

What we believe and why we believe it.

A summary of the background to the teaching and practice of Lennox Evangelical Church, Dumbarton.

Risk Street Dumbarton

Lennox Evangelical Church

What we believe.

We have tried to base our church on the teaching of the Word of God. While Christians disagree about a whole range of issues we want to be as accurate as possible in our understanding and interpretation of the Bible and we believe that the following points accurately reflect our understanding of God's Word with respect to providing a basis for church life. Clearly there are some elements of teaching which deal with practical Christian living and we have also tried to frame these on a biblical basis.

This summary lays out the basis of our faith and quotes the biblical authority for each point. The relevant passage from the bible is also shown in each of three translations. These are shown side by side and are taken from the New International Version (NIV), the New King James Version (NKJV) which is held to be the most accurate translation with respect to applying the meaning of the original languages to today's English and the New Living Translation (NLT).

The Bible is the word of God, written by human authors prompted and inspired by the Spirit of God. We believe that it is the only authoritative and complete account of God's message to mankind.

2 Tim 3:15b-17 The value and authority of the bible.

... the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. NIV.

the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. NKJV.

the holy Scriptures ... have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷It is God's way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do. NLT.

2 Peter 1:19-21 Inspired by God – written down by men.

¹⁹And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. NIV.

¹⁹And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. NKJV.

¹⁹Because of that, we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets. Pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a light shining in a dark place—until the day Christ appears and his brilliant light shines in your hearts. ²⁰Above all, you must understand that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophets themselves ²¹or because they wanted to prophesy. It was the Holy Spirit who moved the prophets to speak from God. NLT.

2 Peter 3:15b-16. Care and accuracy are required in reading and interpretation!

Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. NIV.

Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, ¹⁶as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. NKJV.

Paul wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him—¹⁶speaking of these things in all of his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters around to mean something quite different from what he meant, just as they do the other parts of Scripture—and the result is disaster for them. NLT.

The Bible teaches that God is one God but three persons – i.e. the trinity. The word “trinity” does not appear in the bible but the teaching that there is unity and equality in the Godhead - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit is clear.

Genesis 1:1-26 God (plural) states the role of the trinity in creation.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, NIV

²⁶Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; NKJV

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make people in our image, to be like ourselves. NLT

John 1:1-2 The Lord Jesus (the Word) is God.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. NIV

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. NKJV

¹In the beginning the Word already existed. He was with God, and he was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. NLT

Philippians 2:6 That Christ Jesus is God is not in doubt,

Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, NIV

Christ Jesus, ⁶who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, NKJV

⁶Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. ⁷He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. NLT.

Colossians 2:9 – not in any doubt at all!

⁹For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, NIV.

⁹For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; NKJV.

⁹For in Christ the fullness of God lives in a human body, NLT.

Matthew 28:19 Discipleship and baptism are given God’s full authority.

¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, NIV

¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, NKJV

¹⁹Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. NLT

2 Corinthians 13:14 God's interaction with men involves each character in the Godhead.

¹⁴May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. NIV

¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. NKJV

¹³May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. NLT

The Lord Jesus Christ: both God and man and a unique representation of each. He was born to a virgin, died a sacrificial death and rose bodily from the dead.

John 1:1-2,14 God in human form – a truth so many have difficulty in accepting.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. NIV.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. NKJV.

¹In the beginning the Word already existed. He was with God, and he was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ¹⁴So the Word became human and lived here on earth among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father. NLT.

Hebrews 2:17 The Lord Jesus died a sacrificial death to save those who would follow him.

¹⁷For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for² the sins of the people. NIV

¹⁷Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. NKJV

¹⁷Therefore, it was necessary for Jesus to be in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. He then could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. NLT

Matthew 1:20-25 The birth of Christ was rather special.

²⁰But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,² because he will save his people from their sins."

²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"²—which means, "God with us."

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. NIV.

²⁰But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

²²So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

²⁴Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, ²⁵and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS. NKJV.

²⁰As he considered this, he fell asleep, and an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to go ahead with your marriage to Mary. For the child within her has been conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus,² for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All of this happened to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

²³"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and he will be called Immanuel (meaning, God is with us)."

