)*
- *“It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.” (1 Tim. 1:15)*
- *“And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true.’” (Rev. 21:5)*

6. Give your understanding of the term Trinity.

The Trinity as I understand it is the identification for the three persons of the Godhead in one essence— all are equal in their unity and we should not apply an order of hierarchy. Although the Scripture never spells out the term trinity explicitly, it is apparent in many places. Key verses include Genesis 1:1-2 and John 1:1-2. Both represent the Godhead existing before creation. In addition, Jesus’ baptism and transfiguration illustrates the Trinity. I believe in the Trinitarian Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three persons, one essence. I believe that there was never a time that the Trinitarian God did not exist. And I believe that each Person of the Godhead has a specific role and works by intermingling with one another— a relationship, a unity.

- *“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” (Gen. 1:26)*
- *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” (Matt. 28:19)*

7. I believe in God the Father, the Person of the Godhead who orchestrates His promised-plan for humanity, the world and the universe. God existed before the creation of the world, before He put time into motion— the I Am (and the I will be what I will be). God is the active agent in human affairs. He is the One who is active in seeing history move through past, present and future.

- *“And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven.” (Matt. 23:9)*
- *“Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers?” (Mal. 2:10)*
- *“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” (Jer. 29:11)*
- *“The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.” (Prov. 16:9)*

8. How do you understand the expression: “true God and true Man in one whole person” as applied to Christ?

The assertion of “true God and true Man in one whole person,” which is ascribed to Jesus Christ, may be defined as Christ being both 100% divine and 100% human. This foundational truth of the Christian faith is proposed to rest on his personal claim as confirmed by the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus therefore is nothing less than God’s confirmation of Jesus’ understanding of his identity (*Son of God*) and mission (*as Son of Man*). Concerning His human nature, the confession of Jesus’ humanity leads to the assertion that the humanness, which characterized His existence was true humanness—100% human and yet also showed us what it meant to be human. Jesus’ historical life forms the foundation from which we can draw conclusions concerning His fundamental humanness.

I believe in God the Son, Jesus the Messiah (Christ), who is the incarnation of the invisible God. The One sent by the Father to restore humanity to God Himself. I believe Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God born of a virgin called Mary, suffered at the hands of humanity, died on a cross for the sins of the whole world and rose again defeating sin, death and lives victoriously at the right hand of the Father until such a time that He is given the order to come back to judge all nations and bring His bride, the Church to a new home, a new earth, a new Jerusalem.

- *“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call his name Immanuel.” (Isa. 7:14)*
- *“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on his shoulders...” (Isa. 9:6a)*
- *“Behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.” (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11)*
- *“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)*
- *“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.’ (John 8:58)*
- *“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,” (Gal. 4:4)*
- *“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Phil. 2:5-8)*
- *“Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” (Heb. 2:17)*

9. State your concept of atonement. For whom did Christ die? What difference does His death make? Why was it necessary?

I believe the concept of atonement is the means by which God and humanity can be at “one-ness.” To break that down it means: at-one-ment, or to be at one with each other. Atonement is considered to be at the heart of the Christian story: the restoration and redemption of humanity occurring through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus that has forever changed the human situation between God and mankind.

It might be obvious to say that Jesus died for all of humanity, but Scripture clearly indicates that God loves each person that whoever believes in His Son as Lord and Savior, as the Crucified and Resurrected One will be saved from their iniquity. The who-so-evers highlighted in John 3:16 consist of: Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female from every tribe, every nation, every tongue, and every language.

When God says throughout the Law and the Prophets, “I the Lord your God will do it... so that they will see that I am God,” He indicates that He, Himself would create a way of redemption, of salvation, of restoration with His people.

The necessity of the crucifixion of Jesus answers the question: “Who can stand?” The death of Christ became our expiation, the removal of our sin. The death of Christ became our propitiation where God’s removal of wrath turns to the blessing of favor upon the believer. The death of Christ became our reconciliation by removing our alienation from God and allowing entrance into the holy of holies. The death of Christ became our redemption—the price paid for us as a master buys one out of slavery. The death of Christ defeated the powers of darkness. The death of Christ

became our substitute. He became sin on our behalf. Substitution goes hand-in-hand with sacrifice and the requirement of blood for the forgiveness of sins. We who were destined to death have been reconciled and have been acquitted of all charges against us through the blood sacrifice of the Son of God.

- *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.”* (Lev. 17:11)
- *“But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”* (Isa. 53:5-6)
- *“Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.”* (Matt. 26:27b-28)
- *“He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”* (1 John 2:2)
- *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him ought not perish but have eternal life.”* (John 3:16)
- *“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.’”* (Gal. 3:13)
- *“And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”* (Heb. 9:22)

10. What is the nature of Christ’s resurrection and importance of the resurrection?

I believe also in the bodily resurrection of Jesus and in the resurrection of the human body and the eternal life yet to come. The empty tomb is the ultimate proof that Christ’s resurrection body was the same body that died on the cross. If resurrection meant the creation of a new body, Christ’s original body would have remained in the tomb. The body that rose is the body that was destroyed. The importance of the resurrection is that it is a Trinitarian act. The resurrection of Jesus is a witness to the immense power of God. To believe in the resurrection is to believe in God. If God exists and if He created the universe then He has power over it and has power to raise the dead. Like the other works of God, the Father raises the dead according to the pattern of the Son and by the power of the Holy Spirit. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is also important because it validates who Jesus claimed to be and it proves His sinless character and divine nature.

The resurrection of the body is the gateway to eternal fellowship in the presence of God. The eternal life that God desires to give us is not limited to one dimension of the human person. The resurrection of Jesus promises eternal life that encompasses the whole individual, including the body. Once we understand that Christ’s resurrection is the prototype for the resurrection of mankind and the earth, we realize that Scripture has given us an interpretive precedent for approaching passages concerning human resurrection and life on the New Earth.

- *“For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.”* (Psa. 16:10)
- *“See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”* (Luke 24:39)
- *“Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live”* (John 11:25)
- *“And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.”* (1 Cor. 15:17)
- *“The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.”* (1 Cor. 15:42-44)
- *“And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.”* (1 Cor. 15:49)

- *“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”* (Phil. 3:20-21)
- *“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.”* (1 John 3:2)
- *“I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”* (Rev. 1:17-18)

11. When we refer to the Holy Spirit as the “third person of the Godhead,” what does that mean?

I believe in God the Holy Spirit, sent from both the Father and the Son, who is just like the Son— another helper—who is the One that motivates believers to remember the life, death and resurrection of the Son. The Spirit convicts the world of its sin and separation from God. The Spirit is the personhood of God who is the source of life—creating and sustaining (re-creating)— the physical life and the divine life that overflows throughout creation. The Holy Spirit exhibits power to effect things only God can do. The activity of the Spirit is the activity of God. Within humanity, the Spirit regenerates— spiritual rebirth— those who receive Him and are made alive to spiritual things. Being made alive means being in-filled with the Spirit who gives spiritual gifts to all to be used in building up the body.

- *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever... He will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you”* (John 14:16, 26)
- *“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me”* (John 15:26)
- *“When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment”* (John 16:8)

12. What is the role of the Holy Spirit today?

The Spirit has many functions, roles, and activities. First, He does a work in the hearts of all people everywhere. Jesus told the disciples that He would send the Spirit into the world to “convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.” Everyone has a “God consciousness,” whether or not they admit it. The Spirit applies the truths of God to minds of men to convince them by fair and sufficient arguments that they are sinners. Responding to that conviction brings men to salvation. Once we are saved and belong to God, the Spirit takes up residence in our hearts forever, sealing us with the confirming, certifying, and assuring pledge of our eternal state as His children. Jesus gave the Spirit as “compensation” or a “down-payment” for His absence and for our inheritance, to perform the functions toward us, which He would have done if He had remained personally with us. Among those functions, the Holy Spirit is the revealer of truth. The Spirit’s presence within us enables us to understand and interpret God’s Word. The Spirit convinces us of Christ’s deity and incarnation. Another one of the Holy Spirit’s roles is that of gift-giver. All of the gifts listed in Scripture, both great and small, are given by the Spirit so that we may be His ambassadors to the world, showing forth His grace and glorifying Him. The Spirit also functions as fruit-producer in our lives. When He indwells us, He begins the work of harvesting His fruit in our lives—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These are not works of our flesh, which is incapable of producing such fruit, but they are products of the Spirit’s presence in our lives.

