

Personal Testimony  
and  
Doctrinal Statements  
of  
John H. Brown

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Personal Testimony and Call to Ministry of  
John H. Brown

My life began in 1959. I was raised on a farm south of Wilton, Iowa, (seventeen miles north of Fruitland). My father was a farmer and to this day I have never been certain of his salvation. He was a faithful church attender but often did not display fruits or a profession of salvation. My mother was a devout believer and had a great impact on my spiritual well-being. I have two older brothers. My folks are now both deceased.

I grew up in the Evangelical United Brethren Church that sat on Brown property and was started by immigrant families in the area in 1861. It originally was known as an Evangelical Church (a denomination from Pennsylvania founded by Jacob Albright). That later merged with the United Brethren in Christ. This local church was a Bible-believing, vibrant work in the area for many years. The only doctrinal error that I knew of in its practice was the incorrect mode of baptism (non-immersion). I trusted Christ as my personal Savior at age 7 at home in my bedroom with my mom. I remember it as a time that I did not want to go to school and was having problems and also when I had heard some preaching on hell and I didn't want to go there. My mom encouraged me to be saved for assurance and regarding my not wanting to go to school. We were always faithful in church and Sunday School and I grew some in the Lord during this time. As I entered my teen years, big changes came to Peace Church in that we were literally taken over (merged) with the Methodist Church to become a United Methodist Church. Many people hated that, but yet no one separated. As new pastors came along so did the loss of good Bible teaching. I argued with them, especially about baptism and the confusing teaching on how we are saved and that what was taught in confirmation class. I was under my parents authority so I was baptized by aspersion and joined the church. I did not grow spiritually in my teen years and more or less went through the motions with maybe a touch of rebellion which would seem tame in the world's eyes, but not in a correct response as a Christian should have toward God. I began to date my to be wife, Kim, in our junior year of high school. Our relationship grew and we married in August of 1978 after high school. Kim came from a little different background than I did as she grew up in a RLDS home but was saved by grace as a child and did not accept their false teachings. We were equally yoked as believers but still in need of growth and learning. We both believed that we needed to be under good Bible teaching and began to attend Calvary Baptist Church here in Muscatine. This was a CBA church and we both grew tremendously under the teachings of Pastor Dan Schoeph. Kim and I were both scripturally baptized and joined this church. We were youth leaders and active in our own age groups as well as Sunday School teachers, trustee, bus driver and chairman of a major building project as well as much hands on ministry of all kinds.

God was at work in our lives in a big way during this time. For the first six years of our marriage we were unable to have children. We kept this before God's throne and even had our names in for adoption. A girl named Karen always prayed with Kim at youth group and they continued to pray that God would give us children. He answered that prayer perfectly as Kim told me one day that she was expecting and we soon had Bethany. He gifted us in rapid fire succession with Mark, Greg and Julia to complete our family. What an awesome God!

Throughout my life since the age of nine I have always been busy. I have been a career

farmer in general farming that God has allowed me to continue into this day. I also worked several years in the grain industry in many areas including inspection, maintenance, barge loading on the Mississippi and railroad operations and maintenance. In the mid-eighties I was part of a group of investors that began a new manufacturing venture producing and reconditioning steel drums (barrels) that operated in the western two-thirds of Iowa and northern half of Illinois. I not only helped fabricate the plant but also got it started with customer calling extensively through our territory. This was good teaching for me - cold calling on people and being able to talk to strangers. In later years I managed the plant and had much hands on dealing with people. I tried to run the plant with Christian values and practice and had some that were saved during this time. I was privileged to have several Christians work for me as well. We closed the plant in the nineties due to the never ending challenges of EPA regulation which forced many smaller operations out of business. I continued to supply local clients by working with a large supplier in Chicago up until God led me to go back to school in 2000. God protected me on many trips to Chicago with the semi of which these tales I don't have time or space to write.

