

**ACTSeminars
Positions of the Church**

**North American Ministerial Council
Doctrinal Interpretations and Resolutions**

1974 – Glorieta, NM

- A. Received committee report on the issue of Divorce and Remarriage. Adopted the following doctrinal interpretation:

Be it resolved that Article No. 37 entitled "Marriage and Divorce" be interpreted in the following manner:

1. The Church recognizes that anyone who obtains a divorce for reasons of illicit sex, such as adultery, fornication, incest, homosexuality, etc., on the part of his/her marriage partner may be the innocent party to the divorce. The marriage is dissolved. The innocent party may remarry.
2. An unscriptural divorce involving any member of the Church of God (Seventh Day) may be cause to relieve him/her of all church responsibilities and to disfellowship him/her.
3. The Church appreciates the greatness of God's grace to forgive sins, and she stands willing to receive into her membership those who have been so blessed. The Church agrees to relegate forgiven sins, including those involving divorce and remarriage, to the past. She accepts the true convert as a new creature in Christ and is willing to accord full membership to those who apply.
4. A minister of the Church of God (Seventh Day) is free to officiate at weddings of persons asking him to do so, except he shall refrain from participating when there is known Scriptural prohibition that applies to either marriage partner. He shall also refrain from officiating when he is aware that the couple has been refused by another minister of the Church of God (Seventh Day) unless he has first consulted with the minister who declined.

- B. Discussed the issue of the Kingdom of God. Rejected the following resolution:

Resolved that the Doctrinal Beliefs of the Church of God (Seventh Day) be changed in the following manner:

That doctrinal statements Nos. 25 and 26, "The Kingdom" and "Millennial Reign of Christ," be deleted and replaced with the following:

The Kingdom of God

1. The eternal kingdom of God has always existed.
2. Jesus, since His ascension, is reigning on the spiritual throne of David. The change in the kingdom from fleshly Israel to spiritual Israel means the throne is also spiritual.
3. At Jesus' coming there is one physical resurrection followed by judgment.
4. The final judgment giving eternal life to the believers and destruction to the unbelievers will occur at the second coming of Jesus.

C. Adopted complete revision of Doctrinal Beliefs Booklet (37 points).

1976 – Glorieta, NM

No doctrinal issues were discussed.

1978 – El Paso, TX

- A. Received committee report on Worldliness and Defiling Habits. Reaffirmed doctrinal statements on Worldliness and Defiling Habits.
- B. Discussed the issue of Wine and Communion. Rejected the following motion:

Moved to amend Doctrine 19, "The Lord's Supper," by striking the parenthesized words "(unfermented grape juice)."
- C. Discussed the issue of Tithing. Adopted a new doctrinal statement:

Be it resolved that the North American Regional Ministerial Council recommend that the following concept regarding financial stewardship be incorporated in the Statement of Faith of the International Ministerial Congress, and if adopted, the following statement therefore be substituted for Article 27 of the Doctrinal Beliefs Booklet of the North American Regional Ministerial Council of the Church of God (Seventh Day), Denver, Colorado.

The New Testament, by principle and example, teaches that the work of the Church is to be supported by the financial stewardship of its members. While the tithe laws under the Levitical priesthood are no longer in force, tithing as a biblical principle serves as an appropriate standard of giving. Motivated by love, each member is called upon to give tithe and offering freely and cheerfully.

Genesis 14:18-20; Hebrews 7:1-6 – Abraham gave a tenth to Melchizedek.
Genesis 28:20-22 – Jacob agreed to return the tithe to acknowledge God's care for him.
Luke 11:42 – Tithe to be given in a spirit of love.
I Corinthians 9:7-13; I Timothy 5:17, 18 – Paul speaks of the need to support the ministry.
I Corinthians 9:14 – Paul identifies the means by which the ministry should be supported.
II Corinthians 9:6, 7 – God loves and blesses those who give generously and cheerfully.

1981 – Denver, CO

No doctrinal issues were discussed.