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord commanded. He brought Mary home to be his wife, ²⁵but she remained a virgin until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus. NLT.

Hebrews 9:26-28 His suffering was unimaginable.

²⁶Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. NIV.

²⁶He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, ²⁸so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. NKJV.

²⁶He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, ²⁸so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. NLT.

Hebrews 10:12 His sacrificial death: When it was done, it was done for all time.

¹²But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. NIV

¹²But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, NKJV

¹²But our High Priest offered himself to God as one sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down at the place of highest honor at God's right hand. NLT.

Matthew 28:5-9 His resurrection. He didn't stay dead.

⁵The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." ⁸So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. NIV.

⁵But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." ⁸So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. ⁹And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. NKJV.

⁵Then the angel spoke to the women. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying. ⁷And now, go quickly and tell his disciples he has been raised from the dead, and he is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there. Remember, I have told you." ⁸The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to find the disciples to give them the angel's message. ⁹And as they went, Jesus met them. "Greetings!" he said. And they ran to him, held his feet, and worshiped him. NLT.

1 Corinthians 15:20 Putting his death and resurrection into context.

²⁰But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. NIV

²⁰But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. NKJV.

²⁰But the fact is that Christ has been raised from the dead. He has become the first of a great harvest of those who will be raised to life again. NLT.

The Lord Jesus Christ then ascended to the right hand of God and currently functions to mediate with God for all his followers.

Luke 24:50-51 They saw him leave – to continue his eternal programme.

⁵⁰When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. NIV.

⁵⁰And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. NKJV.

⁵⁰Then Jesus led them to Bethany, and lifting his hands to heaven, he blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up to heaven. NLT.

Hebrews 1:3 His destination - the right hand of God.

³The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. NIV.

³who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had [?]by Himself purged [?]our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, NKJV

³The Son reflects God's own glory, and everything about him represents God exactly. He sustains the universe by the mighty power of his command. After he died to cleanse us from the stain of sin, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God of heaven. NLT

Hebrews 4:14-16 Jesus currently functions as our great High Priest.

¹⁴Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. NIV

¹⁴Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. NKJV

¹⁴That is why we have a great High Priest who has gone to heaven, Jesus the Son of God. Let us cling to him and never stop trusting him. ¹⁵This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin. ¹⁶So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it. NLT

The Lord Jesus Christ will return initially for true believers and then later with his followers in glory.

John 14:3 The promise of his coming.

³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. NIV.

³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. NKJV

³When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. NLT

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 The nature of his coming.

¹³Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸Therefore encourage each other with these words. NIV

¹³But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. ¹⁵For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Therefore comfort one another with these words. NKJV

¹³And now, brothers and sisters, I want you to know what will happen to the Christians who have died so you will not be full of sorrow like people who have no hope. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus comes, God will bring back with Jesus all the Christians who have died. ¹⁵I can tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not rise to meet him ahead of those who are in their graves. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the call of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, all the Christians who have died will rise from their graves. ¹⁷Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and remain with him forever. ¹⁸So comfort and encourage each other with these words. NLT

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 The purpose of his coming.

⁶God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you. NIV.

⁶since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed. NKJV.

in his justice he will punish those who persecute you. ⁷And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, ⁸in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. ⁹They will be punished with everlasting destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power ¹⁰when he comes to receive glory and praise from his holy people. And you will be among those praising him on that day, for you believed what we testified about him. NLT.

Colossians 3:4 The Christian's role in Christ's future plans.

⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. NIV.

⁴When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. NKJV.

⁴And when Christ, who is your real life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory. NLT.

The problem for mankind is that he has no ability to rescue himself from God's judgement. Because of Adam's sin, utter ruin and condemnation applies to the entire human race.

Romans 3:10-24 Christ took our punishment; (This section quotes extensively from the Old Testament).

¹⁰As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹²All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." ¹³"Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." ¹⁴"Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵"Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ruin and misery mark their ways, ¹⁷and the way of peace they do not know." ¹⁸"There is no fear of God before their eyes." ¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. ²⁰Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. ²¹But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²²This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. NIV.

