

Statement of Faith

STATEMENT OF FAITH: WHAT I BELIEVE

Related Topic - A Testimony to God's Grace — My Personal Testimony - Bruce Hurt

HOLY SCRIPTURES THE WORD OF GOD

I believe that the Holy Scriptures are God's written Words representing His special revelation to man and that "all Scripture (graphe - word study) is inspired (theopneustos - word study) by God and profitable for teaching (didaskalia - word study), for reproof (elegchos - word study), for correction (epanorthosis - word study), for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2Ti 3:16, 17+), that "no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2Pe 1:20,21+), that the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures is recorded in the OT such as when "the Spirit of the LORD spoke by" David (2Sa 23:2) and by numerous Scriptures preceded by "thus says the LORD" ([see over 500 passages](#)), that the human writers recorded in perfect accuracy God's comprehensive and inerrant revelation to man (Ps 12:6+ >> *"What a contrast between the vain words of man, and the pure words of Jehovah. Man's words are yea and nay, but the Lord's promises are yea and amen. For truth, certainty, holiness, faithfulness, the words of the Lord are pure as well refined silver. In the original there is an allusion to the most severely purifying process known to the ancients, through which silver was passed when the greatest possible purity was desired; the dross was all consumed, and only the bright and precious metal remained; so clear and free from all alloy of error or unfaithfulness is the book of the words of the Lord. The Bible has passed through the furnace of persecution, literary criticism, philosophic doubt, and scientific discovery, and has lost nothing but those human interpretations which clung to it as alloy to precious ore. The experience of saints has tried it in every conceivable manner, but not a single doctrine or promise has been consumed in the most excessive heat. What God's words are, the words of his children should be. If we would be Godlike in conversation, we must watch our language, and maintain the strictest purity of integrity and holiness in all our communications."* - Spurgeon; Ps 18:30+ Ps 119:140+), that Christ Himself affirmed the infallibility of the Scriptures that "not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law" (Mt 5:18+, cp Mt 24:35, Isa 40:8; 1Pe 1:23, 24, 25+), that "the Scripture cannot be broken" (Jn 10:35+), that the apostles claimed inspiration for their portions of the New Testament (1Co 2:13+; 1Co 4:37+), that Paul quotes both Deuteronomy and Luke as Scripture (1Ti 5:18+, 1Co 9:9+; cp. Dt 25:4), that Peter declares all Paul's Epistles to be Scripture (2Pe 3:15, 16+), that God's Word "which goes forth from" His mouth "shall not return" empty "without accomplishing what" God desires (Isa 55:11), that the inspiration of Scripture is verbal, plenary (complete in every respect), and inerrant, that "if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book" (Rev 22:18,19+, Pr 30:5, 6, Dt 4:2+, Dt 12:32+), that man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Mt 4:4+, Lk 4:4+, Dt 8:3+), that the Scriptures contain "everything necessary for life and godliness" (2Pe 1:3+, cp Deut 32:46, 47+), that "no word from God shall be void of power" (Lk 1:37ASV cp NAS Lk 1:37+), that the Bible is not like human books but that it is living, abiding, powerful and supernatural, that it is "living and active" (Heb 4:12+), that God's Word is "like fire... and a hammer which shatters a rock" (Jer 23:29), that His Words are like goads (Eccl 12:11), that His word of the gospel is "the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Ro 1:16+, cp the "word of truth" in Jas 1:18+), that His word of the Cross is "the power of God" (1Cor 1:18+), that the Father causes us to be "born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable" but by the continually "living and abiding word of God" (1Pe 1:3+, 1Pe 1:23+), that the Word of God has the inherent power to perform "its work in you who believe" (1Th 2:13+, cp Ps 119:130+). How exalted is the Word of God in God's sight? Read Ps 138:2KJV (Note: Other translations give a slightly different meaning to the passage. In any event, clearly God exalts His Word to its rightful lofty, holy position and so should we as His creatures!)

Note: As an aside where possible, every attempt has been made to substantiate the fallible human comments on this website with the inerrant Words of the Bible which is in turn linked to active popups using the NASB. The reader is strongly encouraged not to just note the chapter/verse reference, but to hover over and ingest the living words in that passage (and if time permits to also click on the passage and read it in **context**.) You can practice by hovering over the passages used in this statement of faith!

I believe the Word of God has only one true **Interpretation** which reflects God's original intended meaning, but that there can be many valid **applications** of a passage.