- *“And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.”* (Isa. 11:2-3)
- *“Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.”* (1 Cor. 12:3)
- *“All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”* (1 Cor. 12:11-13)

- *“And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”* (II Cor. 1:21-22)
- *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”* (Gal. 5:22-23)
- *“In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”* (Eph. 1:13-14)

12.1 His role in the Church?

Jesus is the Lord of his church, and the Spirit of God can work vibrantly among his people. Too often our church life is devoid of the Lord’s spiritual fervor. We become overly dependent upon human wisdom and planning, to such a point that we no longer rely upon the Lord who can deliver us. As we lift up the exalted Christ and depend upon Him through worship, prayer and His truth, the majestic working of God will be manifest in the local churches. I believe the Holy Spirit is the motivator within each believer to be zealous for God’s promised plan and to engage as salt and light with the community that surrounds them. Only the Holy Spirit can enact and engage a church to risk shining in a darkened world. The Holy Spirit makes it possible for the church to co-labor with God on mission.

- *“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.”* (Joel 2:28-29)
- *“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”* (Matt. 5:13-16)

12.2 His role in the individual?

The Holy Spirit is described in the Bible as a Person whose power is at work in the lives of people, dealing with them and revealing more fully God and His will for mankind. The Holy Spirit unites us to Jesus Christ and to His body. The Spirit reveals Christ to us, gives us His life, and makes Christ alive in us. So, it becomes abundantly clear that the Holy Spirit plays a major role in the lives of Christians. Paul defines the Christian very clearly: *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”* The Holy Spirit identifies us with Christ, He makes immortality possible to human, mortal beings, He makes possible an obedient, overcoming Christian life, and He truly leads (guides, empowers and motivates) the children of God. In short, God’s Spirit—also called the Spirit of Christ—is what makes one a Christian, a Spirit-led follower of Jesus Christ. He is also the one who comes alongside to: guide us (John 16:13); helps us pray (Rom. 8:26); teach us (John 14:26); speaks to us (Rev. 2:7); reveals things to us (I Cor. 2:10); gives personal instruction (Acts 8:29); testifies about Jesus (John 15:26); encourages us (Acts 9:31); calls us out for service (Acts 13:2); fills us with boldness (Acts 4:31); gives inner strength (Eph. 3:16); confirms things as true (Rom. 9:1); brings joy (I Thess. 1:6); brings freedom (II Cor. 3:17); calls for the return of Christ (Rev. 22:17); transforms us into the image of Jesus (II Cor. 3:18); lives within us (I Cor. 3:16); frees us from the power of sin (Rom. 8:2); gives us new life (Titus 3:5); produces fruit in us (Gal. 5:22-23); gives us gifts (I Cor. 12:4); leads us (Rom. 8:14); gives us power to be witnesses (Acts 1:8); identifies us as God’s own (Eph. 1:13); gives us access to the Father (Eph. 2:18); enables us to wait for the fulfillment of God’s promise (Gal. 5:5).

- *“You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”* (Rom. 8:9-14)
- *“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.”* (I Cor. 3:16-17)

- *“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”* (Titus 3:5-7)

12.3 His role in the world?

The work of the Holy Spirit in the world differed in the Old Testament somewhat from His work in the New Testament. The possession of the Holy Spirit by the believer in the Old Testament was not permanent in every case. The Holy Spirit is active in the created world, works to show the futility and sinfulness of life without God, and brings a conviction of the presence of God, His righteousness, the renewal of the believer and the coming judgment. The Holy Spirit today plays a major role in the application of salvation. It is the Spirit who brings conviction to the world and in specific, the unbeliever and causes him to see the truth of the gospel in a clear light. Those who respond to this conviction and place their faith in Jesus Christ receive eternal life and a new nature. The Holy Spirit unites the believer with Christ and places him in the body of Christ, the church. He also unites the believer with Christ in His death, enabling him to live victoriously over sin. The Holy Spirit controls the believer who yields to God and submits himself to God's Word. When these conditions are met, the believer lives in the power of the Spirit and produces the fruit by way of the Spirit's assistance to become a new creation.

- *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.”* (Gen. 1:1-2)
- *“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.”* (John 16:7-11)
- *“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”* (Rom. 12:2)
- *“But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.”* (1 Cor. 2:14-15)

13. Describe the differences between filling, anointing, and indwelling of the Spirit.

I affirm the guarantee of the receiving of the Spirit as a down payment for what is yet to come for the believer. The receipt of the Spirit is through Spirit-baptism. This baptism is a metaphor that describes our reception of the Holy Spirit at the moment of our conversion to Jesus in faith and repentance. When we believe and are justified, we are, as it were, deluged and engulfed by the Holy Spirit; we are, as it were, immersed in and saturated by the Spirit. The results of Spirit-baptism are two-fold: we are made members of the body of Christ, incorporated into the spiritual organism called the church (I Corinthians 12:13); and the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us permanently.

- *“Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, ‘Which,’ He said, ‘you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’”* (Acts 1:4-5)
- *“Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”* (Acts 2:38)
- *“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”* (1 Cor. 12:13)

13.1 Filling of the Spirit

Being filled with or by the Holy Spirit is a metaphor describing our continuous, on-going experience and appropriation of the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Spirit is to come under progressively more intense and intimate influence of the Spirit. A believer can object to be used by the Spirit and thus the Spirit filling can be forfeited and yet the filling of the Spirit can be sought after and subsequently experienced again on multiple occasions throughout the course of the Christian life.

- *“And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: ‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people...’”* (Luke 1:67-68)
- *“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”* (Acts 2:4)
- *“And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.”* (Acts 4:31)
- *“And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.”* (Acts 13:52)
- *“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit...”* (Eph. 5:18)

13.2 Anointing of the Spirit

The Old Testament is full of references about being anointed but it speaks about being anointed with oil, which is symbolic of having God’s special blessing or commission. Oil is also symbolic of the Holy Spirit or someone being empowered or enabled by the Holy Spirit. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is one of similar definition. The Lord has “called out” the believer for a specific purpose for His plans, to fulfill those plans one will have to be anointed in order for the Spirit of God to work in and through the individual to accomplish the task God has set before them. The best representation of the Spirit’s anointing is at the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry where He stated, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor”* (Luke 4:18-19). The anointing of the Spirit allows the believer to be the witness for Christ they are called to be as His hands and feet.

- *“And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”* (II Cor. 1:21-22)
- *“But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.”* (I John 2:27)

13.3 Indwelling of the Spirit

I would attribute the term baptism of the Spirit with the indwelling of the Spirit. The dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer’s life comes once upon conversion. It could also be stated that Spirit-baptism (indwelling) is simultaneous with conversion and is instantaneous and not a process or repeatable such as the filling of/by the Spirit. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit for the believer is permanent unlike the Old Testament where people received the Spirit for a certain God-ordained task and may be a kin to anointing by the Holy Spirit.

- *“However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”* (Rom. 8:9-11)
- *“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?”* (I Cor. 6:19)
- *“Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.”* (II Tim. 1:13-14)
- *“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior...”* (Titus 3:5-6)

14. What is the place of spiritual gifts in the church?

I believe the understanding and use of spiritual gifts in the church today are largely ignored or left undeveloped. Yet, spiritual gifts are part of the very nature of God, given to us for Him to fulfill His purposes in our lives and on the earth. God gave spiritual gifts for the preaching of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. As the church uses the spiritual gifts given, the body will grow up into maturity and will be able to

discern the deceptions around us and we will grow up in Christ. The body of Christ, the church (not a building, but a people), is meant to function in the same manner that a physical body functions with many parts operating in unity with one another. When the Holy Spirit is working strongly in a church to manifest God's presence, evidence of the use of spiritual gifts within the church would be the beautiful harmony that comes about in the church being a community.