¹⁰As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹²They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." ¹³"Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips"; ¹⁴"Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵"Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶Destruction and misery are in their ways; ¹⁷And the way of peace they have not known." ¹⁸"There is no fear of God before their eyes." ¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. ²¹But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²²even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, NKJV.

¹⁰As the Scriptures say, "No one is good— not even one. ¹¹No one has real understanding; no one is seeking God. ¹²All have turned away from God; all have gone wrong. No one does good, not even one." ¹³"Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their speech is filled with lies." "The poison of a deadly snake drips from their lips." ¹⁴"Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵"They are quick to commit murder. ¹⁶Wherever they go, destruction and misery follow them. ¹⁷They do not know what true peace is." ¹⁸"They have no fear of God to restrain them." ¹⁹Obviously, the law applies to those to whom it was given, for its purpose is to keep people from having excuses and to bring the entire world into judgment before God. ²⁰For no one can ever be made right in God's sight by doing what his law commands. For the more we know God's law, the clearer it becomes that we aren't obeying it. ²¹But now God has shown us a different way of being right in his sight—not by obeying the law but by the way promised in the Scriptures long ago. ²²We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done. ²³For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. ²⁴Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away our sins. NLT.

1 Corinthians 15:22 God's programme links right back to the origin of life.

²²For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. NIV

²²For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. NKJV

²²Everyone dies because all of us are related to Adam, the first man. But all who are related to Christ, the other man, will be given new life. NLT

Romans 5:12 The human condition affects each and every one.

¹²Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— NIV

¹²Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— NKJV

¹²When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned. NLT

When a person becomes a Christian they become spiritually reborn and made acceptable to God. This is the work of the Holy Spirit.

John 3:5-8 Jesus explains this to Nicodemus.

⁵Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You[?] must be born again.' ⁸The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." NIV

⁵Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." NKJV

⁵Jesus replied, "The truth is, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.[?] ⁶Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives new life from heaven. ⁷So don't be surprised at my statement that you[?] must be born again. ⁸Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit." NLT

2 Thessalonians 2:13 The difficult idea of God's choice and our free will.

¹³But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. NIV

¹³But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, NKJV

¹³As for us, we always thank God for you, dear brothers and sisters loved by the Lord. We are thankful that God chose you to be among the first to experience salvation, a salvation that came through the Spirit who makes you holy and by your belief in the truth. NLT

1 Peter 1:2. Elected?

To God's elect..., ²who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: NIV

²elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: NKJV

²God the Father chose you long ago, and the Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed Jesus Christ and are cleansed by his blood. NLT

It is only by faith in Christ that someone can be born again and therefore be justified before God.

Romans 5:1 Faith is the key.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ NIV

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ NKJV

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. NLT

Romans 10:9-10 The change at conversion is real and should be communicated.

⁹That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. NIV

⁹that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. NKJV

⁹For 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. ¹⁰For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. NLT

John 1:12-13 Becoming part of God's family.

¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—
¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. NIV

¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. NKJV

¹²But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They are reborn! This is not a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan—this rebirth comes from God. NLT

1 John 5:1 Becoming a child of God in a special sense.

¹Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. NIV

¹Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. NKJV

¹Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father loves his children, too. NLT

The bible teaches that believers should observe the Lord's instruction to be baptised by immersion on personal confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:19 The decision to follow Christ is followed by baptism.

¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, NIV

¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, NKJV

¹⁹Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. NLT.

Acts 2:41 It is clearly a matter for those who understand it's significance.

¹Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. NIV

⁴¹Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. NKJV.

⁴¹Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church—about three thousand in all. NLT.

Acts 8:36-38 The New Testament pattern involved total immersion in water.

³⁶As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?"

³⁸And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. NIV

³⁶Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" ³⁷Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." NKJV

³⁶As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptized?" ³⁸He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. NLT

Romans 6:3-4 Paul taught that it was a sign of the inner change in a persons life.

³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. NIV

³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. NKJV

³Or have you forgotten that when we became Christians and were baptized to become one with Christ Jesus, we died with him? ⁴For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. NLT

The bible teaches that the souls of men and women exist in an eternal conscious state.