I believe that the best approach to Scripture interpretation is the literal, grammatical-historical method, and that in the sphere of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit (Jn 7:17; 16:12, 13, 14 15; 1Co 2:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; 1Jn 2:20, 27) the **inductive Bible study approach** is one of the best methods to facilitate accurate "handling (of) the word of truth" (2Ti 2:15).

HOLY TRINITY

I believe that "Jehovah is one" God (Dt 6:4, 5 = the "Shema" from verb = "to hear", 1Co 8:4, 5, 6, Jas 2:19, Dt 32:29, Isa 43:10b, 44:6b, 44:8, 45:5, 6, 45:18b, 45:21, 22, 46:9, 2Sa 7:22, 1Ki 8:60, 1Chr 17:20, Isa 37:16, Jer 10:6, 7, 1Ti 2:5), that the God of the Bible is the only true God (Jn 17:3, 1Th 1:9, 1Jn 5:20, 21), that He is the "living God" (Dt 5:26 Jos 3:10 1Sa 17:26, 17:36 2Ki 19:4, 19:16 Ps 42:2, 84:2, Isa 37:4, 17 Je 10:10, 23:36 Da 6:20, 26, Hos 1:10, Mt 16:16, 26:63, Ac 14:15 Ro 9:26+, 2Co 3:3, 6:16, 1Ti 3:15, 4:10, Heb 3:12+, He 9:14+, He 10:31+, He 12:22+, Rev7:2+), that there is "no other God", (Isa 45:14, 5, 6, 18, 21, 22, 44:6, 7, 8, 43:11), that "there is no one like" Him (Isa 46:9) and that we are to "have no other gods before" Him (Ex 20:3).

I believe in the Trinity but also recognize that this clear Biblical teaching is **incomprehensible** to our finite minds and should be a cause for worship and awe not wrangling and argument. And so I concur with Paul's great declaration "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!" (Ro 11:33+)

I believe that although the term "Trinity" is not found in the Bible, the Scriptures clearly teach that God is a one in essence and at the same time exists as three distinct divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In Mt 3:16, 17 "Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he (John) saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him (Jesus), and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased." (cp Jesus' words in Mt 28:19). Paul's parting words to the Corinthians also imply the existence of the Trinity in the Godhead (2Cor 13:14).

I believe that the Trinity is implied even in OT passages such as (Isa 48:16) in which the Son is speaking ("My Servant" Is 48:1) describing God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (John MacArthur, Charles Ryrie, Thomas Constable, et al concur with this interpretation of Is 48:16)

GOD THE FATHER

I believe God the Father is the **eternal** (Dt 33:27) Everlasting God (= El Olam = Ge 21:33, Isa 40:28, Jer 10:10, Ro 16:26), that He is faithful (1Cor 1:9+, 1Th 5:24+, Dt 7:9, 1Ki 8:56, Ps 36:5+; **Faithful**), that He is "from everlasting to everlasting" (Ps 90:2+), that His understanding is inscrutable (unsearchable, cannot be penetrated, discovered or understood by human wisdom) (Isa 40:28; **Incomprehensible**), that He fills "the heavens and earth" (Jer 23:24), that He is righteously jealous (Ex 34:14, Nu 25:11, Dt 4:23, 24, 5:9, 6:15, 29:20, 32:16, 21, Jas 4:4, 5; **Jealous**), that He "is Spirit" (Jn 4:24), that He is "invisible" (Col 1:15+), that "no one has seen God" (Jn 1:18), that He "possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, Whom no man has seen or can see" (1Ti 6:16), that He is "**eternal**, immortal, invisible, the only God" (1Ti 1:17; 6:16), that He exalts Himself "as head over all" (1Chr 29:11; **Sovereign**), that He does "not change" (**Immutable**) (Mal 3:6), that His "gifts and the calling" are irrevocable (Ro 11:29+), that He gives good things and perfect gifts and in Him "there is no variation, or shifting shadow" (Jas 1:17+; **Good**), that "His understanding is infinite" (Ps 147:5+; **Infinite**), that He "does not become weary or tired" (Isa 40:28), that "His understanding is inscrutable (Isa 40:28), that He is "God Almighty" (Ge17:1 = **El Shaddai**) for Whom nothing is "too difficult" (Ge 18:14 - **omnipotent**), that He can "do all things, and that no purpose of (His) can be thwarted" (Job 42:2), that "heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain" Him (1Ki 8:27), that no one can flee from His "presence" (Ps 139:7+), that His eyes "are in every place" (Pr 15:3, Pr 5:21+, Ge 16:13 Dt 11:12, 21:9 2Chr 6:20 Ps 33:18+ Ps 34:15+, Ps 113:6+, Ps 139:2,3+, Job 34:21,31:4, Pr 5:21+ Jer 16:17, 23:24, 32:19 Zech 4:10 Heb 4:13+ 1Pe 3:12+ Ge 6:8 - **omnipresent** and **omniscient**), that "the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa 6:3, cp Ps 72:19+; Isa 11:9; 66:18,19; Hab 2:14; Mt 6:10+, Nu 14:21), that He "is perfect" (Mt 5:48+), that "there is no one like" Him "in all the earth" (Ex 9:14; **Transcendent**), that "He is God" and "there is no other besides Him" (Dt 4:35), that "there is none like" Him (Jer 10:6), that He is "a great and awesome God" (Dt 7:21), that He is "greatly to be praised" (1Chr 16:25) that He is "holy" (Lv 11:44, Ps 99:5+, Isa 6:3, 1Pe 1:15, 16+; **Holy**), that He impartially judges according to each man's work (which should motivate believers to conduct themselves in fear during their life on earth - 1Pe 1:17+; **Impartial**) that His wrath "is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Ro 1:18+; **Wrath**), that He "is the righteous One" (Ex 9:27; Jn 17:25, Ps 11:7-+; **Righteous**), that there is "no other God besides" Him (Isa 45:21), that there "no injustice with God (Ro 9:14+; **Just**), that He "is love" (1Jn 4:16; **Loving**), that He "exercises lovingkindness" (Jer 9:24), that He "is slow to anger (**Longsuffering**) and abundant in lovingkindness" (Nu 14:18), that "His lovingkindness is everlasting" (1Chr 16:41, 2Chr 7:3), that He is "a gracious and compassionate" (Neh 9:31), that "His mercies are great" (2Sa 24:14; **Merciful**), that He is "a God of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate" (Ne 9:17) and that "His