- *“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”* (Ephesians 4:11-16)

14.1 What purpose of them in the New Testament?

While gifts are very important and biblical, they are not, according to Paul, the most important issue in the body of Christ. The purpose for the gifts in the New Testament would be a community that was maturing in love toward one another and the community in which they lived through the use of their gifts. While Paul commends the church for their pursuit of spiritual gifts he reproves them for a deficiency in love, the principle that should guide which gifts they seek. Spiritual gifts in the Bible were for building up the body; encouraging one another to do good works that could be seen in order to praise God the Father. Paul was encouraging the believers to seek out the gifts that built up the community more such as prophecy, the proclamation of the message of Christ. Yet, even prophecy, could be lacking if love is not central to the message uttered. Paul reminds the church that all gifts come from the same Spirit and that the gifts are interdependent. He also urges the church to be zealous for the best gifts, that is, those that will best build up the church. Paul concludes that having all the gifts in the world would not matter if one was acting and using their gifts without love.

- *“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.”* (1 Cor. 13:1-13)
- *“Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church. Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.”* (1 Cor. 14:1-5)

14.2 How does God fulfill that purpose today?

God fulfills the purpose of Spiritual Gifts through the development of the body of Christ. If one Christian possessed all of the spiritual gifts, he would be self-sufficient and have no need of the other members. Yet God has deliberately given us different gifts, therefore we need one another. As each believer responds to the needs according to his

particular gift, and as God allows believers to serve Him in various roles of spiritual service, the body of Christ can experience the fullness of God. As we serve God, His people, and the world through the spiritual gifts bestowed upon us by the Holy Spirit, the love of God—the fullness of God—will be demonstrated, proclaimed, and manifested. Knowing that each of us has gifts that are valuable and needed in the body of Christ gives us purpose for God’s purpose, the kingdom of God. As we demonstrate the love of God through gifts that He gives us we experience personal fulfillment and great joy; we experience purpose in life. As we mature in our understanding of spiritual gifts and learn to be channels of God’s power as He works through them, we are equipped to bear abundant fruit in the kingdom of God.

- *For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.” (Rom. 12:4-13)*
- *“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot says, “Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear says, “Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. If they were all one member, where would the body be? But now there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; or again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ’s body, and individually members of it.” (I Cor. 12:4-27)*

14.3 What are your spiritual gifts?

Through my most recent Spiritual Gift Assessment, my gifts are closely aligned with one another with Teaching (34 ranking) being the strongest of spiritual gifts I believe God has given to me. Wisdom (32 ranking) was the outcome of my second strongest gift. And, the third tier of spiritual gifts encompassed several including: Apostleship, Administration, Knowledge and Pastoring (each 31 ranking).

15.1 Give your understanding of Human beings were created in the image of God. I affirm that the Triune God created humanity in His likeness, His image. The image of God (Imago Dei) in humanity is critical to our

understanding of what makes us human. Genesis 1:26-28 is the key passage of Scripture whereby foundational teaching on the image of God begins. The Hebrew language makes it clear that God's image in mankind depicts humanity as distinct from animals. The human body is something that makes the human creaturely, and not necessarily something that constitutes a distinction. It is the unique creation of mankind in the image of God that distinguishes us from all other creatures. The image of God then is essentially a relational identity (our ability to relate to God and one another) rather than an ontological essence of being. It is an image that bears the righteousness and holiness of God. When Scripture describes all of God's attributes, it is in the context of God being the perfection of such attributes. For example, God is love, and God's love is perfect. Humanity shares many of God's attributes, and we were originally created to reflect God's perfect character in righteousness and holiness. While God has character traits that He does not share with humanity (e.g., God is self-existent, omniscient, omnipotent), we can still see His shared attributes in humanity today, even though they are distorted by sin. Attributes such as love, self-awareness, justice, grace, and mercy are distinct from attributes associated with animals. They are part of the very being of humanity.

- *“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” (Gen. 1:26-28)*
- *“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.” (Gen. 5:1-2)*
- *“Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.” (Gen. 9:6)*

15.2 Give your understanding of Human beings have a sinful nature and are eternally lost.

I affirm the ‘fall’ of humanity as the introduction of the sinful nature and the point at which humanity found were eternally lost and disconnected from God. The effects of the fall are numerous and far reaching. Sin has affected every aspect of our being. It has affected our lives on earth and our eternal destiny. Because of the disobedience of mankind, humanity was immediately and eternally separated from God and could not recognize their sin. Because of the fall, death became a reality, and all creation was subject to it. Because of the fall, humanity has lost sight of the purpose for which we were created— to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. Because of the fall, mankind is utterly incapable of doing or choosing that which is acceptable to God, apart from divine grace.

- *“They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ He said, ‘I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.’ And He said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?’ The man said, ‘The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.’ Then the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ And the woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’” (Gen. 3:8-13)*
- *“The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it? ‘I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds.’” (Jer. 17:9-10)*
- *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come” (Rom. 5:12-14)*
- *“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23)*

- *“For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”* (Rom. 8:6-8)

15.3 Give your understanding of Human beings may experience reconciliation through Jesus Christ.

I affirm the need of humanity to be reconciled back to God through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ who became sin so that we who are destined to death might live because of His sacrifice on the cross. But the word reconciliation goes far beyond a relationship between two human beings. It is used in the Bible to speak of a man's relationship to God in terms of the restoration of the right relationship between humanity and God. Reconciliation, then, is God being reconciled back to His creation, or humanity, if you will, being reconciled back to God -- either way. And the one person, the one who was 100% divine and 100% human would prove to be the only person who could repair the broken link between God and humanity. And, this person was, is, and continues to be Jesus the Messiah. There is total and absolute and complete and full reconciliation through that one who is Jesus Christ.

- *“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”* (Rom. 5:10-11)
- *“Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”* (II Cor. 5:18-21)
- *“But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.”* (Eph. 2:13-16)
- *“For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.”* (Col. 1:19-23)
- *“Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”* (Heb. 2:17)
- *“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.”* (I Tim. 2:5-6)

16. Define the phrase, “Salvation by grace through faith.”

The meaning of “Salvation by grace through faith,” lies in the full actions of the faithfulness of Jesus and nothing that humanity can try to do to win favor with God will match the unfathomable work of the cross of Christ. God sent His Son as a gift, a mercy-filled gift to reconcile us with Himself. Salvation cannot be earned, it was given to humanity by God through the actions of His Son and those who will believe in who Jesus is and who God the Father said He is receive salvation through faith in the faithfulness of Christ. Salvation by grace alone means that we did nothing to earn or merit salvation. God knew we would not be able to hold up the standard of His instructions, so He provided the way to allow us to stand clean before Him. Salvation through faith means that we receive salvation through trusting in what Jesus did for us on the cross.

- *“He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.”* (Mark 16:16)

- *“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”* (Luke 19:10)
- *“And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.”* (Acts 3:16)
- *“But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, “Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.”* (1 Cor. 1:30-31)
- *“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”* (Eph. 2:8-10)

17. Define repentance.

Repentance means to “turn” or “return.” It refers to the turning away from evil to God in repentance. It bears with it the need or requirement of action. Repentance brings with it the idea of turning around, being converted, and the returning to the one true and living God with resulting behavior. It involves a radical alteration within the person, which includes a change in our mental state, emotional state and active state. Repentance begins in the mind as recognizing we have done wrong (sinned) and requires us to renew our thinking as we gain new attitude toward our actions. Repentance then impacts our emotional state or our will to want to change into the Imago Dei— image of Christ and the active state then moves us into new areas of obedience. Repentance is not just saying, “I’m sorry” and then continuing in sin, it means to think about what we have done, willingly want to change and then seek God’s strength to move toward Him.