During this time I continued to serve the Lord. One time that I recall when I refused God's call was in the 80's at Calvary when I rejected what I believed was God's calling to be nominated for the office of deacon. I learned from that experience to never refuse to walk through a door God opens. We endured some big changes with God. There was a time when I thought God wanted me to be an industrial engineer and I took many classes toward this in the 80's along with everything else that was going on. We endured changes at Calvary up to a point but believed we needed to separate as the leadership there began to pursue a seeker "friendly approach" patterned after Willow Creek. I could not approve of the changes and soft peddling of the Word. God directed us to Fruitland Baptist Church the Sunday after our last at Calvary. We grew at Fruitland under Pastor Phil Sherwood but also experienced a troubled period here as a deacon which again grew and prepared me for the ministry, little did I know at the time. Throughout the nineties God was steering a stubborn person to His Will. God literally closed doors and waited patiently for me to walk through open ones. (You remember the lesson learned earlier.) The farm situation became a big loser. I sold hogs some of those years at \$13 per hundred weight. Crop prices really put the squeeze on us. Problems with the barrel plant and costly breakdowns in the excavating business that were way out of the ordinary realm of possibility. It became apparent to me that God closed the doors to these things for me and I knew in my heart that He had wanted me out of this business and in His. I fought for a while but finally yielded to Him in the Spring of 2000. I was willing to give it all up to go where He wanted me to go. Pastor Richard Westbrook was led by God to help me I know, as he was interim pastor here at Fruitland and he told how God led him off the farm and to the mission field at age forty (my then current age). While I had fairly good knowledge I knew I needed polished and trained to be a better servant of God. I applied to Faith Baptist Bible College and they actually accepted me. This was not an easy transition for me or my family. It was a hard move to leave Wilton, especially for my teenagers, but God had His hand in that too, and they now know there were good things planned for them too in that move. The first day of classes at Faith found me thinking, "What am I doing here?", but God worked all that out well too. He put people in my way that will be life-long friends. We attended Faith Baptist at Cambridge as we lived there for the first two months of

school. In October of that year the extension office called me to fill the pulpit for Art Woodward at Grace Baptist Church in Corwith, Iowa, while he was out of town. I did that and in the process he left that work later that Fall. I began to fill that pulpit regularly and was called as interim pastor and served three years. Again what a great learning experience. I drove over 250,000 miles during school between the farm, Corwith and college. Some days I came back to Wilton everyday in the afternoons to plant or harvest. Our family as a whole had only one flat tire during all this time. The Goodness of God! Most of these miles were on our '88 Chevy Caprice which I prayed God would get me through school. It did and died with 435,000 miles after I gave it to son Mark to drive to high school. That was a lot of oil changes at 2,000 miles each. The drain plug was teflon taped for the last 50,000 miles due to wear!

In my last year of school God impacted on my heart that maybe he would want me back at my home church here at Fruitland. I was willing to stay at Corwith, but the driving was hard on us. I sent my resume to Fruitland and as things worked out, God brought me back here as interim pastor November 30<sup>th</sup> of 2003. I've been here since and am enjoying it. I learned at Corwith that it takes at least three years to get even a foothold in the community and me being a lifer in this area is a great help. I was willing to give it all up for God including the farm. By His grace I am still farming part-time which opens a great many doors to me. My boys now do much of the farm work and hopefully I can just observe and advise them in the future. As I've told the folks at Fruitland, I'll be here as long as God wants me here, but I've learned to walk through doors if He calls. It is interesting also to note that some of the doors I thought were closed on the farm He had reopened with blessings where there was trouble when I was out of His Will.

I know God wanted me in His service because I'm burdened by people headed for hell and the decline in our nation and world for the things of God. He truly is all-sufficient and I praise Him for allowing me to be a part of His work and a testimony for what He had done for me!

John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Respectfully, In His Service,

John H. Brown

## Soteriology

I believe that the thrust of the Bible's teaching is man's need for salvation from personal sin and its consequences including the final result of eternal separation from God (Rev. 20:10-15). Salvation is seen in three facets that deal with our sin in the past, present and future (Titus 3:5; I Cor. 1:8; I Cor. 15:35-58) with the end result of an incorruptible body in the presence of God. Salvation is the act whereby we are delivered from the penalty of the sin curse through God's grace in the form of His Son, Jesus Christ, who paid the penalty of death on the cross for all who will accept His work by faith alone (Eph. 2:8-9). To accept the Gift, man must realize his sinful state (Rom. 3:23) and total need of God's provision. I believe salvation was effected in the manner (by grace through faith) in times prior to Christ's death (Heb. 11:8-19) looking forward to His coming sacrifice.

