

What We Believe

(A Concise Summary)

Gloriavale Christian Community

CONTENTS

A	SALVATION	Page 1
B	THE CHRISTIAN LIFE	Page 6
C	THE CHURCH	Page 10
D	THE FAMILY	Page 30

WHAT WE BELIEVE – A SUMMARY

A. SALVATION

1. The Bible (KJV) is the infallible, written word of God.
2. All Christians must sustain and renew their faith by studying the Bible.
3. The God of the Bible is the one true God, who has existed throughout eternity as Father, Word and Holy Spirit.
4. About 6000 years ago God created the heavens and the earth in six 24-hour days. On the Sixth Day he created Adam, the first man, in his own image, from the dust of the earth. God made Eve, the first woman, from Adam's rib, and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply.
5. In the beginning there was no sin, and everything was very good. When Adam and Eve ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil, they disobeyed God and sin entered into the world. That day they died spiritually, and were put out of the Garden of Eden. Immediately their bodies started to grow old and die as they were cut off from the tree of life. The whole creation became cursed, the ground brought forth weeds, and the woman was put in subjection to her husband.
6. Adam and Eve became the father and mother of all mankind, and from them we all inherited a sinful nature, being naturally disobedient, rebellious, proud, self-willed and unacceptable to God.
7. About 1650 years after creation, and about 2350 years before Christ, because the wickedness of man was great, God destroyed the old world with a flood, except for eight people and the animals aboard the Noah's Ark.

8. God judged mankind again by confusing their languages at the Tower of Babel. This divided mankind into separate nations and languages. This city, Babylon, was the source of all the false religion and wars of this world.
9. About 2000 years before Christ, God called Abraham to become the father of his chosen people, Israel.
10. Four hundred and thirty years later they were delivered by God with mighty signs and wonders from Egypt. At Mt. Sinai God gave them The Law at the hand of Moses, and established the Old Testament covenant with them.
11. The old covenant (Old Testament) was given only to the nation of Israel, to give them knowledge of their sin, and to prepare them for Christ, the Messiah. It provided a temporary covering for their sin until the perfect sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. The new covenant (New Testament) however, was written for the Christian church, and is the final authority for any belief or practice in the Christian life. The Old Testament is of value as useful background information, but it is not the covenant upon which the Christian life is based. Practices based solely in the Old Testament, such as divorce and remarriage, going to war, and the union of Church and State, have no part in the Christian life.
12. The wages of sin is death, both physical and spiritual. Sin separates mankind from God, brings us all under the wrath of God, and makes us worthy of eternal damnation.
13. God, in his mercy, has shown his love toward us by giving His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
14. Jesus Christ is the Word of God made flesh. As the Word, he created the Universe, and was truly God. As Jesus of Nazareth, with a human body, conceived at a point in time and born as the son of Mary, he was tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin. He performed many great miracles and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. He was crucified, died for the sins of the world, was buried, and rose from the dead three days later, by the power of God, triumphing over Satan, sin and death. He showed himself

alive after his resurrection to more than 500 brethren at once, then was taken up into heaven, where he makes intercession for us at the right hand of God.

15. Christ will come again soon, to take the true believers to be with Him in heaven. Then we shall receive new, incorruptible bodies, which can never die.
16. Then the world will see the reign of the Anti-Christ on earth for 3½ years, and will experience great and terrible judgments from God. The False Prophet will work great miracles to deceive the world into thinking that the Anti-Christ is God.
17. At the end of this Great Tribulation period, Christ will return with his saints in great power and glory, to destroy the kingdoms of this world in a great battle, and to set up his own kingdom on Earth.
18. Then Christ and his saints will rule over the earth in peace and righteousness for a thousand years. During this time Satan will be bound, and unable to deceive mankind. At the end of this time Satan will be released to deceive the nations to rebel against God, in a final war, in which the wicked will all be destroyed by God.
19. Then all the dead who are not in Christ will be raised and will be judged by God. They will be cast into the lake of fire, together with the Anti-Christ, the False Prophet, the Devil and all his angels, to burn in eternal torment.
20. The present heavens and earth will be completely destroyed by fire, and God will create a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth only righteousness. There God shall dwell forever in perfect joy with all His children, those who have been saved from sin by faith in the Son of God.
21. Only through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ can any person be saved from their sin.
22. True belief in Christ is not mere head knowledge, or mental assent, but involves trust and obedience to His commands.
23. Becoming a Christian (follower of Christ) involves the following steps (not necessarily in this order):-
 - a) Confess your sin (Admit you are totally unacceptable to God).