1982 – Boise, ID

Discussed the issue of Clean and Unclean meats (in connection with the unification efforts with the General Council of Meridian, ID). Adopted new doctrinal statement:

Moved and seconded to substitute the following for the proposed amendment to Article #24:

The observance of the distinction between clean and unclean meats with respect to food was God-given for man's benefit.

Genesis 7:1-3 – Noah knew which animals were clean and which were unclean.
Leviticus 11:2-47; Deuteronomy 14:3-20 – Clean and unclean animals were designated.
Acts 10:9-14 – Peter recognized difference between clean and unclean animals.

1984 – St. Joseph, MO

A. Discussed the issue of Clean and Unclean meats (in connection with the unification efforts with the General Council of Meridian, ID). Adopted new doctrinal statement:

Whereas the present wording on the doctrine of the clean and unclean may appear too vague in clearly establishing our church stand on this issue, be it moved that the following be substituted for the present Doctrinal Statement #24.

The distinction between clean and unclean meats with respect to foods is to be observed today as God's will because it was God-given for man's benefit.

Genesis 7:1-3 – Noah knew which animals were clean and which were unclean.
Acts 10:9-14 – Peter recognized difference between clean and unclean animals.
Isaiah 66:15-17

B. Discussed the Date and Frequency of the Lord's Supper. Adopted a resolution calling for a committee to study the issue and to report at the next council.

1986 – Glorieta, NM

A. Discussed three related issues: 1) the Gospel and the Law, 2) the Importance of Doctrine, and 3) the Church's Identity, Nature, and Mission. Adopted the following consensus statement:

Statement of Consensus

I. Grace and Law

We are saved by God's grace through faith in the person and finished work of Jesus Christ. This grace and salvation demands our obedient response, inspires our obedient response and empowers our obedient response. Therefore, because it is God's grace which leads to holy living and obedience rather than holy living and obedience which lead to God's grace, God's grace should receive the greater emphasis, but not without maintaining a proper balance.

II. The Importance of Doctrine

All of our doctrinal beliefs are very important in that they express to the best of our present understanding the truth of the Bible. But not all of our doctrines share the same purpose or emphasis. This we have recognized by re-ordering our doctrinal beliefs statements under the headings "Belief and Salvation (Doctrines that Reveal Salvation)," "Christian Action (Doctrines that Reveal Responsibility)," and "Study and Research (Doctrines that Reveal Learned Truth)."

III. The Mission and Message of Our Church

The Church of God (Seventh Day) exists, first, to proclaim the gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Second, the Church of God (Seventh Day) exists to proclaim a unique understanding of Bible truth.

NOTE: The above resolution passed unanimously.

B. Adopted the following resolution concerning the rearrangement of the Doctrinal Beliefs Booklet:

Whereas the present Doctrinal Beliefs Booklet has the various points of belief listed with no apparent planned order, and

Whereas a new arrangement would provide for a better understanding of the purpose and value of each point of our theology,

Be it moved that the following re-listing of our present points of belief be approved for the printing of a new Doctrinal Beliefs Booklet that will list each point of theology under headings and sections that will reveal their intended purpose and value.

Doctrinal Beliefs Booklet

- Section #1 – BELIEF AND SALVATION
(Doctrines that Reveal Salvation)
1. God, the Father
 2. Jesus, the Son of God

3. The Holy Spirit
4. The Fall of Man
5. The Plan of Salvation
6. Accepting Christ
7. The Bible
8. Baptism

Section #2 – CHRISTIAN ACTION

(Doctrines that Reveal Responsibility)

9. Prayer
10. Prayer for the Sick
11. The Lord's Supper
12. Washing of Feet
13. The Ten Commandments
14. The Sabbath
15. Worldliness
16. Defiling Habits
17. Clean and Unclean
18. Financial Stewardship
19. Carnal Warfare
20. Pagan Days
21. Marriage and Divorce

Section #3 – STUDY AND RESEARCH

(Doctrines that Reveal Learned Truth)

22. Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ
23. Pre-existence of Christ
24. The Second Coming of Christ
25. The Millennial Reign of Christ
26. Satan
27. The Punishment of the Wicked
28. The State of the Dead
29. The Resurrection of the Dead
30. Church Name
31. Church Organization
32. Prophecy and Signs of its Fulfillment
33. The Kingdom
34. The Third Angel's Message
35. The Regathering of Israel
36. The Seven Last Plagues
37. The New Earth

C. Adopted a new doctrinal statement on the subject of the Church:

30. The Church

The church consists of baptized believers who have the testimony of Jesus and follow the will of God in their lives. The church is of divine origin under the Lordship of Christ and exists universally and locally for the preaching of the gospel, for the nurture and fellowship of the believers, and for service to the human race. The most frequent

reference used for the church in the New Testament is "Church of God." Therefore we believe we should be called Church of God.

Colossians 1:18 – Christ is the head of the body, the church.

Acts 20:28 – The church has been purchased with the blood of Christ.

I Corinthians 1:2 – The church of God consists of those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with those everywhere who call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 12:17 – The Devil makes war against the church, those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 16:18 – Jesus speaks of the universal church.

Matthew 18:17 – Jesus speaks of the local church.

- D. Received committee report on the Date and Frequency of the Lord's Supper. Adopted resolution calling for further study and report at next council.

1988 – Tulsa, OK

- A. Received committee report on the Date and Frequency of the Lord's Supper. Adopted new doctrinal statement:

Be it resolved that Article of Belief No. 11, The Lord's Supper, be amended by substituting the following:

11. The Lord's Supper

In the Lord's Supper we eat unleavened bread and drink the fruit of the vine as symbols of our Lord's body and blood, which He offered as a substitutionary sacrifice for sin. In partaking of these emblems we commemorate the Lord's death, proclaim our hope in His return, commune with one another as the Body of Christ, and symbolize our continued union with the Savior.

Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19, 20 – Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper to symbolize the new covenant which He ratified by His death.

I Corinthians 11:23-26 – The Lord's Supper looks back in commemoration of the Lord's death, but also looks forward in anticipation to the coming Messianic kingdom.

I Corinthians 10:16, 17 – The Lord's Supper is a communion or common sharing which unites the participants in fellowship with Christ, and so with one another.

NOTE: The Church of God (Seventh Day) has chosen to observe the Lord's Supper on the night beginning the fourteenth of Nisan as determined by the current Hebrew calendar. We extend charity toward those who may observe communion at other times. We have chosen to use unleavened bread and unfermented grape juice as emblems of the broken body and shed blood of Christ.

- B. Adopted resolution calling for a committee to study the Godhead (especially the pre-existence, divinity, and relationship of Christ with the Father) and that the study be presented at the next council.

1990 – Lansing, MI

- A. Discussed the issue of the Godhead (i.e., the Deity of Christ). Voted to continue the discussion at the next council.
- B. Discussed the issue of Health-Care Personnel Working on the Sabbath. A resolution that would have recommended to local congregations that health-care personnel who work on the Sabbath should not be eligible to hold positions of elder or deacon was postponed indefinitely.

1992 – Phoenix, AZ

- A. Discussed the Deity of Christ and rejected the following motion:

Moved and seconded the following statement be substituted for Doctrinal Statements 2 and 23 appearing in the 1988 edition of the Doctrinal Beliefs Booklet:

God the Son

God the Son is co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father. Being truly God, He became also truly man, Jesus Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Through Him all things were created, the nature of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is secured, and the judgment of the world is executed (Jn. 1:1-18; Heb. 1:1-14; Mt. 1:23; Isa. 9:6; Phil. 2:1-11; Col. 1:15-20; Col. 2:9; Mt. 25:31, 32; Jn. 5:27).