I believe that the law plays the role of exposing the knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20), as a school master bringing us to Christ (Gal. 3:24) and points to the example of Christ in the animal sacrificial shedding of blood (temporary) vs. Christ's (permanent).

I believe infants under the age of accountability will be saved on the basis of II Samuel 12:23 and Rev. 20:12-13 (judged on the basis of works which they don't have).

I believe in unconditional election which is defined as "God's sovereign, eternal, unmerited, choice of individuals to eternal life within His overall plan of redemption" (Eph. 1-4, 14; II Thess. 2:13-14; Rom. 9-10:21, 11:33-36).

I believe God calls people to salvation in two ways that produce the act. The general call (Acts 17:30) and the effectual call (John 6:44).

I believe that our conversion process contains the following: trust and belief which is defined as faith (John 3:16; Acts 16:31), repentance which is changing the mind to the correct attitude toward sin, God and Christ (Acts 3:19; II Pet. 3:9) and conversion which is turning from sin to Christ (Acts 15:3; 11:21).

I believe the intent of the relationship with the Lord is not only for salvation but to experience the blessedness of Him having dominion of our lives by choice. I do, however, acknowledge that we often struggle at times with carnality but this is a temporary setback that if confessed is overcome through His forgiveness. Carnality should not be the pattern in the life of the believer (I Cor. 3).

I believe that we can have assurance of salvation and that we cannot lose our salvation (John 6:37; I John 5:13; all of I John; Rom. 8:16).

I believe that there are results of our salvation in that we have been redeemed (Heb. 9:12) which describes our being bought back, regeneration (Titus 3:5) which is the being born again or new life in the believer and justification (Rom. 5:1) which is a legal pronouncement that declares us righteous and reconciliation (II Cor. 5:18-20) which restores our peace with God. I believe that we are adopted into God's family (Gal. 4:1-7) and are sanctified as an ongoing process during our lives by study and obedience to the Word of God (I Cor. 6:11). I believe that our complete sanctification will be realized at our arriving into the presence of God (I John 3:2).

## Ecclesiology Statement

I believe that the word “church” is defined in several ways. One of the definitions which is “ecclesia” means “called out ones” (Acts 19:41) or “gathering” or “congregation”. This example fits as the individual believers called out of sin and death and into salvation and life in the local church setting as well as the universal church. It should be noted that the universal church is made up of true believers whereas the local church may have members that are truly not saved. “Church” may also represent the Universal Church which is the sum total of all believers from Pentecost through the Rapture (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2, I Thess. 4:13-18). This form is invisible in its entirety and scope to the individual believer. The other “church” is what is known as the “visible” or “local”. This gathering was in houses in the early days (Rom. 16:1-5) and is defined (Ryrie) as “An organized assembly of baptized, professing believers in a given location.”

I believe that the universal church is also called the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23), the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:22-33) which help to picture the relationship between Christ and the church. This is also portrayed in (Heb. 13:20) as Christ the great Shepherd caring for His sheep. This can also be seen in the local body.

I believe the local church is characterized by the following: congregational government as seen in the choosing of officers (Acts 6:35; 14:23; I Cor. 5), decision making (Acts 15:22, 30), Pastor(s) (Titus 1:5; I Tim. 3:1-7; I Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20: 17, 28; Eph. 4:11-12) that also are one and the same as teachers, mature (spiritual) individuals (elders), feeders (pastors-shepherds), overseers (Bishops). Deacons (servants Acts 6). Believers baptism by immersion (non-triune) in water (Acts 8:38-39). Practice of the Lord’s Supper (memorial) (I Cor. 11). Fellowship (Rom. 12:15). Working in the mission of: edification, education, benevolence, evangelism (outreach), worship, equipping, locally and in the world. Having members (Acts 2-3) that are baptized (see above) on profession of faith (saved), responsible, faithful (Heb. 10:24-25), unified (Phil. 2:1-5), ministry workers (Eph. 4:11-13), financial supporters (I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7) with discipline according to the Scriptures (I Cor. 5:1; Matt. 18; II Thess. 3:6-14; etc.) in hope of restoration, that the Bible in its 66 books is the only rule of faith and practice, that the local church is autonomous in its existence and self governing, that it is obedient to the laws of the state so long as they do not contradict the Word of God (Acts 5:29), and that the state cannot mandate its existence or removal or its mission, that it practice ecclesiastical separation from all apostasy and apostates (I Cor. 5; II Cor. 6:14-7:1; II Jn. 9-11), that we would practice militant, fundamental, separatism and only fellowship with those of like faith and practice on the church level.