- *“Therefore I despise myself, and I repent in dust and ashes!”* (Job 42:6)
- *“For after I had turned away, I relented, and after I was instructed, I struck my thigh; I was ashamed, and I was confounded, because I bore the disgrace of my youth.”* (Jer. 31:19)
- *“And I said: ‘Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’”* (Isa. 6:5)
- *“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live.”* (Ezk. 18:30-32)
- *“Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.”* (Matt. 3:8)
- *“Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.”* (Acts 3:19)

18. Define justification.

Justification involves God declaring the innocence of sinners through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Justification is not a process it is an act of God (Rom. 8:33). In justification, God declares the believing sinner righteous; He does not make them righteous. True justification is in the recognition of what God has declared and leads to a changed life. Justification, therefore, is God’s ultimate answer to the condemnation that stands over us because of sin. The Father sent the Son to die for us, and now the Spirit applies the fruit of His death to our lives. As a result, we can enjoy a new standing before God.

- *“How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit!”* (Psa. 32:1-2)
- *“Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.”* (Rom. 3:19-20)

- *“God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”* (Rom. 3:25-26)
- *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.”* (Rom. 5:1-2)

19. Define sanctification.

I affirm that sanctification is a process through the transformative agent of the Holy Spirit in this process He requires our personal cooperation. To sanctify means to be set a part for a holy use and it is a continual growth process in holiness, not a one-time event. It is a process of moving from one glory to another glory, a transformation of becoming whole and holy like Christ. God’s activity in our sanctification arises not only out of His holiness, but also from His purpose in calling out a people to be His own. Sanctification begins after conversion to start a life of holy living. We must diligently apply ourselves to the task while the Spirit works within renewing our minds and our actions.

- *“For I am Yahweh your God, so you must consecrate yourselves and be holy because I am holy. You must not defile yourselves by any swarming creature that crawls on the ground. For I am Yahweh, who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your God, so you must be holy because I am holy.”* (Lev. 11:44-45)
- *“Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine.”* (Lev. 20:26)
- *“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”* (II Cor. 3:18)
- *“As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”* (Eph. 4:14-16)
- *“Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.”* (Phil. 3:12)
- *“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’”* (I Peter 1:14-16)
- *“Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.”* (II Peter 1:5-11)

20. What does it mean to “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?”

I affirm that “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ” means a condition of salvation along with inward and outward evidences of conversion. Belief is not taken to be easy as some might define it but it is faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as the means to reconciliation with God. Believe refers to the act of faith. In the Old Testament, to believe (to have faith) meant to recognize something as true— God’s word as truth, God’s plan and purpose as truth, and God’s mission for Jesus Christ as truth. The biblical concept of believing involves action where true faith,

true belief-ism produces obedience. It involves trusting God is powerful enough to accomplish His word through Jesus Christ and following Him. Believing in Jesus Christ is having faith in the faithfulness of the Son of God going to the cross, having shed His blood providing the sole basis for the forgiveness of sin. Therefore, God offers salvation to those who place their faith, who believe in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as sufficient payment for our sin and recognizing that Jesus is the way to God, the truth about God, and life in the presence of God.

- *“‘You are My witnesses,’ declares the Lord, ‘And My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me.’” (Isa. 43:10)*
- *“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:18)*
- *“It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.” (John 4:42)*
- *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” (Acts 16:31)*
- *“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” (Heb. 11:6) “*
- *In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.” (1 Peter 1:6-12)*

21. Give your views on baptism and the Lord’s Supper

I affirm that baptism is an outward sign to an inward change and commitment to follow Jesus Christ. The symbolism of baptism reflects the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism serves as a sign that we’ve been purified from our sins. Baptism represents a new beginning as we have put on Christ as a servant of Christ.

- *“Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.” (Rom. 6:3-4)*
- *“having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.” (Col. 2:12)*
- *“For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” (Gal. 3:27)*

I affirm the Lord’s Supper or Communion as an ordinance given by Christ for the church, His followers, to share in the elements that remember His actions in the giving up of Himself for the forgiveness of sins. I believe Communion is a sacrament of thanksgiving for what God has done in Jesus Christ. The participation in the Lord’s Supper is more than a meal; it is a means to grace for strengthening of faith and nourishment for the spiritual life.

- *“While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”” (Matt. 26:26-29)*
- *“While they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it, and gave it to them, and said, ‘Take it; this is My body.’ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, and they*

all drank from it. And He said to them, 'This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'" (Mark 14:22-25)

- *"When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, 'I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, 'Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes.' And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.'"* (Luke 22:14-20)
- *"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."* (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

21.1 How do you respond to someone who says you must be baptized to be saved?

My reply to someone who demands the need for baptism in order for a person to be saved would reference my belief that baptism is an outward sign of an inward commitment to Christ and is then a personal choice. However, I would also mention that the person must confess to someone as an outward dedication or indication that one has chosen to surrender to the ways of Jesus the Christ. I believe there is a requirement of a declaration, whether it be through baptism or verbal recognition of the actions made by Jesus on behalf of, in substitution for, the sins which the believer recognizes that they need a Savior.

- *"And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."* (Joel 2:32)
- *"if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"* (Rom. 10:9-13)
- *"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* (Acts 2:38)

21.2 How do you respond to Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21?

The citations of Mark 6:16, Acts 2:38, and 1 Peter 3:21 may indicate the necessity for one to be baptized in order to be saved. However, the indication may be stating that there is a need for an outward sign or something that one does on the outside that shows and indicates that one has surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is one of the ways a follower of Christ can "show" their dedication and surrender to the will of God. In each of the cited verses there is an act of belief whether implicitly or explicitly noted. Belief is coupled with baptism and is therefore a requirement before baptism takes place as a sign that one has called on god for forgiveness of sins.

The importance of baptism may be in the fact that Jesus submitted Himself to be baptized by John the Baptizer before the beginning of his ministry. Jesus then showed the necessity of baptism by telling Nicodemus that one must be baptized by water and the Spirit. Later, Jesus commanded His disciples to go into the world teaching and baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Although I would say baptism is not conditional on an individual to call upon the name of the Lord to be saved, I affirm that baptism is an outward sign to an inward surrender to change into the likeness of Christ. And since baptism is a sign of the most important event in recognition of one's salvation why would one not want to celebrate the act of Jesus becoming one's Savior?!

- *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* (Matt. 28:19-20)

- *“Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.”* (Acts 22:16)
- *“They said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.’ And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household.”* (Acts 16:31-32)

22. What is the relationship between the local church and the universal church?

I believe church is both local and universal at the same time. The local church has one form of relationship where Christians in one region are working together as a team (collectively) to carry out God’s purposes. It is God’s will that no believer walk the journey of followership alone. The universal church is another form of relationship. One of individuals with God and exists even if a local church does not receive you into their fold. The universal church can be defined simply as all believers in Jesus Christ and is known as the church universal. Whereas, the local church is an assembly, or gathering of believers based on common community location, beliefs, and doctrine. While Christians will always be involved in particular communities, it must acknowledge the importance of engaging in dialogue with Christians from other cultures and lands, for they comprise the universal church as well. The church local and the church universal must also commit to pursuing oneness or unity under Christ. Paul’s use of the “Body of Christ” imagery provides important insight into our responsibilities as individual members of the local church and use of the gifts for that body which goes beyond in service toward the universal church. Through the relationship of local and universal churches, both individually and corporately, we can represent a united community by acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God.