- b) Repent of your sin. (Stop rebelling and turn away from all your wrong).
 - c) Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (that he is the only begotten Son of God, that He died for your sins, and that He rose from the dead).
 - d) Believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God.
 - e) Surrender your will to God (Trust him completely and seek to do His will in every part of your life).
 - f) Forsake all for Christ (Put him before your family, your friends, your possessions, your independence, your self-will and everything else that means a lot to you, even your own life).
 - g) Confess the Lord Jesus before men (let people know you belong to Him).
 - h) Be immersed in water as a believer (to bury the old man of sin and to rise in the resurrected power of Christ to walk free from sin.)
 - i) Follow Christ by obeying the new Testament in everything.
24. Two important signs that a person has become a true Christian are that he obeys the commandments of Christ, and that he truly loves other Christians.
25. The love of God in a Christian is not just a feeling, but shows itself by acting according to the commandments and example of Christ.
26. Those who choose to follow Christ must do so of their own free will, having believed in what he has done for them, and accepted the grace of God in their lives.
27. God knows beforehand which people will choose to avail themselves of His grace, and He works in their lives to influence their decisions.
28. After a person becomes a true Christian he may choose to turn back and lose his salvation. There is no 'once-saved always saved'. For this reason we must each be diligent to keep our hearts in the love of God each day.

29. The grace of God that brings salvation is available in equal measure to males and females. Both can know God and go to heaven, where there is neither male nor female.
30. In this life however, God has ordained different roles for men and women in the family and in the church: the man to lead and protect, and the women to support and nurture.

B. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

1. Freedom from Sin

(a) The normal Christian life for a person who has been truly born of God is that he or she walks each day without sin.

(b) This will not take place automatically but as he believes the promises of God, and lays hold of the spiritual weapons that God has made available to the Christian. If a Christian falls into wilful and knowing sin, he will lose his relationship with God. If he does not repent of his sin he will lose his eternal salvation and be condemned like any other sinner in the world, only worse, because he has known better.

(c) If the Christian falls into sin and truly repents, his relationship with Christ will be restored, and the blood of Jesus Christ will wash him clean once again. Our bodies are still corrupt, we will forget things; experience hunger, tiredness, and pain; make mistakes, get sick, get old and die. Then we will receive a new, perfect toady which has none of these problems.

2. Perfection

(a) Every person who has been truly converted to Christ has had his/her sins washed away and is now perfectly clean before God. He is also now perfectly willing to do anything that Christ asks of him. This is a perfection of spirit that we can all attain to. We can all be perfectly obedient to the truth that we know.

(b) From the time we are converted until the day of our death, our minds as Christian people are being renewed, as we grow in knowledge and wisdom of God. By ourselves we will never have perfect knowledge, understanding or wisdom until we have received our new bodies. However we can have the mind of Christ on specific issues as we submit ourselves to the word of God and to one another in unity.

3. The Holy Spirit

(a) There is a sense in which every person who has been born again by the spirit of God has the Holy Spirit present in their soul and working in their life.

(b) However, it is God's will that every believer in Christ be filled or overwhelmed (baptized) with the Holy Spirit. This is a separate experience to salvation, and is evidenced by speaking in tongues. After this initial filling the believer has the ability to speak in this new heavenly language whenever he wishes, mainly to pray or to praise God. A believer who is filled with the Spirit of God in this way will have boldness to testify and speak to people about Christ, and a joy even in the midst of sorrow and persecution, that no man can take away.

4. The true Christian will be separate from the ways of this world. He will not love it or lust after its pleasures or goods or follow after its ways, knowing that, both the system and the people of this world are enemies of God with the potential to destroy the soul of the Christian.
5. While maintaining this separation of spirit, it is good for Christians to show kindness and hospitality to the people of this world, to help them when they are in need, to do honest and legitimate business with them, to preach the gospel to them and to show forth Christ in every way they can. Therefore we will not smoke cigarettes, or drink alcohol, or anything else which could set a harmful example to others.
6. As ambassadors for Christ, all Christians should be neat, clean and orderly in appearance. They should dress modestly, the men with short hair and the women with long hair, the men in masculine clothing and the women in feminine clothing.
7. God commands all Christians to come out of Babylon, the false religion of this world, lest they be partakers of her sins and of her plagues. He expects them to join themselves to his

true church, wherever they can find it, and submit themselves to the leaders there.