I believe that the local church must maintain a testimony before God and man which is aided by a constitution, covenant and doctrinal statement that support the definition of I Tim. 3:15 of the church being “the pillar and ground of the truth”.

I believe the local church should be known as a house of prayer and made up of those who practice it fervently (James 5:16; Matt. 21:13).

I believe that the church is distinct from Israel (I Cor. 10:32) but does have some similarities.

I believe the local church has the right to create positions for the orderly function of its mission such as S.S. teachers, trustees, treasurer, etc. so long as they do not violate the Scriptural mandate.

I believe the local church is distinct in that it cannot be Biblically based in its practice through para-church organizations.

## Eschatology Statement

I believe that the end times have a basis that originate with covenants that God made between Himself and man that have yet to be totally fulfilled. These would be the Abrahamic (Gen. 15:1-21) and the Davidic (2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 7:12:16). When interpreting Scripture we must take into account "conflation" of the O.T. prophets which apply to the two advents of Christ. I believe that the "rapture" is not the second coming (I Thess. 4:17) and that the second coming occurs at the end of the tribulation period (Matt. 24:29-31). I believe that at the time of physical death our bodies return to the dust of the earth and our soul goes into the presence of the Lord while we await our resurrected spiritual bodies after the pattern of Christ's resurrection at the time of the rapture. (I Thess. 4:13-18, I Corth. 15, II Corth. 5) I believe those that are alive at the time of the rapture will be translated to heaven and will not taste physical death similar to Enoch (I Thess. 4:13-18, Heb. 11:5). Unbelievers' souls go to hades at death and their bodies wait resurrection to the great white throne judgment where they will be cast into the lake of fire for eternal death and punishment (Rev. 20:14-15). I believe O.T. saints' souls went to Abraham's bosom at physical death (Luke 16) and that at least some of them rose bodily at the time of Christ's death and resurrection and followed Him into Heaven (Matt. 27:52-53). I believe in a time of great tribulation as described in (Rev. 7:14, Matt. 24:21-29, Jer. 30:7, Dan. 12:1, Rev. 3:10) that will cover seven years (Dan. 9:24-27, Rev. 12:14), and that it is broken into two parts of three and one half years or forty-two months or 1260 days. I believe that God will pour out judgment on the earth during the period in the form of the seals (Rev. 6:1-17, 8:1), that there will be trumpets (Rev. 8:2-9:21, 11:15-19), and bowls (Rev. 15:1-16:21). I believe that there will be one who is the anti-Christ that will be prevalent in the tribulation period. (I John 2:18, II Thess. 2:3-12), beast (Rev. 13:4-8), false prophet (Rev. 13:11-17), that there will be 144,000 saved Jews (Rev. 7:2-8, 14:1-5), and two witnesses (Rev. 11:3-14). I believe Christ's return is imminent. I am of the pre-trib rapture persuasion for the Church (Rev. 3:10). I believe that believers will be judged according to works for rewards at the judgment seat of Christ (II Corth. 5:9-10) following the rapture. We will be given various rewards in the form of crowns (ie. rejoicing I Thess. 2:19) which we will cast back to Christ (Rev. 4:10). I believe in the 1000 year reign of Christ known as the millennium (Rev. 20:1-10). I believe in the eternal state where believers will dwell in heaven and the new heavens and earth, also known as new Jerusalem (II Peter 3:12-13, Rev. 21) where we will live in perfect joy and bliss in the presence of our Lord (Rev. 21:3-4, 22:3-5).