- *“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”* (Mich. 6:8)
- *“I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”* (Matt. 16:18)
- *“When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”* (Acts 14:23)
- *“And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”* (Eph. 1:22-23)
- *“To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”* (Eph. 3:21)
- *“He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.”* (Col. 1:18)

23. What are the types of church government and which do you espouse?

Historically there have been three major models of church government: episcopalianism, presbyterianism, and congregationalism. I have put together a brief sketch of each governmental model:

Episcopalianism

Although in all the models there are differences across denominations that take on the model of episcopalianism, they all share the characteristic of having the office of bishop distinct and superior to the officers of the local churches. Episcopal government is thus, in some sense, hierarchical, with the bishop ordaining and governing the leaders of several local churches. In many episcopal denominations, an archbishop has authority over many (or all) the other bishops.

Presbyterianism

In presbyterianism, the local church is ruled by a group of elders (called sessions) who are chosen by the congregation. Members of these sessions from several regional churches are also members of a presbytery, which has ruling authority over those churches. Some of these members may also become members of a general assembly, which governs the entire denominational body. Within the local church, presbyterians distinguish two types of

elders, these being, teaching elders and ruling elders. The teaching elders are given the responsibility to preach and teach in the church while the ruling elders provide leadership in policy and ministry.

Congregationalism

Within the congregational model of government it can take on either a Single-Elder or Plural Elder leadership model. The congregationalists operate under the doctrine of autonomy of the local church. Each local church, under the authority of Christ, governs itself. For congregationalists, no ecclesiastical authority exists outside or above the local assembly of believers. In the model of Single-Elder Congregationalism, one elder or pastor oversees the local church. This person is chosen by the congregation and is clearly distinguished as its spiritual director. The single elder is usually assisted by or supervised by a group of deacons. In the Plural-Elder Congregationalist model, the local church is governed by a plurality of elders or pastors with equal authority. These elders have no authority outside their own local church and there is no distinction between ruling and teaching elders. In the plural leadership structure, all of the elders teach and rule.

I believe that there must be a single visionary person to set the pace for the spiritual direction and teaching of the church while at the same time requiring the development of leaders to assist in the fulfillment of the vision inside the congregation and outside in the community. If correct in my understanding, I would function my best in a congregational model of church government whereby leadership is given to a plurality of spiritually strong individuals to assist in ministering to the local body of Christ.

24. How is the church to function as a body of believers?

The function of the church is doing the work that the Head of the church, Jesus directs the them to do for the purpose of glorifying God and part of that purpose is seeking those who are lost. By being called the Body of Christ or the body of those who follow and believe in Jesus Christ, the church is to be the hands, mouth, and feet of Christ on the earth. Each member has been gifted by God to perform a vital function in the church so that the body is edified, encouraged, and grows in grace and knowledge of what it means to become like Christ. Each member works in unison with other members for one another and each member's function is to help the Body of Christ perform what she, the church, was created to do. Pastors, elders, deacons, teachers, and other leaders are placed in the Body as it pleases God to ensure members are disciplined and disciple-led, to ensure the sacraments are administered regularly, and that biblical teachings are consistently taught to feed the body so that they can grow and mature toward the stature or nature of Christ.

- *“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10)*
- *“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:42-47)*
- *“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:11-16)*
- *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as*

is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” (Heb. 10:23-25)

25. Can you support an autonomous, congregational form of church government?

I can affirm and support the congregational form of government while at the same time recognizing that the Congregational government is not perfect. Like any other governmental system, congregationalism is only as good as the people within the system. And as long as we live in a fallen world, abuses will occur. While negative instances may occur, there is no other system that fully recognizes the true priesthood of every believer. Nor does any other system protect a congregation from unwise or unbiblical edicts passed down from some hierarchy outside the local church. Congregationalism allows a congregation to function in fellowship with other good churches while at the same time remaining true to its own basic principles and follow the Lord’s leading. In Congregationalism, the people of God are free—under the leading of the Lord—to follow the Holy Scriptures according to the light God gives them.

25.1 Can you provide scriptural support for such a governing body?

The biblical data presents a basic congregational form of church government with local autonomy and a basic democracy. It is evident, however, that no detailed and full-orbed organizational pattern is presented in the New Testament. Rather, the governmental structures provide basic principles of church order consisting of: The Headship of Christ, Priesthood of the Believer, and the Practice of the Early Church.

Headship of Christ

The teaching that Christ is the head of the church most naturally comports with a congregational understanding of church government. When Christ is the head, why should any group of men or women be elevated to a place of special authority over the rest of the body? The church does not need two “heads.” If Christ is the head, then we the people are free to go directly to him for instruction and guidance. We do not need intermediaries to act with absolute authority over us. Does this mean that churches should have no leadership? Not at all! It does mean that if Christ is the head, then any members of the body who serve in leadership must be seen as having delegated authority and not inherent authority. Congregationalism would argue strenuously that no member of the body should be exalted over any other members of the body, and that the leaders should be seen as coming from within the body, to serve the body, to whom they must ultimately give account for their actions. They are members of the body who serve the body—not despots who rule the body in an authoritarian manner.

- *“And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” (Eph. 1:22-23)*
- *“For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.” (Eph. 5:23-24)*
- *“And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.” (Col. 1:18)*

Priesthood of the Believer

The congregational government preserves the Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of every believer. Congregationalism asserts that the youngest believer, the least and humblest church member, has a God-given right to participate in the building up of the body through the use of their spiritual and natural giftings. They also have a voice and a vote in determining the direction of the church.

- *“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (I Pet. 2:9)*
- *“To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (Rev. 1:5b-6)*
- *“You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.” (Rev. 5:10)*

Practice of the Early Church

Congregationalism may be seen in a number of ways in the New Testament:

1. The congregation chose the first “deacons” (Acts 6).
2. The responsibility of church discipline is given to the entire church (Matt. 18; I Cor. 5; II Cor. 2).
3. The ordinances were committed to the entire church (Matt. 28; Mark 16; I Cor. 11).
4. Many of Paul’s letters were written to entire congregations—not to church leaders.
5. The congregation chose its own representatives (Acts 11; Acts 13; Acts 15).

25.2 How does this relate to the elder/deacon board?

The relationship between biblical support for congregationalism and the board of elder/deacon is their relationship to Christ and their relationship with the congregation as priesthood of the Believer. They act as the primary spiritual leaders of a congregation, who are also called overseers. Elders teach or preach the Word and shepherd the souls of those under their care (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9; Heb. 13:17). Deacons, too, have a crucial role in the life and the health of the local church, but their role is different from the elders’. The biblical role of deacons is to take care of the physical and logistical needs of the church so that the elders can concentrate on their primary calling. The only passage that mentions the qualifications for deacons is 1 Timothy 3:8–13. In this passage, Paul gives an official but not exhaustive list of the requirements for deacons. The similarities of the qualifications for deacons and elders/overseers in 1 Timothy 3 are striking. Like the qualifications for elders, a deacon must not be an addict (v. 3), not greedy for dishonest gain (v. 3), blameless (v. 2; Titus 1:6), the husband of one wife (v. 2), and an able manager of his children and household (vv. 4–5). Furthermore, the focus of the qualifications is the moral character of the person who is to fill the office: a deacon must be mature and above reproach. The main difference between an elder and a deacon is a difference of gifts and calling, not character.

25.3 In this form of government, who decisions should the congregation make?

In churches practicing congregational polity, authority is vested in the church as a whole, although it is a matter of debate to what extent the church is able to delegate this authority to church leaders and whether or not church leaders’ authority is derived from the congregation or directly from Christ. Typically, in a congregational system the church does the following: (1) select, appoint, and, if necessary, remove church leaders; (2) (help) guard pure doctrine; (3) exercise church discipline and decide on church membership; (4) participate in major decisions affecting the entire congregation. Usually, the congregation operates in democratic fashion by way of regular church business meetings at which each member has an equal voice and vote.