compassions never fail" for "they are new every morning" (La 3:22, 23). In the future the Son will deliver up the kingdom to His "Father" (1Cor 15:24), Who (the Father) is not subjected to Him (Jesus) (1Cor 15:27+), but is the One to Whom both the Son and all things will one day be subjected so that "God may be all in all" (1Co 15:28+).

Related Resources:

- [Name of the LORD is a Strong Tower: Summary](#)
- Name of the LORD is a Strong Tower: Why Should You Study It?

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD

I believe that Jesus "and the Father are One" (Jn 10:30, 31, 32, 33 where Jesus clearly proclaimed His Deity as He did also in Jn 8:57, 58, 59, cp Jn 5:17, 18, Php 2:6+), that "in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form" (Col 2:9+, cp Jn 1:1, 14, Php 2:6+, Lk 3:22), that He was recognized as God by men (Jn 20:28, cp Jn 1:49, 6:66, 67, 68, 69, 9:35, 36, 37, 38, 11:27, 1Jn 4:15, 5:1, 10, 20), that one day all mankind, believers and unbelievers, will recognize and acknowledge the truth that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Php 2:10, 11+), that Jesus "is the radiance of" the Father's "glory and the exact representation of His nature and upholds all things by the word of His power" (Heb 1:3+), that in Christ "all things hold together" (Col 1:17+), that He was "In the beginning... the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn 1:1), that He is "the only begotten from the Father" (Jn 1:18) Who "became flesh" (Jn 1:14, cp 1Jn 4:2), that Jesus was "in the bosom of the Father" and "explained" the Father (Jn 1:18 - exegeomai gives us "exegesis" the unfolding of an interpretation through the teaching of Scripture - Jesus, the Living Word unfolded the character of the Father), that His mother Mary "was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit" before she came together with her betrothed Joseph (Mt 1:18), that He was "conceived in her... of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 1:20), that He was given the name "Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins" (Mt 1:21), that His virgin birth fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14 that "THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL" which translated means, "GOD WITH US" (Mt 1:23), that God (the Father) "sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law" (Gal 4:4) and "revealed (Jesus) in the flesh" (1Ti 3:16, cp Jn 1:14, Acts 2:22, 2Ti 1:9+, 2Ti 1:10+, 1Jn 3:5, Jn 1:29, He 9:26+, 1Ti 1:15), that Jesus is called "the Son of the Most High" (Lk 1:32), that "the Lord God (the Father) will give Him the throne of His father David and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and His kingdom will have no end" (Lk 1:32, 33), that His birth was a fulfillment of the prophecy that God would "put enmity between" Satan "and the woman" (Eve) "and between" Satan's seed and Eve's seed and that Jesus would "bruise" Satan "on the head" (Ge 3:15 - see also **Messianic Prophecies**), that God (the Father) sent Jesus "His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin", (Ro 8:3+), that He was without sin (2Cor 5:21, 1Jn 3:5, Jn 7:18, 8:29, 46, He 4:15+, He 7:26+; 1Pe 1:18+, 1Pe 2:22+), that Jesus "existed (continuously) in the form of God" and possesses "equality with God" (Php 2:6+), that He "emptied Himself taking the form of a bond-servant... being made in the likeness of men... being found in appearance as a man" and that "He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Php 2:7+, Php 2:8+), that He reconciles those "formerly alienated and hostile in mind" through His death "in His fleshly body" (Col 1:22,23+) "having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time" (Heb 10:12+) "in order that He might bring us to God" (1Pe 3:18+), and that He "died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (1Co 15:3,4+) and was "taken up... into heaven" and "will come in just the same way" (Acts 1:11). I believe that "there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12, 10:42, 43, Jn 3:36, 14:6, cp the 7 great "I Am" statements of Jesus - Bread - Jn 6:35,41,48, 51, Light - Jn 8:12, cp 1Jn 1:5, Jn 1:4, 9, 9:5, 12:46, Isa 9:2, the Door Jn 10:9, the Good Shepherd Jn 10:14, the Resurrection and the Life Jn 11:25, the Way, the Truth, the Life Jn 14:6, the Vine Jn15:1,5). I believe that Jesus is now and forever **the believer's very life** (Col 3:4+, Gal 2:20+, cp Jn 11:25, 14:19, 20:31, 1Jn 5:12, Ro 5:10+, Ro 6:4+, Ro 6:8+, Ro 6:11+). I believe Jesus "has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42, 17:31, 2Ti 4:1+,Jn 5:22, 27+, Ps 9:8+, Ps 96:13+, Ps 98:9+, Mt 16:27, Re 22:12+, Mt 25:31f, Ro 2:6+, Jer 17:10, 2Cor 5:9, 10, 1Cor 3:11, 12, 13, 14, 15+, 1Co 4:5+, Ro 14:10, 11, 12+, Rev 20:11, 12, 13, 14, 15+)