8. It is acceptable to God for Christians to partake in games that promote good relationships and a healthy lifestyle, as part of their family or church community life and fellowship. Such games should not foster violence, pride, immodesty or a competitive spirit but should be conducted in the spirit of making other people happy.
9. It is also acceptable for Christians to listen to and/or produce singing and/or instrumental music to express godly values. Although such music may be lively, express a wide range of emotions, and be in a wide range of styles and instruments, it must be free from the spirit of the world, and seek to glorify God. The same principles apply to other activities such as filmmaking and drama.
10. It is essential that every Christian live a holy life of separation from sin and the world, and dedication to God. In the same way, good deeds of kindness and love also show evidence of a person's faith in a practical way. Any faith that does not express itself in obedience to the scriptures in such practical ways is not a true, saving faith.
11. The heart of the Christian life is contained in Christ's commandment that we love one another as he has loved us.
 - (a) One of the most important ways in which Christians can love one another is by sharing their goods with one another, holding them in common and disciplining themselves to come to an equality together.
 - (b) If a rich man wishes to become a Christian he must give away his riches to the poor, then take up his cross and follow Christ as a humble brother in the church like anybody else; or he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Covetousness (the desire to gain and to keep the things of this world) is idolatry.
12. God has ordained both the family unit and the church community, and each must have its place and be kept in balance with the other. To avoid fornication and adultery, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should

have her own husband whom she should obey in the Lord. Parents should bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and children should honour and obey their parents in the Lord. Families should care for their own widows and old people. Nevertheless, our commitment to Christ must come before our commitment to our natural family

13. Although a life in common in the Christian community is God's provision for the souls, minds and bodies of His people, living in a Christian community can never, by itself, make a person into a Christian. Each individual must be born again by the spirit of God, as they yield themselves to God and follow Christ of their own free will.
14. Christians should not only concern themselves with those inside their own Church community, but should also share as they are able with those in need outside that community, especially other Christians, such as those living under persecution.
15. By uniting and living together in Christian community, the people of God can love one another better, show a greater light to the world, and fulfil many other commandments and teachings of the New Testament.

16. The Use of Money

(a) A Christian should owe no man anything. This includes bank overdrafts, hire purchase, mortgages, and the like. This does not include normal monthly credit as long as the money for the purchase is laid aside ready for payment as soon as it is asked for.

(b) A Christian may lend money to help someone in need, but must not accept interest or get upset if the loan is not repaid, but should treat it as a gift.

(c) No Christian should lay up treasure on earth, whether money, or possessions, superannuation or insurance policies, to provide for the future, nor claim money from similar schemes such as Accident Compensation, but should pay their

own way, and trust in God. However, this does not prohibit laying aside money to meet a present need where payment must be made in a lump sum, or the storage of food until the next harvest, or third party insurance policies to protect those who have no faith.

(d) If the Christian has money or food left over after his present moderate needs have been met, then this should be given away to meet the present needs of others.

17. True Christians should strive to be in unity with one another in thought; word and action, for variance and strife are works of the flesh.

18. Making Provision

(a) It is the responsibility of every Christian man to work hard to provide for the needs of himself, his family and every other person in the church who cannot provide for themselves, and not to rely on the government or the church to do so for him.

(b) Those Christians who have responsibility as masters to lead others in any work situation should do so diligently, treating their workers kindly and equally, as brothers in the Lord.

(c) Those Christians who work under master should show them respect and do good service, whether or not they are Christians. They should not join any trade union. If a master demands that his workers act in a way that is contrary to their Christian faith then they should leave and find other employment.

(d) No Christian in business should compromise any godly principle in order to make financial gain, or use his position in the business to obtain benefits or privileges above his brethren.

(e) No Christian should say that his income or possessions are his own, but should hold them in common with his brethren and sisters in the church.

(f) Every Christian should pay their taxes in full, unless it is a special tax for a specific ungodly purpose.

19. The State

(a) God has ordained the leaders of the state to keep order in this present world, and he gives them authority to use force to execute wrath upon the evil doer and to protect those who do well. As part of this responsibility they may need to carry out judgments such as fines, imprisonment or even the death penalty, and to go to war if need be. There is nothing wrong with such measures if they are applied justly and fairly.