In a representative form of the congregational model, an effort is made to balance authoritative leadership with genuine congregational participation. In this approach, it is the elders who have ultimate authority, not the congregation. The elders consult the congregation on important matters and involve them in the decision-making process, but in the end the elders’ decision obtains. It is recognized that the congregation’s participation in the selection of elders does not necessarily amount to an exercise of authority and that the New Testament teaches congregational participation but not necessarily congregational rule. It is also noted that elders hold positions of authority as church members, so that local elder authority with congregational participation is not based on a clergy-laity distinction but is consistent with the notion of the priesthood of all believers.

26. What is the basis for membership in the local church?

The standards for local church membership should be no higher or lower than the standards for being a Christian. A Christian is someone who has repented and believed, and that’s who churches should affirm as members. More concretely, church membership is a formal relationship between a local church and a Christian characterized by the church’s affirmation and oversight of a Christian’s discipleship and the Christian’s submission to living out his or her discipleship in the care of the church. The church body says to the individual, “We recognize your profession of faith, baptism, and discipleship to Christ as valid. Therefore, we publicly affirm and acknowledge you before the nations as belonging to Christ, and we extend the oversight of our fellowship.” Principally, the individual says to the church body, “Insofar as I recognize you as a faithful, gospel-declaring church, I submit my presence and my discipleship to your love and oversight.” Church membership, in other words, is not about “additional

requirements.” It’s about a church taking specific responsibility for a Christian, and a Christian for a church. However, in some denominations, the only additional requirement is baptism. These Church members must be baptized, a pattern that is uniform in the New Testament. Baptism is an act of commitment. It marks our initiation into the narrative of the Christian fellowship.

- *“Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation.’ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:37-47)*
- *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.” (Heb. 13:17)*
- *“So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’” (1 Peter 5:1-5)*

27. What is the role of the Old Testament for the church today?

For Christians, the Old Testament sets the stage for the cosmic and temporal contexts found in the New Testament. It is the “First Testament” of a unique two-part epic story of God and his promise-plan of redemption. Jesus, Peter and Paul, Matthew and John, and numerous others in the New Testament, frequently quote from the Old Testament. Without the Old, the New would be adrift, cut off from its life-giving roots. And as we all know, any living organism cut off from its roots will soon wither and die. But the reach and relevance of the Old Testament, its importance and significance, far exceed these already substantial achievements. For life here and now, the Old Testament is essential for anyone seeking to understand the human condition and humankind, for anyone seeking the answers to the most fundamental questions of life and death. In other words, the Old Testament is as relevant as today’s newspaper. For understanding the infinite and forever, the Old Testament is nothing less than a formal introduction to God himself. And so it is for anyone seeking a relationship with Him. Its ultimate purpose and value, is that it enables all of us, each and every one of us the opportunity to begin to comprehend the Incomprehensible. For anyone seeking to come to know the Lord their God, the Lord God of Hosts, the Creator of the Universe, the Old Testament is, in a word, indispensable.

- *“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27)*
- *“Then he said to them, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’” (Luke 24:44)*
- *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:1-5)*

- *“For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.” (John 5:46)*

28. How do you relate to the Old Testament concept of law to the New Testament concept of grace?

I affirm the presence of both law and grace within the Old and New Testaments. So, what is the relationship of law to grace and how do we reconcile the commands in the Old Testament law with grace? Many would state that grace is there to keep the law, but the Bible states in the New Testament that if you fail to keep one of the laws you have broken them all. This is the very reason we are under grace. In the Old Testament there was grace under the surface of the law in the New Testament grace rules over the law. If you failed in one of the commands the way it was dealt with was by sacrifice. With New Testament we are not under grace to keep the law of the Old Testament because the scripture makes it clear no one can. It is Jesus who kept the law where we could not and He kept it absolutely perfectly. Every requirement small or large was kept in the absolute way God required it of man. So Christ lived a perfect righteous life even to the point of His death on the cross. We are under grace because of His righteousness that is imputed or given to our account. So many people misunderstand which covenant they are living under and because of this there is so much confusion that they get condemned because they have not lived up to the perfect standard the law requires. Not realizing the purpose of the law is to make one guilty, so we are to go to the ultimate sacrifice found not in animals without blemish but in Christ Jesus the lamb. Grace did not annul the law; instead, it upheld it, it completed it. Only in Christ would the veil be taken away. And because we are now united with Christ, in union with Him, the instructions God gave through the law is not out of obligation, but is lived out in worship to the act of obedience in the faithfulness of Christ. If we by grace have been saved, our lives ought to exhibit the obedience with which we are growing into the likeness of Jesus.

- *“For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. But the righteousness based on faith says, Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down) or Who will descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.” (Rom. 10:5-10)*
- *“Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.” (Gal. 3:23-26)*

Christian Life

1. What is your view of divorce and remarriage? On what biblical grounds?

I believe that divorce is allowable when it harms, comes against, or oppresses another who is created in the image of God. Remarriage of a divorced person is allowable if the divorce is a mutual decision between both parties. The Bible is explicit about a divorce and remarriage. Before God, marriage is a lifetime covenant and should never be severed by human action. Malachi reports that God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16). God’s perfect will is the preservation of society and future generations by the preservation of marriages. God will give help in sustaining a marriage relationship or in the reconciliation of estranged marriage partners. The Bible is also explicit in regards to being unequally yoked to another person. The inequality, this being Christian and non-Christian relationship in the eyes of God cannot be sustained. In extreme cases, there are only two grounds for divorce and remarriage. The first of these is adultery. If infidelity has taken place in the marriage, a divorce can be obtained, because adultery has already severed the marriage relationship and divorce is a formal acknowledgment of what has already taken place. The second is a concept taught by Paul. If an unbelieving spouse leaves a believer, the believer is not bound to the marriage relationship, but is free to remarry. I do think physical brutality and abuse, and mental abuse of a nature that endangers the person’s mind or body are clearly grounds for separation, and if reconciliation cannot happen, divorce on the grounds of desertion may be permitted.

- *“When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out from his house, and she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man’s wife, and if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife, then her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his wife, since she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance.” (Deut. 24:1-4)*
- *“‘For I hate divorce,’ says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘and him who covers his garment with wrong,’ says the Lord of hosts. ‘So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.’” (Mal. 2:16)*
- *“He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.’” (Matt. 19:4-6)*
- *“But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace.” (I Cor. 7:15)*

2. What is your view regarding the role of women in the church? On what biblical grounds?

The question regarding the women’s role in the church is answered as to whether the church holds an egalitarian or complementarian view of women and their leadership within the church. I believe there may be a third viewpoint that is created by a both/and scenario. I affirm that men and women were created by God to be both equal in value and dignity, but He gave us differing roles, in order that we may best reflect both the equality and differing roles within the Trinity. In order for me to be clear, I must seek out what Jesus had in mind (if he did) what roles women would play in the church. The church of course did not begin while Jesus was on earth but after His ascension. Nevertheless, we can learn about Jesus’ regard of women during his earthly ministry. We know that none of the apostles were women (was this because of cultural norms?) However, some of Jesus’ closest disciples were women and those left at the cross and those who met the resurrected Christ were also women. From these and other references in the Gospels, we learn that Jesus in no way dealt with women as being inferior to men as far as being His disciples was concerned. In selecting men rather than women to be His apostles, He did make some distinction in the roles men and women should fill. When the church was born on Pentecost, there were no distinctions made in conditions of membership between the sexes. Furthermore, the importance of women to the whole church is reflected by the concern, which the early church had for widows who needed care and help. The good works of women are frequently mentioned in scripture. Dorcas, Lydia, Phoebe, are only a few of those mentioned for their assistance with the growth of the church. Paul describes the qualifications for women who were devoted full time to Christian work and to be supported by the church. The Women’s role in private teaching of God’s word is also referenced in Scripture as Priscilla, and her husband, Aquila, privately taught the way of God. And in Titus, the text commands older women to train younger women in Christian living. A key verse to understanding the importance of women in the eyes of God is Paul’s statement in Galatians regarding any distinctions found in the body of Christ. While there are no distinctions for one being in the Body of Christ, there are differing roles for men and women to within the church that God has ordained for them to step into. In this scenario, men and women become helpers to each other in the task of ministry using their spiritual and natural gifts to build up the church together. If a woman is called by God to act in leadership, there ought not be any obstacles placed in her way, yet the same qualifications for her service would apply depending on the role she is to perform.