## Christology Statement

I believe the following statements about our Lord Jesus Christ. That He existed throughout all eternity past and will through all eternity future. That He was involved in the creation work (John 1:1-3, Col. 1:15-17, Ps. 89:27). That He appeared in the pre-incarnate form as The Angel of the Lord at various times (Gen.31:11, Judges 13:8) and that He is God (John 8:58-59, 10:30). He is also a member of the trinity as the person of the Son of God (II Cor. 13:14, Matt. 17:5, John 1:14-18). He is worthy of worship (Rev. 22:8-9). He manifests the following attributes as God: Omniscience (John 4), Omnipotence (Matt. 28:18), Forgiveness (Mark 2), Immutability as the Son (Heb. 13:8), Eternality (John 8:58), the Judge (John 5:21-27). He is known by the following names: The Lord Jesus Christ (I Thess. 1:1), Jesus (Jehovah Saves) (Matt. 1:21), Christ (Messiah, Anointed One) (Matt. 1:1), Savior (Luke 2:11), also Son of God, Son of Man, Son of David. I believe that Jesus was fully God and fully man (John 1:14, I Tim. 2:5, Gal. 4:4, Luke 3, I John 4:2-3, Matt. 27:50, Luke 2:52). I believe that He was born of a virgin and conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18-25). I do believe that His mother, Mary, was a vessel used of God but not deity. I believe that Christ was obedient to death on the cross for our sake and voluntarily laid aside the use of some of His attributes during some of this time (Phil. 2:6-8). I believe Christ was without sin and unable to sin (II Cor. 5:21, Heb. 4:15, I Ptr. 2:22, I Jn. 3:5). I believe that Christ holds the following offices: High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16), Mediator (I Ptr. 2:5), Prophet (Jn. 7:40), King (Matt. 27:29). I believe in Christ's atoning work for us on the cross and that He died in my place (Rom. 5:11, II Cor. 5:21, I Ptr. 3:18). I believe that He died for all, but He alone knows who will accept His work from the foundation of the world (Titus 2:11, I Tim. 2:5-6, I Ptr. 1:2). I believe He suffered a physical death on the cross where he bore the sins of the world and that He was buried in the tomb and was resurrected (Matt. 28:6-7) and that He ascended back to Heaven (Acts 1:9-11) where He is preparing a place for the believer (Jn. 14:3). I believe that He is coming in the air to receive the Church and that those who have died trusting Him shall have their bodies raised at this time (I Thess. 4:16). I believe that Christ will return at the end of the tribulation period to defeat the forces in opposition to Him and to close the age. He will establish His reign on earth for 1000 years (Rev. 19), at which time He will judge the unsaved to the lake of fire and eternal punishment. He will create a new heaven and earth where He will dwell with His Saints for eternity (Rev. 21).

## Angelology Statement

I believe angels to be the divinely created personal beings that are God's ministering spirits (Col.1:16-17; Heb. 1:7; Ezek. 28:15; Job 38:4-7). The root meaning of the term "angel" is "messenger". I believe that we cannot know the precise number of angels but that their number is vast, that they are a company not a race, that they cannot propagate, are referred to in the masculine form, were created before the earth and that they had no prior existence before their creation. I believe they also possess the following characteristics: masculine, but not marriageable; moral, but not redeemable; not mortal, but only forward eternity; powerful, but not omnipotent (Ps. 103:20); knowledgeable, but not omniscient.

I believe angels have the following classifications: Cherubim (Ex. 37; Gen. 3:24), Seraphim (Is. 6:2-6; Rev. 4:6-9), Arch (Michael, Gabriel) (Jude 9; Luke 1:26), bad as in Lucifer (Is. 14:12).

The following are ministries of good angels: praising God (Is. 6), watching over children (Matt. 18:10), serving God's people (Heb. 1:14), influence government (Matt. 4), rejoice at people's salvation (Luke 15:10), watch over us (I Cor. 4:9), observe (I Pet. 1:12), bore to heaven (Luke 16). They also inflict punishment as displayed in Revelation.