- B. Received report of Committee on Scriptural Principles for Sabbath Observance and adopted the following motion:

Moved that the North American Ministerial Council encourage the Literature Committee to develop and distribute several gospel booklets promoting the many positive and beneficial aspects of Sabbath observance: the Sabbath is God's gracious gift to all mankind and it speaks a positive and much-needed "Good News" message of rest, redemption and relationship; God continues to command that we remember the Sabbath is holy and blessed, and that by keeping and participating with its intent, we find its blessing real for humankind.

Be it further moved that, because lists of "appropriate" vs. "inappropriate" Sabbath behaviors which are developed by men, no matter how well intentioned, are inadequate in scope, divisive in nature and easily abused in practice, the North American Ministerial Council specifically declines to become involved in the development of such lists or in arguments concerning them.

1994 – Colorado Springs, CO

- A. Adopted complete revision of Doctrinal Beliefs Booklet (27 points).

- B. Passed resolution calling for a committee to develop a statement on the gospel for possible endorsement at the next council.

Whereas the Conference Board of Directors has adopted the following resolution:

Whereas the Board of Directors and representatives of the districts, in a joint meeting, have identified the need for the members of the General Conference to have a clear theological understanding of the gospel; and,

Whereas this understanding is foundational to the existence and purpose of the church and lack of common understanding has resulted in tensions which impede the ability of the church to fulfill its mission,

Therefore be it resolved that the Board of Directors request the Ministerial Council to formulate a clear statement of what the gospel is and actively communicate it to the General Conference membership.

Therefore be it moved that the Ministerial Council invite all its members to write 300 word-or-less summaries on the topic of "What is the Gospel?" for the next two Ministerial Forums. Further, that a committee of three ministers appointed by the Council President review the published summaries and select the one that in its opinion best represents the truth of Scripture for consideration and possible endorsement by the Council in 1996. Or the committee may synthesize its own summary from the best elements contained in the summaries.

International Ministerial Congress

Doctrinal Interpretations and Resolutions

1978 – Juarez, Mexico

International Ministerial Congress organized and current Statement of Faith adopted. No changes or amendments have been made to the Statement since its adoption.

1982 – Mexico City, Mexico

Discussed the issues of: 1) Head Covering for Women, and 2) the Validity of Baptisms Performed by Persons Other than Ministers of the Church of God. These issues were discussed on an informational basis. No doctrinal resolutions were adopted.

1986 – Cuernavaca, Mexico

A. Discussed the issue of Head Covering. Adopted the following resolution:

Be it resolved that we clarify our position concerning the use of the veil by the Christian woman with this 1986 International Ministerial Congress going on record as allowing those member councils or conferences practicing head covering for Christian women to be allowed to continue the practice as heretofore.

[Note: Earlier in the 1986 meeting a proposed amendment to the Statement of Faith which would have required women to wear a head covering when praying or prophesying had been defeated.]

B. Discussed on an informational basis the issues of: 1) Validity of Baptisms, and 2) the Godhead. No doctrinal resolutions were adopted.

1990 – Oaxtepec, Mexico

A. Discussed the issue of the History of the Church of God (Seventh Day). Adopted the following resolution:

Whereas there are many who believe that the history of the organization of the Church of God (Seventh Day) can be traced in an unbroken line to apostolic times, and

Whereas the origin of the organization of the Church of God (Seventh Day) can clearly be established as arising out of the advent movement in the United States in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, therefore:

Be it resolved that the International Ministerial Congress go on record as recognizing that the organization of the Church of God (Seventh Day), beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, clearly grew out of a community of

believers who observed the seventh-day Sabbath, and believed in the second coming of Christ.

- B. Discussed the issue of the Gospel and the Law. Adopted the following doctrinal interpretation:

Whereas the International Ministerial Congress contains in its Statement of Faith the following:

"Section 5. Man and Sin: We believe that man was created sinless in the image of God. Through Adam's disobedience, man became a sinner by nature and by choice and thereby incurred sin's penalty, physical death and ultimately, if in an unsaved condition, eternal death (annihilation)."

"Section 7. Man and Salvation: We believe that man is saved from eternal death (annihilation) solely by the grace of God through faith, apart from human merit, works or ceremonies. Christ's death is given as payment for sins, and is offered to all who will accept it."