1 Corinthians 15:51-57 The bible speaks of the "mystery" of future things.

⁵¹Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—⁵²in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."⁵⁵"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. NIV

⁵¹Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."⁵⁵"O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. NKJV

⁵¹But let me tell you a wonderful secret God has revealed to us. Not all of us will die, but we will all be transformed. ⁵²It will happen in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, the Christians who have died will be raised with transformed bodies. And then we who are living will be transformed so that we will never die. ⁵³For our perishable earthly bodies must be transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die. ⁵⁴When this happens—when our perishable earthly bodies have been transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die—then at last the Scriptures will come true: "Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"⁵⁶For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. ⁵⁷How we thank God, who gives us victory over sin and death through Jesus Christ our Lord! NLT

Luke 16:19-31 The resurrection of the dead to eternal life if righteous;

¹⁹“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

²²“The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

²⁵“But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ ²⁷“He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father’s house, ²⁸for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

²⁹“Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ ³⁰“No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

³¹“He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’” NIV

¹⁹“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. ²⁰But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, ²¹desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

²⁴“Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ ²⁵“But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’

²⁷“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, ²⁸for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’

²⁹Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ ³¹But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’” NKJV

¹⁹ Jesus said, “There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed and who lived each day in luxury. ²⁰At his door lay a diseased beggar named Lazarus. ²¹As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man’s table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores. ²²Finally, the beggar died and was carried by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³and his soul went to the place of the dead. There, in torment, he saw Lazarus in the far distance with Abraham. ²⁴“The rich man shouted, ‘Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish in these flames.’ ²⁵“But Abraham said to him, ‘son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish. ²⁶And besides, there is a great chasm separating us. Anyone who wanted to cross over to you from here is stopped at its edge, and no one there can cross over to us.’ ²⁷“Then the rich man said, ‘Please, Father Abraham, send him to my father’s home. ²⁸For I have five brothers, and I want him to warn them about this place of torment so they won’t have to come here when they die.’ ²⁹“But Abraham said, ‘Moses and the prophets have warned them. Your brothers can read their writings anytime they want to.’ ³⁰“The rich man replied, ‘No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will turn from their sins.’ ³¹“But Abraham said, ‘If they won’t listen to Moses and the prophets, they won’t listen even if someone rises from the dead.’” NLT

Matthew 25:45-46 - or to eternal punishment, if unrighteous.

⁴⁵“He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

⁴⁶“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” NIV

⁴⁵Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’

⁴⁶And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” NKJV

⁴⁵And he will answer, ‘I assure you, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.’ ⁴⁶And they will go away into eternal punishment,

but the righteous will go into eternal life.” NLT

Revelation 20:11-15. God is portrayed as being in ultimate control.

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

¹²And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. ¹⁴Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. NIV

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead,

small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. NKJV

¹¹And I saw a great white throne, and I saw the one who was sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. ¹²I

saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to the things written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³The sea gave up the dead in it, and death and the grave gave up the dead in them. They were all judged according to their deeds. ¹⁴And death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire. ¹⁵And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. NLT

Satan? Who is he? What power does he have? What does he do?

1 Peter 5:8, The devil is real and presents an unseen and cunning threat.

⁸Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. NIV

⁸Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. NKJV

⁸Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour. NLT

Revelation 20:2 The prognosis for Satan is however, not favourable.

²He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. NIV

²He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; NKJV

²He seized the dragon—that old serpent, the Devil, Satan—and bound him in chains for a thousand years. NLT

Matthew 4:1-11. The devil was quite incapable of overcoming the Lord Jesus.