(b) God has not ordained Christians to be ministers of wrath for we are ambassadors for Christ, the King of Kings, to minister salvation to all men. Therefore it is not God's will for Christians to go to war, or to hold office in the state. Christians should not use force even to defend themselves, but should love their enemies and turn the other cheek.

(c) Every Christian should obey every law of the state that does not require him to go against any principle of the word of God. He should show due respect to the leaders of the country, and pray for them that they may govern well.

(d) No Christian should ever take another Christian to court or prosecute him before the unbelievers. If they cannot sort out their problem before the Church then it would be better to suffer the wrong.

(e) All those who seek to live truly for Christ shall suffer persecutions at some time, whether from individuals, groups or the ungodly government of the day. When this happens the Christians must not fear those who can only kill the body, but fear God who can destroy both body and soul in Hell. They should rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer with Christ, be faithful to Him and look to Him for strength, deliverance and a reward in heaven.

(f) The time will come when Christians will go to war, at the end of the Gospel Age, when Christ returns with the armies of heaven to destroy the armies of this world and to rule over the whole earth.

(g) A Christian should not swear any oaths, but should simply keep his word and always speak the truth.

20. Special Days

(a) The New Testament speaks against observing special days, months, times and years like they did in the Old Testament, since these things are only a shadow of the reality that we have in Christ.

(b) Therefore, like the early Christians, we do not celebrate birthdays. However, we will show love and affection to people, and give them presents, on any day of the year.

(c) We do not keep “Christmas” and “Easter”, since these came from pagan festivals and we are not told to keep these in the New Testament. The New Testament does not even say when Christ was born, so it must not be very important to keep his birthday.

(d) Since the worldly names for the days of the week and the months of the year are largely derived from the names of pagan gods, we do not use those names, but simply follow the scriptures and refer to ‘The First Day’ etc.

(e) The New Testament nowhere commands the Christian to keep the weekly Sabbath Day, and for good reason. Like the Old Testament Passover, the Sabbath Day has a spiritual fulfillment in the New Testament, where the true Christian ceases from trying to earn salvation through his own good works, and instead trusts in the finished work of Christ on the cross to save him. This is the rest of faith, which we enter into every day of the week.

21. Health

(a) Sickness or death may come upon any Christian, not necessarily because of any wrong he has done, but because he has a corruptible body and lives in a corruptible world.

(b) Nevertheless, sickness or death can come upon a Christian (or anyone else) as a direct or indirect result of specific sins they have committed.

(c) If a Christian is sick, he should call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray for him, anointing him with oil and laying hands on him, in the name of the Lord that he might be well. If he has committed sins he should confess them to the person or persons concerned.

(d) God gives a measure of natural health to those who live righteous lives and trust in Him.

(e) God can work through doctors and hospitals, but we must not put our trust in them.

(f) Christians are not vegetarians

(g) No Christian should judge or offend another Christian spiritually just because of food.

(h) Christians should look after their bodies with good diet, exercise and the avoidance of harmful substance.

22. It is important that every Christian be a good witness to the truth and love of Christ, as part of their service to Him. Their lives should be a good example of the way of Christ, and they should take every opportunity to speak to other people and influence them for Christ, by proclaiming the gospel and by testifying of what God has done in their lives.

C. THE CHURCH

1. It is not God's will that the Christian be alone, but that he be submitted to godly leadership in the church that Christ is building in his local area.
2. The true church is built on the word of God, and not the traditions of men.
3. Christ does not build many different churches in the same local area, each with different beliefs and practices, and competing with one another for members. The true church in a local area will not be difficult to the true Christian to recognize.
4. The true church of Jesus Christ (the ekklesia or 'called-out ones') is separate from the ways of the world. It does not form alliances with the state or any other organization that is not faithful to Christ.
5. The true church is separate from the harlot church Babylon (that world-wide state-church organization known as the Roman Catholic Church) and all her harlot daughters, such as the Protestant state churches who came out of her but kept many of her ungodly ways and do not follow many of the beliefs and practices of the New Testament.
6. The members of the true church discipline themselves to come to unity in all things, based on the word of God. They seek to exclude all pride, personal opinions, and separate traditions and customs in order to do God's will in every area of their lives.
7. The true church preaches the gospel boldly to the world, and will receive persecution of one sort or another, as a result, but will not compromise the truth in order to gain any earthly advantage.
8. The members of the true church truly love one another, and are willing to die for one another. They are also willing to live for one another, by caring for each other and providing for one another's needs. There will be no rich and poor among them, but each will share what he has with the others, that there be an equality. The best way for this to occur is for

them to live together as closely as they can in Christian community, holding all their goods in common, and exhorting one another daily, thus providing for both spiritual and natural needs. In this way also they will show a greater light to the world, like a city set on a hill.