Satan (Lucifer) is a fallen angel that chose to rebel against God (Rev. 12:7-9), he is the author of sin. His name means adversary and is known by many names such as Devil and Serpent, etc. He holds the following positions: prince of demons, god of this world, prince of the power of the air. He is further defined in his works through temptation (I Thess. 3:5), blinding (II Cor.4:4), accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10), a snatcher of the Word (Mark 4:15), a hinderer of God's plans (I Thess. 2:18).

I believe Satan works through other fallen angels known as demons. They affect their work in such things as possession of men and animals (Matt. 4:24), disease (Matt. 4:24), opposition of believers (Eph. 6:12), encouragement of false doctrine (I Tim. 4:1-3). I believe that believers can be oppressed, but never possessed by demons. I do not believe that exorcism of demons can be performed in this age by humans, but rather is accomplished by the work of Christ in our salvation.

I believe the following about Satan and the fallen angels: Some are chained in Tartarus awaiting final judgment (II Pet. 2:4), Satan will be held in a pit during the millennium (Rev. 9:1-11), and released at end of millennium (Rev. 20:2). The devil and all his angels will be judged and cast into the lake of fire for all eternity to suffer punishment (Rev. 20:10).

## Pneumatology Statement

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, distinct, yet also God (John 15:26; Acts 13:2; I Cor. 12:11; Rom. 8:27; Eph. 4:30; Acts 5:3; II Cor. 3:17). The Holy Spirit possesses Divine attributes such as eternality, omnipresence, omniscience as does the Father (Heb. 9:14; Ps. 139:7-10; I Cor. 2:10-11). The Holy Spirit was active in both Old and New Testament eras and can be seen in connection with the other members of the Trinity (Is. 6:8-10; Acts 28:25-27; Matt. 28:19).

I believe the following are symbols and manifestations of the Holy Spirit: oil (I Sam. 16:13), the "earnest" (Eph. 1:14), seal (Eph. 1:13), water (John 7:38-40), wind (John 3), dove (Matt. 3:16), fire (Acts 2:2-4).

I believe the Holy Spirit is manifested in several works such as creation (Gen. 1:2), restrainer of sin (Gen. 6:3), Old Testament anointing (I Sam. 16:13-14), to Christ (Luke 1:35, 4:14, 18; Acts 10:38; Rom. 8:11), scripture inspiration (II Pet. 1:20-21). He is active in salvational work by convicting (John 16:8-11), regeneration (Titus 3:5), baptizing (I Cor. 12:12), indwelling (I Cor. 6:18-19), sealing (Eph. 1:13-14). That He is manifested in the believers life by teaching (I Cor. 2:12, 14), guiding (Rom. 8:14), fruit production (Gal. 5:22-23), intercession (Rom. 8:26-27), filling (Eph. 5:18-20), ethics (Rom. 7:5-6), empowering (Acts 4:31). I believe that He works in the Church as an entity such as beginning (Acts 2), unity (Eph. 4:3), worship (Eph. 5:19), empowering (Acts 1:8), guiding (Acts 15:28), indwelling (Eph. 2:22).

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the giver of gifts and abilities to minister for the Church and to glorify God. It is my opinion that while today God equips the believer with abilities for service which are often looked on as spiritual gifts they cannot be equated with those of the early Church which were used for the purpose of its formation. Therefore, I would lean toward the view that many have ceased (Eph. 2:19-20, 4:12-13), but would caution those that may believe in some to operate under the total guidelines of scripture if practiced with the guideline of I Cor. 14:40 being followed. We have the revealed Word of God in its entirety today as our standard.

## Anthropology-Hamartiology Statement

I believe in the account of the creation of man as found in Genesis chapters one and two. I believe that Adam and Eve are the original and first human beings and that our direct roots lie in them. I believe that humans were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and possess a similarity to some of the various attributes of God that separate us from the rest of creation such as intelligence, personhood, reasoning skills, morality, social-relational qualities and the ability to exercise dominion over the balance of creation. I believe that humanity is made of distinctly male and female species with man being formed by God from the dust and woman being formed from the man (Gen. 1:22-23). I believe that from the spiritual perspective that man and woman are equal in their total depravity and need for redemption in God's eyes (Rom. 3:23). In a social sense and role sense man and woman are designed by God to fulfill different functions with the man being responsible to God and the woman being responsible to her husband in the chain of command. She is not to overrule the authority assigned to the man in the home or the church (I Tim. 2). The husband or man is to assume the position of Christ and His love for the church in loving and caring for His wife (Eph. 5:22-33).