- *“Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’ Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the*

rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.” (Gen. 2:18-22)

- *There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.” (Matt. 27:55-56)*
- *“Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.” (Luke 8:1-3)*
- *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3:28)*
- *“For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.” (I Tim. 2:13-15)*
- *“Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.” (I Tim. 5:9-10)*
- *“Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.” (Titus 2:3-5)*

3. What is your view of regarding human sexuality? On what biblical grounds?

I affirm that God created humanity as male and female in His likeness, He created them. I also pronounce that marriage is a covenant relationship between one man and one woman. Additionally for the single individual, chastity or living a life of celibacy is biblical. Anything coming against these two beliefs would be in violation to God's purpose for humanity and are a direct result of the fall of mankind this includes homosexual relationships, transgender assignment, and cross-dressing. I would also confirm that God created us as sexual beings. The intended purpose of our being created as sexual persons is to draw us into significant and satisfying connection with others. The God-ordained relational longing for emotional bonding is what gives us a sense of belonging and purpose. When it comes to sexual expression through intimacy, the Scripture teaches that this aspect of being created sexual is reserved for the exclusive love relationship defined as one-flesh union between husband and wife. Trinitarian theology is a rich analogy for human relationships; achieving unity while maintaining distinctiveness. As distinctly unique persons, we open ourselves to each other through the encounter, making a place for unity. Our sexuality brings energy and enthusiasm to the process of knowing and being known, satisfying our deep longing for belonging, connection and interdependence. Our maleness and femaleness, personality differences, giftedness, and unique perspectives bring dimension to our relationship that enhances our distinctiveness and who we are together.

- *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Gen. 1:27-28)*
- *“The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” (Gen. 2:22-24)*
- *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” (Matt. 19:5-6)*

- *“But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let not man separate.”* (Mark 10:6-9)
- *“But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband.”* (1 Cor. 7:2-3)
- *“Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.”* (Eph. 5:33)
- *“Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.”* (Col. 3:18-19)
- *“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.”* (Heb. 13:4)

4. What is your view regarding abortion? On what biblical grounds?

I affirm that abortion is the killing of an unborn child in the mother’s womb. From both a biblical and scientific perspective, life begins at the moment of fertilization. Since abortion destroys a human being who is fearfully and wonderfully made in God’s image, it is murder.

- *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”* (Gen. 1:27)
- *“And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.”* (Gen. 9:5-6)
- *“Thou shalt not kill.”* (Ex. 20:13)
- *“Did not he who made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb?”* (Job 31:15)
- *“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.”* (Psa. 127:3)
- *“For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.”* (Psa. 139:13-16)
- *“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”* (Jer. 1:5)

5. What is your view regarding social drinking? On what biblical grounds?

I affirm that the Bible does not outlaw drinking in moderation. Yet, the Bible warns against drunkenness or doing anything that might make a brother stumble. A Christian, in the privacy of his or her home, can drink a glass of wine or a single beer, but to drink more than this is to flirt with sin. Drinking in social situations is almost always problematic, because so many who we know have problems with alcohol. Given the large percentage of people who are alcoholics or reformed alcoholics, I personally would advise against encouraging anything which could be described as “social drinking” especially when it might affect another person in something that they might struggle with in their own lives.

- *“Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.”* (Rom. 13:13)
- *“But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.”* (1 Cor. 8:9)
- *“All things are lawful, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful, but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.”* (1 Cor. 10:23)
- *““So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.”* (1 Cor. 10:32-33)

- *“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”* (Gal. 5:19-21)
- *“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit...”* (Eph. 5:18)
- *“For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.”* (I Pet. 4:3)

6. In what ways does spiritual warfare affect the lives of the people in your church? What should we do to protect ourselves?

I believe there is a lack of understanding about the spiritual realm and the influence that it has on the physical realm. The spiritual realm precedes, influences and, to many degrees, determines the physical realm. The effects of the war going on in the unseen world reveal themselves in our strained and damaged relationships, emotional instability, mental fatigue, physical exhaustion and many other areas of life. Many people can feel pinned down by anger, unforgiveness, pride, comparisons, insecurity, discord, and fear. The enemy's attacks are always wrapped in the packaging of deception, always designed to manipulate the truth about God, and about your value in Him. He desires to lead you into sin so that fellowship is broken between you and God—this way you'll be disconnected from the Source of true power and strength. The temptations that appeal to our specific desires happen to show up when we are most vulnerable and are not accidental. The better we understand the spiritual and how it relates to the physical, the better we are able to operate as Christians. Jesus resisted the devil by applying Scripture to the attacks He was going through. When we are attacked, it is the knowledge and use of Scripture that allows us to resist him. We don't resist him by human will or human effort. We resist him by spiritual means, by using Scripture—the Word of God—just as Jesus did. I think the power of prayer is equally important. Prayer is our mechanism of engaging the Holy Spirit's power as we use the Word. So, it's prayer with the Word, because prayer invokes the Spirit's presence with the Word as we address whatever the spiritual issue is. And finally, it is preparing ourselves for the battle at all times by putting on the armor God has given us by first remembering we are saved through the victory of Christ on the cross and therefore His victory is our victory.

- *“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Rom. 8:37-39)
- *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.”* (Eph. 6:10-18)
- *“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”* (James 4:7)
- *“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”* (I John 4:2-4)
- *“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.”* (I Pet. 5:8-9)

The Church

1. What is the church?

I affirm that the church is the Body of Christ— all those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. The church is a people-group who gather together to build up one another in the faith, to equip people for the care of others in the community, to disciple other disciples for leadership and mission, and to release individuals into the world to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and to be fishers of people. I also affirm that the church is not a building or a denomination.

- *“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.”* (I Cor. 12:27-28)

2. According to the Bible, what are the purposes of the church?

I affirm that the early church had this as their purpose statement, *“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer”* (Acts 2:42). According to this verse, the purposes/activities of the church should be 1) teaching biblical doctrine, 2) providing a place of fellowship for believers, 3) observing the Lord’s supper, and 4) praying. Yet, there are additional tasks the church is to be involved as the instrument through which God works in the world. The church is to teach biblical doctrine so we can be grounded in our faith. The church is to be a place of fellowship, where Christians can be devoted to one another and honor one another, instruct one another, be kind and compassionate to one another, encourage one another, and most importantly, love one another. The church is to be a place where believers can observe the Lord’s Supper, remembering Christ’s death and shed blood on our behalf. The concept of “breaking bread” also carries the idea of having meals together. This is another example of the church promoting fellowship. The church is to be a place that promotes prayer, teaches prayer, and practices prayer. Another commission given to the church is proclaiming the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ. The church is called to be faithful in sharing the gospel through word and deed. The church is to be a “lighthouse” in the community, pointing people toward our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The church is to both promote the gospel and prepare its members to proclaim the gospel. The church is to be about the business of ministering to those in need. This includes not only sharing the gospel, but also providing for physical needs (food, clothing, shelter) as necessary and appropriate. The church is also to equip believers in Christ with the tools they need to overcome sin and remain free from the pollution of the world. This is done through biblical teaching and Christian fellowship. The church is to be “Christian,” “Christ-like,” and Christ-following.