9. When the church of Christ in a local area meets together under the authority of the leaders that God has appointed, in order to seek his guidance on a particular matter that has not already been made clear in the Scriptures, and they are willing to submit themselves one to another and to do God's will, whatever it be, then they can have confidence that God will lead them into the truth together as they seek Him.
 - (b) The casting of lots was an Old Testament practice and was discontinued by the New Testament church once the Holy Ghost was poured out on the church on the Day of Pentecost.
 - (c) The Holy Spirit will never lead anyone contrary to the written word of God in the New Testament.

10. Judgment in the Church

(a) The true church of Jesus Christ keeps itself clean from all sin. Where sin arises it is dealt with. The person concerned is spoken to individually, then by two or three, and then (if necessary) by the whole church. If he refuses to listen to the church, then he will be put out of the church, not permitted to break bread with them, and not be accepted as a Christian until he repents. If he truly repents he must be forgiven and received back into fellowship.

(b) If a Christian is overtaken in a fault he should be led out of his error in the spirit of meekness. If he is stubborn he should be rebuked, and judged by the church if he does not repent. Those who sin before all should be rebuked before all, that others may fear.

(c) If one Christian offends another, the one that is offended should either show forbearance towards the fault, or go alone to the other and tell him his fault privately, and not criticize him to someone else. If he is received, he has gained his

brother. If not, then he should take two or three others with him and go back to the brother. If the alleged offender does not accept the judgement of this small group the matter should be judged by the church. If the one in the wrong does not accept the judgement of the church he should be put out of the church. If he wants to get back to a place of fellowship with God he must return and submit himself to the church where he was put out, for God leads the church and backs its judgements. No other church has the right to receive such an one into fellowship until they have made right in this way.

(d) All judgement in the church must be righteous judgement. That is, it must be fair, according to the truth, not hypercritical, and must not accept or excuse sin. If a church or an individual accepts and excuses sin, then they become guilty of that sin.

(e) A heretic should be rebuked and told where he is teaching wrongly, and if he stubbornly refuses to repent after two or three warnings, he should be rejected. No Christian should eat with him or receive him into their home.

(f) The church does not hand sinners over to the secular authorities for judgement or carry out such punishments itself. The greatest punishment the church can inflict on an unrepentant person is to put them out of the church and have nothing to do with them. By doing so they are handing them over to the devil to punish them and to God to bring them to repentance if at all possible. God will not force anyone to repent or believe against their own will.

(g) There are some transgressions, such as laziness, where it may be appropriate for the church to deal with the person by putting them aside on their own for a time.

(h) There are other sins which are not unto death, such as sins of ignorance, or lack of understanding, and for which the best remedy may simply be to show forbearance and pray for that person that they might be forgiven.

11. The present tendency of many so-called "churches" to accept anyone who claims to be a Christian, regardless of the life they lead, and to excuse all manner of sin in the name of

‘love’ or ‘the leading of the spirit’, is a grievous error that is contrary to the word of God and to the spirit of God. By accepting and justifying sin amongst themselves, such groups lose all claim to belong to the true church of Jesus Christ.

12. Christ promised that He would build His church, and that the gates of Hell would not prevail against it. Since the time of Christ there has been an unbroken succession of true churches in different parts of the world that have been faithful to the word of God and have fearlessly witnessed for Christ in truth and purity of life. They have been persecuted by the world and by the false church, have been called many names, have been falsely accused for many false doctrines and evil practices, and have had their writings and their records destroyed. Some have lost their first love and fallen away, only to be replaced by another. Christ has kept His promise – the true church never fell into the Dark Ages, and is still active today throughout the world.

13. Leadership

(a) Leaders in the true church are men called to that place by God, and will be held accountable to God for the souls of all those who have been put in their care. Therefore they should be obeyed and respected as the messengers and servants of God.