I believe that Adam and Eve were in a state of unconfirmed righteousness before the fall (Gen. 1:31). I believe that sin did not exist prior to the work in fallen angels hearts and that Adam and Eve chose to sin at Satan's deceptive bidding (Rom. 5:12-19). Due to the fall of man we are the recipients of the following: pain in childbirth (Gen. 3:16), the curse (Gen. 3:18-19), broken equality - husband rule over wife (Gen. 3:16), physical and spiritual death (Gen. 3:19), judgment on Satan and the genetic transmission of sin to the race (Rom. 5:12).

Sin is defined as "anything against the character of God."

I believe in the total depravity of man as defined by this statement: "Not every human being is as bad as he could be but every part of our being is affected by sin and all of our being is affected by sin." Total depravity affects the following: the mind (II Cor. 4:4), desires and will (Rom. 1:28), motives and goals (Eph. 4:18), a seared conscience (I Tim. 4:22), inability to please God or merit grace (Rom. 7:18).

I am a trichotomist in my view of the nature of humanity based on I Thess. 5:23 and Heb. 4:12. This is meant as body, soul and spirit. I am "traducian" in my view of the human soul which is to say that we receive our souls at conception from the product of the parental union.

I believe in the human act of personal sin with its process as found in James 1:13-15. I believe there are sins of commission and sins of omission being defined as sins we do that we should not and sins of not doing things we know we should but don't (James 4:17), also sins of act and attitude such as stealing and pride (Gal. 5:19-21), weakness and ignorance and against nature i.e. homosexuality. I believe that the sin unto death may be that of a saved person backsliding that God calls them home (I John 5:16). I believe that the unpardonable sin is the hard-hearted rejection of God's call (Mark 3:29). I believe that there are three sources of sin: the world, the flesh, and the Devil (I John 2:15-17).

I believe that the only solution to personal sin is found in the forgiveness of that sin in the person and work of God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ's work on the cross of Calvary. This act is operational as we confess our condition initially whereby we are forgiven for all past present and future sin. Daily sin, while covered eternally, still requires confession to restore our relationship and remove our guilt in the relationship with God. We need also to restore and ask

Forgiveness to parties wronged in our sin (1 John 1:9). Results of our sin are: fellowship with God and man damaged, discipline of God, church discipline, lack of growth, and loss of future rewards.

## Bibliology Statement

I believe that The Holy Bible, consisting of thirty-nine Old Testament books as determined by early Protestants and based on the reconfiguration of The Jewish Scriptures from twenty-four to thirty-nine books, as well as the New Testament containing twenty-seven books, as set at the Council of Carthage in 396 A.D., to be the revealed Word of God in their original manuscript form. While there are no original manuscripts, I believe that the vast number of copies that exist, that are the basis of our accepted Bible, are free of error in all areas that affect the spiritual walk of the believer, and are in broad agreement with the exception of scribal error at various places that result in minor disagreement within the copies. I believe the books of the Bible to have stood the tests of canonicity that include inspired apostolic authorship, early widespread acceptance, doctrines in agreement with early Church, genuineness and credibility.

I believe the Bible to be the inspired (verbal-plenary) Word of God. This is the direction of human authors by God in the direction, composing and recording, without error, His message to humanity in the words found in the original writings (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:20-21; Matt. 5:18; Ex. 20:1).

I believe that the Bible is only understood through the process of illumination, which is the work of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:12-15; I John 2:20, 27).

I believe in the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible. The Word of God is free from all error and cannot contradict itself or cause deception (John 17:17, 10:35).

I believe the Bible must be interpreted by the following methods: literal, in eyes of audience written to, in contest of other passages (II Pet. 1:20), from a historical perspective, grammatical/original language and cultural perspective.