THE HOLY SPIRIT

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of God" (Ge 1:2), that He is called "God" (Acts 5:3,4), that He "spoke through Isaiah the prophet to" the Jews (Acts 28:25), that He strives with sinners (Ge 6:3), that He is the "eternal Spirit" (Heb 9:14+), that He is omnipresent ("Where can I go from Thy Spirit?" Ps 139:7+), that He is called "Holy" (Ps 51:11+), that He is the third person of the Godhead as taught in (2Co 13:14), that He was active in the Creation (Ge 1:2; Ps 104:30+), that He "came upon" men temporarily in

the Old Testament (Jdg 14:6+, 1Sa 16:14), that He was the active Source of enablement in the OT (Zec 4:6), that He was active in the ministry of several OT judges by which Israel was freed from her oppressors (Jdg 3:10+; Jdg 6:34+; Jdg 11:29+), that Jesus conception in the womb of Mary was "of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 1:20), that the "Spirit of God" descended "as a dove" upon Jesus at His baptism (Mt 3:16), that "Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit" (Lk 4:14), that Jesus "cast out demons by the Spirit of God" (Mt 12:28), that the Father promised the Spirit (Lk 24:49, Acts 1:4), that believers "receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon" them and are to "be... witnesses" of Jesus (Acts 1:8), that He is our "Helper, Who will be with us forever" (Jn 14:16), that He was sent to believer's by the Father in Jesus' name and that He will teach us "all things" (Jn 14:26, cp Neh 9:20, 1Jn 2:27), that He is active in convicting "the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment" (Jn 16:8), that by Him men are born from above (Jn 3:5,6), that He is the One Who "gives life" (Jn 6:63), that He is "the Spirit of truth, Who proceeds from the Father" and "will bear witness of" Jesus (Jn 15:26), that "no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1Co 12:3), that He distributes spiritual gifts "to each one individually just as He wills" (1Co 12:11), that "by the Spirit" we are enabled to put "to death the deeds of the body" (Ro 8:13+), that all "who are being led by the Spirit of God... are sons of God" (Ro 8:14+), that He "bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Ro 8:16+), that He "helps our weakness" and He "Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Ro 8:26+), that we "pray at all times in the Spirit" (Eph 6:18+), that He "searches all things, even the depths of God" and reveals the things of God "which eye has not seen & ear has not heard" (1Co 2:8,9), that He is received from God "that we might know the things freely given to us by God... taught by the Spirit" (1Co 2:12,13), that God has given "the Holy Spirit of promise" "in our hearts as a pledge... of our inheritance" (2Co 1:22, Eph 1:14+), that by Him we were "sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph 4:30+), that He leads believers (Ro 8:14+, Gal 5:18+), that He comforts the church (Acts 9:31), that our "body is" His temple and He "is in" us (1Co 6:19), that "by one Spirit" all believer's were "baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free" (1Co 12:13), that we can "grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph 4:30+), that we can "quench the Spirit" (1Th 5:19+), that men can resist Him (Acts 7:51), that believers are commanded to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18+), that He is the power by which believers "may abound in hope" (Ro 15:13+), that He is the Source of "the fruit of the Spirit" which "is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal 5:22+, Gal 5:23+), that believers are being "transformed into" the image of God by "the Lord, the Spirit" (2Co 3:18), that He is the source of "the sanctifying work" in believers (1Pe 1:2+, Ro 15:16+, 2Th 2:13), that He is the Source of the Scriptures "for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2Pe 1:21+) and that He "He shall glorify (Jesus) for He shall take of (Jesus') and shall disclose it to you." (Jn 16:14).