- *“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”* (Matt. 9:37-38)
- *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* (Matt. 28:19-20)
- *“And Jesus said to them, Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”* (Mark 1:17)
- *“You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.”* (John 15:16)
- *“Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”* (John 20:21)
- *“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.”* (Rom. 12:10-13)
- *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”* (Heb. 10:23-25)
- *“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and we have seen*

and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.” (1 John 1:1-3)

3. What does it mean to “make disciples of Christ” and what is the process to accomplish that purpose?

Jesus commissions the church to “*go and make disciples of all nations...*” (Matt. 28:19-20) and to do this primarily teaching everything that Jesus had said. We may define this “going” as Discipleship, a process of Disciples making disciples. The standard definition of “disciple” (noun) is someone who adheres to the teachings of another. It is a follower or a learner. It refers to someone who takes up the ways of someone else. Applied to Jesus, a disciple is someone who learns from Him to live like Him — someone who, because of God’s awakening grace, conforms his or her words and ways to the words and ways of Jesus. Every believer is called to discipleship where mature followers of Christ mentor or build up younger or new followers of Christ.

To disciple means being a worshiper. The foundation of being a follower of Jesus means to worship Him exclusively. This is the fundamental perspective of a disciple because it is more ultimate than anything else we are or do, and most distinctive in our context. When the world may be fine with the concept of Jesus, to worship Him alone or exclusively rubs against their pluralistic tendencies. To follow Jesus means gathering His worshipers.

To disciple means being a servant. And as a servant, Jesus says of His disciples, to His disciples, “*If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you*” (John 13:14-15). In one sense, the posture of servant should characterize Jesus’s disciples on all fronts by obeying the commands of Christ. But in another sense, being a servant like Jesus has a particular focus on disciples serving disciples by demonstrating Christ-like character. It’s a family thing. “*Let us do good to everyone,*” Paul said, “*and especially to those who are of the household of faith*” (Gal. 6:10). To be a disciple of Jesus means to serve like Him. It means to serve, primarily, by looking at your brothers and sisters and going low in acts of love, even when it’s an inconvenience to yourself, even when it flip-flops the world’s social order and expectations. Making disciples of Jesus means making servants who love one another.

To disciple means being a witness. This means that Jesus’s disciples are on a mission. It means, in the broadest sense, that they are missionaries, that they are envisioned and empowered to step into this world as His witnesses. Jesus was sent for a purpose— to reveal God and redeem sinners. We too, as his disciples, filled by his Spirit, are sent for a purpose to tell His good news to others. To be a disciple of Jesus means to point people to Him to engage people with the gospel. It means to tell the old, old story of Jesus and His love so that others would know Him and worship Him. It means, in other words, that we gladly seek more worshipers-servants-witnesses.

4.1 What does the Bible say about the church’s responsibility to “win” lost people to Christ?

The church’s responsibility to “win” lost people to Christ is shown in the ministry of reconciliation. God through Christ Jesus has given us the word of reconciliation He has identified us as ambassadors through whom He reconciles the world to Himself (II Corinthians 5:11-21). God then is a seeking God. He sent His Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins, not for ours only, but for the sins of all humanity. The Bible clearly proclaims, “*God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance,*” (II Peter 3:9). And stated by Paul to Timothy, “*God our Savior who will have all men to be saved*” (I Timothy 2:4). God’s promised-plan of reconciliation is meant for the entire world, “*God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16). That is the great redemptive promise that explains human history. The church, then, comprised of a body of believers, is one who would glorify God, honor His desire, exalt His purposes, fulfill His objectives would be the church who loves the lost world and gives their life for the sake of bringing others to salvation.

- “*Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back.*” (Prov. 24:11)
- “*And He said to them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.*” (Matt. 4:19)

- *“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” (Matt. 9:37-38)*
- *“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:11-15)*
- *“To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.” (I Cor. 9:20-22)*
- *“My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.” (James 5:20)*
- *“And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.” (Jude 1:22-23)*

4.2 What does the Bible say about the church’s responsibility to “build” believers up in their faith?

The Scripture states that the church is to embody the role of edification. It involves edifying believers, but also nurturing, building up or helping believers to mature in Christ. Edification is more than just encouragement; it includes any activity that results in more Christlikeness, either in self or in another believer. Edification may be individual or corporate. Individually, one can edify oneself by participating in the various spiritual disciplines (Bible intake, private prayer, private worship, etc). Generally, however, the concept of edification in the New Testament is applied to the corporate body (mutual edification). Mutual edification involves helping one another along the road to Christlikeness, and it requires the participation of all members of the church. Teaching and preaching improve our understanding of God; encouragement promotes conduct that develops Christlike character. When we exhort one another and hold one another accountable, we are prompted to engage in activities that promote godliness. Accountability means we lovingly check each other’s spiritual progress. Christlike service ensures that the needs of the church are met, and true fellowship is the interaction we have with each other on a deeper spiritual level. The corporate nature of edification cannot be overemphasized. Without mutual edification, the church becomes a collection of spiritual weaklings, a perpetual nursery for spiritual infants, rather than a body or a building up of mature Christians.

- *“So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.” (Rom. 14:19)*
- *“When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.” (Acts 14:21-22)*
- *“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:12)*
- *“Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church. Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying... What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.” (I Cor. 14:1-5, 26)*
- *“Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.” (I Thess. 5:11)*

- *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”* (Heb. 10:23-25)

4.3 What does the Bible say about the church’s responsibility to “equip” people in your church to care for and share their faith with their peers?

Equipping churches see their people’s daily work as part of the church’s ministry. By equipping congregants, the church has the ability to help their people discover new ways of nourishing and living out their faith in the course of their daily work. Equipping churches encourage their people to build relationships with both Christians and non-Christians in their daily lives. The equipping church believes that people will be more committed to supporting a church that sets in front of them a large and exciting vision of God at work in their world and that helps them to discern their part in it while understanding how to share their faith.

- *“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.”* (Rom. 12:10-13)
- *“Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”* (Eph. 4:15-16)
- *“Honor widows who are truly widows. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”* (I Tim. 5:3-8)
- *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”* (II Tim. 3:16-17)
- *“So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.”* (I Thess. 2:8)

4.4 What does the Bible say about the church’s responsibility to “multiply” and train leaders to oversee the disciple-making mission of the church and its ministries?

Church leaders are responsible to lead God’s flock by walking personally with God and by working together to help church members do the same. Leadership is primarily influence, and the way that church leaders influence others is by their godly example and through the teaching of God’s word. Leadership requires having a clear biblical picture of what the local church ought to be and what it ought to be doing, and continually communicating that to the church. God provides leaders who have the role of preparing others for their roles. The result is growth, maturity and unity, if we allow the process to work as God intended. Some Christian growth and learning comes from peers; some comes from people in the church who have the specific assignment of teaching and modeling the Christian life. People who isolate themselves are missing out on this aspect of the faith. The whole Bible is summed up by the two great commandments, which are both relational: Love God and love others. This means that godly church leaders must work at relating to one another in love, and they must work at helping church members relate to one another in love— Disciples making disciples.

- *“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.”* (Luke 6:40)
- *“Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word. And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of*

faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.” (Acts 6:1-7)

- *“And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.” (Acts 14:23)*
- *“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.” (Acts 20:28)*
- *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10)*
- *“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” (Col. 2:6-7)*
- *“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” (II Tim. 2:2)*
- *“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.” (Heb. 13:7)*
- *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.” (Heb. 13:17)*

4.5 What does the Bible say about the church’s responsibility to “send” called ones to plant churches in a neighboring community or city and internationally?

I affirm that Body of Christ has a “Kingdom Initiative” that is bigger than one church. The Apostle Paul went on a journey to plant churches. This was how people unfamiliar with the true story of Christ came to know Jesus. Church planting is important because the church is important. And, Jesus’ Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 was essentially a call to plant new churches. Baptizing, teaching and making disciples are exactly what churches were commanded to do throughout the rest of the New Testament. Additionally, the dozen men who originally heard Jesus say the words “baptize, teach and make disciples” responded by spending the rest of their lives planting new churches whether in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, or to places we have not yet been called.

- *“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” (Isa. 49:6)*
- *“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matt. 16:18)*
- *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)*
- *“Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.” (Acts 13:1-3)*