¹Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" ⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" ¹¹Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him. NIV

¹Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." ⁴But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" ⁵Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" ⁷Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'" ⁸Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" ¹¹Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him. NKJV

¹Then Jesus was led out into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted there by the Devil. ²For forty days and forty nights he ate nothing and became very hungry. ³Then the Devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, change these stones into loaves of bread." ⁴But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People need more than bread for their life; they must feed on every word of God.'" ⁵Then the Devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, ⁶and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, 'He orders his angels to protect you. And they will hold you with their hands to keep you from striking your foot on a stone.'" ⁷Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'Do not test the Lord your God.'" ⁸Next the Devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him the nations of the world and all their glory. ⁹"I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will only kneel down and worship me." ¹⁰"Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God; serve only him.'" ¹¹Then the Devil went away, and angels came and cared for Jesus. NLT

The church, which is the body of Christ, consists of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 16:16-18 The church of God however will endure and be victorious.

¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. NIV

¹⁶Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. NKJV

¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷Jesus replied, "You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. ¹⁸Now I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. NLT

Ephesians 1:22-23 Christ is the head of the church.

²²And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. NIV

²²And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. NKJV

²²And God has put all things under the authority of Christ, and he gave him this authority for the benefit of the church. ²³And the church is his body; it is filled by Christ, who fills everything everywhere with his presence. NLT

Acts 2:46-47. The functioning first century church had certain practices.

⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. NIV

⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. NKJV

⁴⁶They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—⁴⁷all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved. NLT

1 Corinthians 12:12-31 While every believer is a member of the church, individuals will exhibit different ministries, gifts and responsibilities.

1 Corinthians 14:26-28 (see also on to v 40). How Christians in church should conduct themselves.

²⁶What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. ²⁷If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. ²⁸If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God. NIV

²⁶How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. ²⁷If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. ²⁸But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God. NKJV

²⁶Well, my brothers and sisters, let's summarize what I am saying. When you meet, one will sing, another will teach, another will tell some special revelation God has given, one will speak in an unknown language, while another will interpret what is said. But everything that is done must be useful to all and build them up in the Lord. ²⁷No more than two or three should speak in an unknown language. They must speak one at a time, and someone must be ready to interpret what they are saying. ²⁸But if no one is present who can interpret, they must be silent in your church meeting and speak in tongues to God privately. NLT.

1 Peter 2:5 All Christians have a kind of priestly function.

⁵you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. NIV

⁵you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. NKJV

⁵And now God is building you, as living stones, into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are God's holy priests, who offer the spiritual sacrifices that please him because of Jesus Christ. NLT

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13. The church leadership are not formally elected, but are recognised as those members of the church who take a special interest in the spiritual affairs of the church.

¹²Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. ¹³Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. NIV

¹²And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. NKJV

¹²Dear brothers and sisters, honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and warn you against all that is wrong. ¹³Think highly of them and give them your wholehearted love because of their work. And remember to live peaceably with each other. NLT

Acts 4:2-4. Deacons were appointed by the church.

²They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. ⁴But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand. NIV

²being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. NKJV

²They were very disturbed that Peter and John were claiming, on the authority of Jesus, that there is a resurrection of the dead. ³They arrested them and, since it was already evening, jailed them until morning. ⁴But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so that the number of believers totaled about five thousand men, not counting women and children. NLT

Acts 9:26-27. All applicants for membership shall be accepted upon satisfying the church as to their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and moral fitness. They should be interviewed by the leaders, who can then report each case to the church for acceptance or otherwise.

²⁶When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. ²⁷But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. NIV

²⁶And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. NKJV

²⁶When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the believers, but they were all afraid of him. They thought he was only pretending to be a believer! ²⁷Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus. Barnabas also told them what the Lord had said to Saul and how he boldly preached in the name of Jesus in Damascus. NLT

Discipline

The church may exercise discipline on any member who attempts to teach any doctrine contrary to the teaching of the word of God as applied in the local church or who is guilty of moral inconsistency or causing discord or division.

1 Corinthians 5: 9-13.(see also 5-8).

⁹I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—¹⁰not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. ¹²What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? ¹³God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked man from among you.” NIV

⁹I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. ¹⁰Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. ¹¹But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. ¹²For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? ¹³But those who are outside God judges. NKJV

⁹When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin. ¹⁰But I wasn't talking about unbelievers who indulge in sexual sin, or who are greedy or are swindlers or idol worshipers. You would have to leave this world to avoid people like that. ¹¹What I meant was that you are not to associate with anyone who claims to be a Christian yet indulges in sexual sin, or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or a drunkard, or a swindler. Don't even eat with such people. ¹²It isn't my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your job to judge those inside the church who are sinning in these ways. ¹³God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, “You must remove the evil person from among you.” NLT

Galatians 6:1 All discipline shall be exercised in a spirit of love with a view to the eventual restoration of the member disciplined.