And whereas there is some uncertainty as to the practical understanding of these statements,

Therefore be it resolved that the Congress approve the following as its current understanding of sin and salvation:

Sin and Salvation

A true appreciation of man's salvation from God can be obtained by surveying the length, breadth, and depth of sin.

Sin is the transgression of God's law (I John 3:4). Sin is any act of unrighteousness (I John 5:17), whatever comes short of God's glory (Romans 3:23). It is committed in thought (Proverbs 24:9), in attitude (Proverbs 14:21), in word (Proverbs 10:19; James 3:2), in habit (Romans 7:20), and in neglect (James 4:17). Sin is a failure to always love (James 2:8-9) or always believe (Romans 14:23). Sin in its broadest sense (Psalm 119:96) may be defined as any lack of conformity to the perfections of Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:21-23, I John 2:6, Romans 8:29).

When the magnitude of sin and the just condemnation of God upon it is understood, then the good news that the penalty of sin has been paid by the death of Christ may be believed with appreciation (I Corinthians 15:3). A faith relationship with the crucified and risen Savior and Lord brings the assurance of forgiveness (Hebrews 10:18, 22) and the imputation of perfect righteousness to the record in heaven (Romans 4:7-9). The believer is no longer condemned by any remaining sin, while he is trusting in Christ (Romans 8:1).

This same Lord who justifies the ungodly (Romans 4:5) freely by His blood (Romans 5:9) also begins the work of sanctification by his regenerating Spirit, when men first truly believe (Titus 3:5, 6). There is an imitation faith which neither justifies nor sanctifies (James

2:14-26). The faith which truly accepts God's saving grace (Ephesians 2:8-9) is also a faith which works by love (Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 5:6), producing fruits of obedience and holiness which increase continually, though imperfectly and unevenly, toward the character of Christ (Ephesians 4:13).

Thus, saving faith always produces good works (James 2:18); but good works never produce salvation (Galatians 2:16), nor are they sufficiently sin-free to maintain it (Galatians 3:3). One who is believing unto salvation stands righteous continually in God's family only by faith in God's gracious promise (Romans 1:17). He falls into final condemnation only if he willfully denies the gospel of God's grace and kingdom through enduring unbelief and subsequent rebellion (Colossians 1:22-23; Hebrews 3:12, 4:11; I Corinthians 10:12).

NOTE: The above resolution passed unanimously.

- C. Discussed the Frequency of the Lord's Supper. Approved the following resolution:

Whereas the consideration of a study regarding the frequency of the Lord's Supper resulted in the North American Ministerial Council's adoption of the following doctrinal statement and note:

"In the Lord's Supper we eat unleavened bread and drink the fruit of the vine as symbols of our Lord's body and blood, which He offered as a substitutionary sacrifice for sin. In partaking of these emblems we commemorate the Lord's death, proclaim our hope in His return, commune with one another as the Body of Christ and symbolize our continued union with the Savior.

Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19, 20: Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper to symbolize the new covenant which He ratified by His death.

I Corinthians 11:23-26: The Lord's Supper looks back in commemoration of the Lord's death, but also looks forward in anticipation to the coming Messianic kingdom.

I Corinthians 10:16, 17: The Lord's Supper is a communion or common sharing which unites the participants in fellowship with Christ, and so with one another.

NOTE: The Church of God (Seventh Day) has chosen to observe the Lord's Supper on the night beginning the fourteenth of Nisan as determined by the current Hebrew calendar. We extend charity toward those who may observe communion at other times. We have chosen to use unleavened bread and unfermented grape juice as emblems of the broken body and shed blood of Christ."

And whereas, the statement and note do not alter the current practice of an annual observance of the Lord's Supper;

Be it resolved, that the 1990 session of the International Ministerial Congress permit the doctrinal statement and note to stand, noting that it is in keeping with the spirit of the Congress' Statement of Faith, Article VIII, Section 9. 2) "Lord's Supper as an annual memorial of Christ's death symbolizes the believer's continued union with the Savior...."