(b) It is the responsibility of the people to judge in their hearts whether they are in the true church that Christ is building, by discerning whether the fruit of the leaders’ teaching is according to the word of God in the New Testament. If this is so then God expects them to submit themselves to and follow those leaders, regardless of personal opinions or difficulties in their own flesh.

(c) Such leaders must not be proud or self-willed, but must themselves be subject to the word of God.

(d) No person is fit to become a leader of God’s people who has not learnt how to submit themselves to others. (e) Each leader must continually seek to be a good example to the

people in his personal and a public life. He and his family should not live at a higher standard of living than the rest of the people, or take special titles, but should serve the people. They should be the hardest workers, carry the heaviest burdens, do the most unpleasant tasks, be the first to go without in time of need, and the first to suffer affliction and death in time of persecution.

14. The Place of the Women in the Church

(a) Women are not called to any place of leadership over men in the church, but are to submit themselves. (b) They may pray or prophesy, sing, give testimony or read scriptures in the church with their head covered, but not question or correct the men. (Similarly the men should pray and prophesy with their head uncovered.)

(c) The older women should teach the younger women and set them a good example in all things.

(d) Although women are not called to a place of leadership in the church they have equal rights to salvation, and equal rights to be loved and respected.

15. All Christians should submit themselves to one another, and esteem one other more highly than themselves, and not seek to dominate one another or to have their own way. In the affairs of this life, they should be able to submit themselves to the judgment of even the least esteemed member of the local church. The true church is led by godly men (not women) whom God has chosen, equipped and called for this important task. Leaders in the true church are called by God, and the calling is recognized by the people of God. The church is not a democracy.

16. Meetings

(a) Christians should not be independent but should meet together regularly to exhort and to strengthen one another in the faith.

(b) The meetings of the church should not be based on dead ritual and ceremony, but should be led by the spirit of God.

(c) The spirit of God never acts contrary to the written word of God, or leads any person to disobey what God has revealed in the scriptures.

(d) The meetings of the church are to be under the oversight and control of the Leader(s) that God has appointed.

(f) While any believer may prophesy in the meetings, the other brethren are expected to judge what is said, whether it be of God or no. also, other brethren should be free to add to what is said. All spiritual gifts must be exercised in humility.

(g) It is good thing for Christians to wash one another's feet and do other lowly jobs as part of their service for each other. However this need not be a regular religious observance as part of a meeting.

17. We do not accept any denominational labels for ourselves, but New Testament names only, such as "Christians" and "the Church".

18. The commandment to go into all the world was given not to individuals, but to the apostles of Christ as a group. The church will send people to other places to preach the gospel as the spirit of God leads. As people respond to the message they will be grafted into local churches, either the home church or another local church established by those who were sent out. No Christian should leave his local church unless he is sent with the blessing of the church. On his return he should report to the leaders about what has happened.

19. We accept only the Authorised (King James) Version of the English Bible, because it was translated from better texts, by better scholars, with a better faith, and a better method. The modern translations are corrupted.

God equips the true church of Christ with spiritual gifts, so that each believer has something to contribute to the meetings, and to the life of the church. These might include supernatural knowledge, diversities of tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, healing, etc. The meetings will not just be a 'one-man-band' but will be open to the leading of the spirit of God.

20. The church of Christ meets together regularly to hear the word of God, to pray, to have fellowship, to worship and praise God, and to remember the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus by sharing in the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine (grape-juice). In the New Testament it is recorded that the church i.e. at TROAS came together on the first day of the week (the Lord's Day) to break bread, and it has been the habit of true Christian churches throughout the world over the centuries to meet together on that same day for the same purpose.
21. The keeping of the Sabbath is part of the law of Moses in the Old Testament, and has been superceded by the true Sabbath, or rest of faith experienced by the Christian who has ceased from his own sinful works and is trusting in the merits of Christ to save them from his sin.