I believe the Bible has been transmitted to mankind by various tools such as stone, papyrus, parchment, and paper. There are many languages that help convey the Word around the world today. The originals would be Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic with early translations in Latin, Coptic and Syriac. No Writings are exactly alike. These variations are minor and include dative - singular issues, sight and sound copy errors. Textual criticism yields small differences between original language to English of today. Only texts from the translation from originals are acceptable for scholarly work and teaching. I prefer later revisions of the King James translation or the NASB. I prefer the KJV for public use as it has set the standard for nearly four hundred years. I would accept other translations for leisure reading or criticism only.

I believe the Bible to be the standard for faith and practice on the part of the believer and the local Church.

## Theology Statement

I believe that there is one and only one living and true God (Deut. 6:4; Is. 44:6, 45:5; John 10:30; Gal. 3:20; I Cor. 8:4). God is pure spirit (John 4:24). God is manifested in three separate persons in one essence known as the Trinity. These manifestations are seen in the persons of the Father, the Son (Christ), and the Holy Spirit. These are the three in one (Gen. 2; Ps. 2; Is. 48:16, 61:1; I Pet. 1:2; Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 12:4-6; I John 4:13-14; John 14:26, 15:26).

I believe that God is defined in His personhood and work with several names in scripture.

- A. Elohim - strong one, God - Gen. 1:26
- B. Yahweh, Jehovah, Lord - Gen. 9:26, 12:8; Ex. 3:14, also covenant keeping God (Lev. 24:16), Yahweh Sabaoth (Lord of hosts I Sam. 1:3), Yahweh Shalom (Lord of Peace Judges 6:24), Yahweh Roi (the Lord my Shepherd Ps. 23:1)
- C. Adonai - master - Dan. 9
- D. El - God (Shaddai - almighty - Gen 17:1), (Elyon - most high - Gen. 14:22), (Olam - strong - Gen. 1:26)
- E. Theos - God, deity - John 1:1
- F. Kurios - Christ - Lord - master used throughout N.T.
- G. Despotes - master and ownership (Acts 4:24) used rarely

I believe God is revealed in His Divine Attributes as follows:

- A. Self existence - eternal self-existence - Ex. 3:14
- B. Eternality - infinity in relation to time - Ps. 90:2
- C. Immutable - unchanging - Malachi 3:6
- D. Incomprehensible - greatness unsearchable - Ps. 145:3
- E. Omnipresent - everywhere present - Ps. 139:7
- F. Omniscient - all knowing - Ps. 147:5
- G. Omnipotent - all powerful - Matt. 19:26
- H. Sovereign - Dan. 4:35
- I. Holiness - pure - I Pet. 1:16
- J. Righteous and Just - in all things - Ps. 145:17
- K. Goodness - Ps. 119:68
- L. Love - I John 4:16
- M. Wrath - Rom. 1:18
- N. Jealous - Ex. 34:14
- O. Mercy - Ps. 103:8
- P. Grace - unmerited favor - I Pet. 5:10
- Q. Long Suffering - patient - Rom. 15:5
- R. Truthful - John 17:3
- S. Faithfulness - true to His Word - Lam. 3:22-23

I believe in the decree of God defined as, "His eternal plan whereby He works all things after the counsel of His will" (Job 28:25-27).

I believe in God's preservation in that He continuously maintains in existence all things which He has made (Heb. 1:3).

I believe in the providence of God in that He directs all things according to His purpose (Dan. 4:35).

I believe in traditional dispensational theology which is a stewardship whereby God regulates the way human beings relate to Him (Blaising) (Eph. 1:10). I believe that there are seven distinct dispensations: innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace and kingdom.

I believe that the Father (God) has a relationship to: the Son - His eternal generation (John 3:16), Creation (Deut. 32:6), Israel - their father (Jer. 31:9), Believers - adoption and new birth (Gal. 3:26).

I believe God the Father fills the following roles: Provider (James 1:17), Disciplinarian (Heb. 12:4-8), the One to address in prayer (Matt. 6), the One we should imitate (Matt. 5:48).