¹Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. NIV

¹Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. NKJV

¹Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. NLT

A worship service for the purpose of remembering the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ in the breaking of bread will be held each Sunday.

Matthew 26:26-29

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." ²⁷Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you." ²⁸This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom." NIV

²⁶And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²⁷Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you." ²⁸For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. ²⁹But 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." NKJV

²⁶As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and asked God's blessing on it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take it and eat it, for this is my body." ²⁷And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, "Each of you drink from it," ²⁸for this is my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out to forgive the sins of many. ²⁹Mark my words—I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom." NLT

1 Corinthians 11:23-29, There is a real responsibility incumbent on all those who wish to remember the Lord Jesus by sharing bread and wine. They are personally responsible to be living a consistent Christian life and as such will be welcomed to participate in the communion service.

²³For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. ²⁷Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. ²⁹For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. NIV

²³For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. ²⁷Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. NKJV

²³For this is what the Lord himself said, and I pass it on to you just as I received it. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took a loaf of bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and you, sealed by the shedding of my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it." ²⁶For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again. ²⁷So if anyone eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily, that person is guilty of sinning against the body and the blood of the Lord. ²⁸That is why you should examine yourself before eating the bread and drinking from the cup. ²⁹For if you eat the bread or drink the cup unworthily, not honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God's judgment upon yourself. NLT

Acts 20:7 The pattern of meeting to break bread on a weekly basis is a New testament one.

⁷On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. NIV

⁷Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. NKJV

⁷On the first day of the week, we gathered to observe the Lord's Supper. Paul was preaching; and since he was leaving the next day, he talked until midnight. NLT

Acts 2:42. Services with the purpose of teaching the Word of God, prayer and preaching the gospel shall be held regularly.

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. NIV

⁴²And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. NKJV

⁴²They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, sharing in the Lord's Supper and in prayer. NLT

Matthew 28:18-20 Mission is a priority.

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." NIV

¹⁸And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen. NKJV

¹⁸Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given complete authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." NLT

Rules and Regulations.

1. The heritable and leasehold property of the church shall be conveyed to the existing trustees and their successors in office. The overseers shall elect the trustees from their own number and from members of the church. In the event of any of the trustees removing from or otherwise ceasing to be members of the church, they shall ipso facto cease to be trustees. The number of the trustees shall be not less than three. When the number is reduced to less than three the overseers shall appoint new trustees.
2.
 - a) The overseers shall appoint from their number a Chairman and Secretary. These appointments shall be reviewed annually by the overseers. The Treasurer will also be appointed from the Leadership and this appointment will be reviewed annually.
 - b) The duty of the chairman shall be to preside at the annual Business Meeting of the church and all meetings convened for the purpose of conducting any business pertaining to the management of the church.
 - c) The overseers shall have the power to require the immediate resignation of any office bearer during his term in office and the surrender forthwith of all books, documents or monies belonging to the church.
3. Overseers shall meet monthly and in addition as required.
4. An annual Business Meeting of the church shall be held at the beginning of December each year. Other meetings of the church shall be held at regular intervals as agreed by the members, or for an ad hoc purpose at the discretion of the overseers.
5. All matters of a spiritual nature requiring to be brought before the church shall first be considered by the overseers.
6. The overseers shall be entrusted to make all necessary arrangements in connection with the supply of speakers to conduct public meetings.
7. The office bearers, overseers, trustees and deacons shall be bound to consider further all recommendations made at a special or general meeting of the church and to report their decisions to the church.
8. Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the church and of meetings of overseers and deacons.
9. The overseers are empowered to forbid entry to or to remove or have removed from the church premises anyone, member or otherwise, whom they consider about to create a disturbance or become a nuisance. Any such matter shall be communicated to the church.