- D. Discussed the issue of Church and State. Adopted resolution calling for a continuation of this topic at the next Congress.
- E. Discussed the issue of the Godhead (i.e., the Deity of Christ). Adopted resolution calling for continuation of this topic at the next Congress.

1994 – Corpus Christi, Texas

- A. Discussed the issue of Church and State. Adopted the following resolution:

Be it resolved that the International Ministerial Congress adopt the following statement that sets forth a definitive course of action appropriate for Christians in response to civil authority:

1. That the Church have more participation in the social sphere, practicing the love of God for our fellow man.
2. That the Church be instructed so that members know the proper procedures for voting.
3. That the parish be taught to take part in civil acts, without compromising their Christian integrity, thus fulfilling their duties as good citizens.
4. That the members of the Church be informed as to what patriotic symbols should be respected.
5. That the faithful who have financial resources which are taxable be instructed to execute their fiscal obligations.
6. That the pastors of the Church study the political constitution of their country and the universal declaration of human rights, so that they may know their rights and obligations.
7. That the Church of God (Seventh Day) cooperate when possible with the evangelical churches of the country, creating a common cause to demonstrate peacefully, according to their right, when the government violates human rights.
8. That the Church of God (Seventh Day) cooperate when possible with the alliance of evangelical churches in each country to protest and reject all arrangements and laws that come from the government that affect free expression and primarily the faith we confess.

- B. Discussed the issue of Worship Styles. Adopted the following resolution:

Whereas the form and style of worship have become a source of controversy and threatens the unity within the membership of some member councils and conferences of the International Ministerial Congress, therefore,

Be it resolved that the 1994 session of the International Ministerial Congress adopt the following statement:

1. Worship is an essential part of our Christian service in recognizing and exalting the name of God as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.
2. Worship is an essential part of our corporate service to God by which the individual believer and the church are edified through the singing

of songs, the offering of prayers, and the preaching of the Word of God.

3. Worship by its very nature will vary in form from culture to culture and age to age. Therefore, worship, regardless of its form, is appropriate as long as it is offered in an orderly and peaceful manner and contains the elements of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Therefore be it resolved that the International Ministerial Congress recognize the right of each member conference to resolve any controversy regarding worship styles and forms that may exist within its membership, as long as the member conference approaches the controversy with tolerance and charity to all segments of the Church.

C. Discussed the Deity of Christ. Adopted the following doctrinal interpretation:

Whereas the statement of Faith of the International Ministerial Congress declares in Section 3: "We believe in Jesus, the Messiah and Savior, only begotten Son of the Father....,"

And whereas Section 3 does not state or imply that Jesus was "created by God,"

Be it resolved that the Congress interpret the phrase "only begotten Son of the Father" as follows:

The phrase "only begotten Son of the Father" reveals two complimentary truths about Jesus Christ: 1) His inherent nature, and 2) His position within the Godhead.

In regard to nature, the phrase indicates the full deity of Christ. Through begetting, the Son consists of the same nature, substance, or "stuff" as the Father. The term *begotten*, by definition, makes the Son divine because the One from whom He was begotten is divine. Since the Son is of the same divine substance as the Father, He is an equal member of the Godhead and shares with the Father the nature, attributes, and title of "God."

In regard to position, the phrase "only begotten Son of the Father" also indicates the relationship of the Son to the Father. The term *begotten*, by definition, places the Son under the Father's authority. The Son is begotten, while the Father alone is unbegotten. Because the Son acts only in accord with the Father, and not of Himself, He is subordinate to the Father in rank. However, the subordination of the Son does not make Him a separate or second "god." By nature, the Son remains equal to the Father, sharing with Him the divine substance of the Godhead. Although the Father and Son differ in role and position, the equality in nature of Father and Son preserves the oneness of the Godhead.

Be it further resolved that the Congress distribute this resolution to each member conference or council with instructions that each conference or council in turn distribute a copy of this resolution to its ministers, pastors, and church workers.