D. THE FAMILY

1. A marriage takes place when a man and a woman freely take one another publicly as man and wife, and consummate that commitment by joining together as one flesh in sexual intercourse. The church does not marry them, nor does the state, nor any other person, but they marry one another, and God accepts them as married, whether or not they are Christians, and whether or not they have a marriage license.
2. Once a man and a woman are married in this way they are married for life, and only death can break that bond. Divorce and remarriage is adultery and is forbidden by Christ and His apostles, whether between Christians or non-Christians.
3. The words of Christ about 'saving for the cause of fornication' refer to the type of situation allowed for in the Law of Moses, where a man who is legally betrothed to a woman finds out, before they come together sexually, that she is no longer a virgin. If he then decides that he has been deceived and he no longer wants to take her as his wife, he can divorce her before he consummates the marriage. However, if they have accepted one another as they are and consummate their marriage, they are then truly married, and any such infidelity would be adultery, and not fornication.
4. If a Christian finds that the situation with their husband or wife is so intolerable that they cannot live together, then they must either live as a chaste single person or be reconciled to their spouse. The same applies to people who are already separated or divorced and then they come to Christ. They should seek to win their spouse to Christ by their loving attitude [if possible], but if they must leave and live a single life until they die or their spouse dies, they may do so. No Christian should ever knowingly marry a non-Christian.
5. Christian wives are commanded to submit themselves unto their own Christian husbands, as unto the Lord, and to obey them in all things, willingly giving to them the leadership of the whole family. In this they should show a meek and a quiet spirit that comes from trusting in God.

6. The authority of the husband in spiritual matters is dependent on his own submission to Christ and the Church. He should love his wife and lead her and the children in the way of Christ.
7. There is nothing wrong or shameful or impure about sexual love within marriage but only in its abuse as in fornication, adultery or homosexuality. Husbands and wives should always seek to satisfy each other's sexual desire, both out of love and consideration to each other, and in order to avoid temptation.
8. God made men and women to marry once they reach sexual maturity, and not to burn with lust or fornicate until they reach some arbitrary age. Therefore the church community and the family should seek to bring their young people to that stage of spiritual, mental, emotional and social maturity in life where they are capable of successfully marrying and bringing up children as soon as they find that they need to do so.
9. The choice of a marriage partner should not be made in Hollywood fashion by blindly following fleshly feelings, but should be made after seeking the will of God, and after seeking and following the counsel of parents and church leaders. True love is based on commitment and obedience to God; it is a principle, not a feeling. Marriages based on principles are more lasting and satisfying, even between unbelievers. They do not require long courtships, but they do need trust in God.
10. During their courtship, Christian couples should avoid all amorous physical contact, knowing that one thing leads to another. They should meet together only with the consent of their parents, within plain view of responsible Christian adults, and should be led by their parents and church leaders to a full understanding of all they need to know in order to enter confidently into marriage.
11. Christian married couples should not use any form of birth control, but should trust God to give them all the children he wants them to have, knowing that children are a blessing from the Lord.

12. Christian women are forbidden to wear gold, pearls, fancy hairstyles and costly clothing, but are exhorted to show that inner beauty that comes from the heart. The wearing of wedding rings and engagement rings is a pagan custom that has no place in the Christian life.
13. The New Testament promises that if Christian wives continue in faith, charity and holiness with sobriety, God will bring them through childbirth without much of the suffering and sorrow experienced by unbelievers. Normal childbirth is not a sickness requiring hospitalisation, but should be a wonderful and natural occurrence in a Christian home.
14. Christian children should honour and obey their Christian parents. This includes looking after them when they are old.
15. Christian parents should bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and should not withhold chastening where it is needed. Their children should be educated in a Christian environment, where they can be taught the spiritual and practical principles that they will need in their Christian life, and not in a worldly school. In such an environment they will learn to understand and practice both judgement and mercy.
16. Children born to Christian parents will not automatically become Christians. Like all other children they are born with the sinful nature of Adam, and must learn to turn away from sin of their own free will, and to follow Christ. When they believe and do this themselves they can be baptized, but not before. Until they come to an age of understanding they are covered by the faith of their Christian parent(s).
17. The children of ungodly parents have no covering for their sin, and will naturally tend to follow their ungodly parents and their own ungodly nature into sin and unbelief. If they die in this sinful state, whatever their age, they will be rejected by God and will be cast into Hell along with all others who do not have their sins washed away by faith in Christ.
18. All Christians should live within families. The church should ensure that any Christians without a family of their own are

taken into a Christian family where they can belong. Christians in need should be provided for by God through the church, and should not be dependent for their livelihood on handouts from the governments of this world.

19. It is a good thing for Christian parents to give godly names to their children, such as Bible names or names with a clear meaning, rather than naming them after worldly people or choosing names for their pretty sound. Similarly, it is a godly thing for people who are converted to Christ from the world, to forsake their worldly name and choose a Christian name as above.

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