International Ministerial Congress

Statement of Faith

SECTION 1. The Scriptures

We believe the Scriptures, contained within the Old and New Testaments, are inspired by God, inerrant in the original writing, and the only infallible rule by which human conduct and religious beliefs and practices should be determined.

SECTION 2. God, the Father

We believe in one God, the Eternal Spirit, and Creator, Preserver and Ruler of the universe, who is infinite in wisdom, holiness and love. By His own initiative God offers salvation to every one and is worthy of our love, reverence, and obedience.

SECTION 3. Jesus, the Son

We believe in Jesus, the Messiah and Savior, only begotten Son of the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of a virgin. We affirm His pre-existence, incarnation, sinless life, death as a substitutionary atonement, entombment for three full days and nights, bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, present work as Mediator and High Priest and His personal, visible, imminent, premillennial return to rule on earth as Judge and King.

SECTION 4. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit as the manifestation and power which proceeds from the Father and the Son to regenerate, sanctify, teach, guide and preserve all believers. Obedience to God and "fruit of the Spirit" are evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

SECTION 5. Man and Sin

We believe that man was created sinless in the image of God. Through Adam's disobedience, man became a sinner by nature and by choice and thereby incurred sin's penalty, physical death and ultimately, if in an unsaved condition, eternal death (annihilation).

SECTION 6. Man and Death

We believe that physical death is a state of unconsciousness for all persons, righteous and wicked, a state which will remain unchanged until their resurrections. The righteous will receive eternal life and the wicked will suffer annihilation.

SECTION 7. Man and Salvation

We believe that man is saved from eternal death (annihilation) solely by the grace of God through faith, apart from human merit, works or ceremonies. Christ's death is given as payment for sins, and is offered to all who will accept it.

SECTION 8. The Church

We believe the Church of God, consisting of baptized believers who keep the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God, is of divine origin under the Lordship of Christ and exists universally and locally for the preaching of the gospel, for the nurture and fellowship of the believers and for service to the human race.

SECTION 9. Church Ordinances

We believe Christ prescribed two ordinances for the church which confirm faith in Him. 1) Baptism by immersion symbolizes the believer's death to sin and new birth in Christ. 2) Lord's Supper as an annual memorial of Christ's death symbolizes the believer's continued union with the Savior. Footwashing as an act of humility accompanies the Lord's Supper.

SECTION 10. The Ten Commandments

We believe the Ten Commandments, including the true seventh-day Sabbath, existing from creation and included in both the old and new covenant, constitute the basic code of conduct for all mankind. They are to be observed today, as an expression of one's love to God and fellowman.

SECTION 11. Christian Living

We believe the Christian, in keeping with his confession of faith in Christ, is called to a holy and godly life in thought, word and deed. This is exemplified in one's interaction with others, beginning in the home, which God established with the institution of marriage, and extending to the church and community. It is because a Christian has been redeemed, not in order to be redeemed, that he should: 1) reflect that his body is the "temple of the Holy Spirit" by his choice of entertainment, dress, conduct, personal habits and diet which includes eating only those meats designated by the Bible as "clean" for food. 2) respond to the physical and spiritual needs of humanity by relieving suffering, hunger, ignorance, loneliness and by witnessing for the gospel. Accordingly, a Christian's participation in warfare is contrary to his humanitarian calling. 3) serve God "in spirit and truth" by refraining from religious practices and celebrations which intermix Christianity with paganism. 4) support the church's mission by active involvement and financial stewardship of tithes and offerings. 5) maintain his relationship with God through prayer, fasting, Bible study, worship and obedience.

SECTION 12. Prophecy and Second Coming of Christ

We believe that Bible prophecy identifies certain religious, social, and political events and trends, including the rebirth of Israel, which precede and point to the imminent return of Christ, to establish His kingdom on earth, culminating in the eternal Kingdom of God. The fulfillment of Bible prophecy serves to strengthen the faith of the people of God.