SALVATION

I believe that every person is born dead in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1+, Ep 2:5+, Col 2:13+, cp Ep 4:18, 19+) passed on from Adam (Ro 5:12+) and that the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven" and that our salvation is "protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1Pe 1:3, 4+, 1Pe 1:5+). I believe that men and women are saved "by grace... through faith; and that not of" ourselves but that salvation "is the gift of God not as a result of works, that no one should boast" and that our salvation reflects that we are "His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph 2:8, 9+, Ep 2:10+), that when we are born again from above (Jn 3:3) we become "a new creature; the old things passed away" and "new things have come" (2Co 5:17) so that the regenerated individual now is empowered to live a brand new way of life (Ro 8:13+, Ro 8:14+, Ezek 36:27, et al), his or her works now a manifestation of that new life so that the lost will see those good works and receive a proper opinion of our heavenly Father (Mt 5:16), and that this individual will persevere to the end (Heb 3:6+, He 3:14+, Mt 24:13). I believe the basis of mankind's salvation is that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life"... and that "He who believes in Him is not judged" but that "he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (Jn 3:16, 17, 18). I believe that God our Savior "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1Ti 2:4), "not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2Pe 3:9+). I believe that the Gospel is "the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Ro 1:16+). I believe that the basis of our salvation is that Jesus Christ "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds" (Titus 2:14+), that God "saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, Whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:4+, Titus 3:5+, Titus 3:6, 7+), and that everyone "who hears (Jesus') word, and believes Him who sent (Jesus) has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life" (Jn 5:24). I believe that we "were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from (our) futile way of life ... but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" Who "was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for" our sake and that we "through Him are believers in God, Who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that (our) faith and hope are in God" and that we "have

been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God." (1Pe 1:18, 19+, 1Pe 1:20, 21+, 1Pe 1:22, 23+).

BAPTISM

I believe that Jesus commanded us to "Go therefore and **make disciples** (aorist imperative = command. Do this now! Do it effectively! Just do it!) of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that" He commanded (Mt 28:19, 20). I believe that He is with us always, even to the end of this age.

I believe that the early church practiced water baptism by submersion from passages such as Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch in which "the eunuch said "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?"... and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; and he baptized him" and then "they came up out of the water" (Acts 8:36, 37 38).

I believe that water baptism is the desire of our Lord Jesus for every believer, but that water baptism itself does not "convey grace" and that it is not necessary for salvation, for salvation is the gift of God which is entered into by grace through faith and not through human works (Ep 2:8, 9+) like baptism.

In summary I believe water baptism is a sign or an outward indication of the inner supernatural change (new birth - John 3:3) that has already occurred in the believer's life by grace through faith and thus serves as a public identification with Jesus Christ, and a public testimony of the change that has occurred. (see word study of the verb Baptize = Baptizo) See [Is baptism necessary for salvation? | GotQuestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org/Is-baptism-necessary-for-salvation?)

ETERNAL SECURITY

I believe that old phrase I first heard 25 years ago when God delivered me from the domain of darkness and transferred me into the kingdom of His beloved Son (Col 1:13+) is just as true today as it was the moment of my new birth --"Once saved, always saved". If God is able to save us He is surely able to keep us, a truth taught even in the OT -- "The Lord will protect you from all evil. He will keep your soul." (Ps 121:7). Jesus warned Peter that "Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers" (Lk 22:31,32+). Soon after Jesus said that, Peter denied Christ three times (Mt 26:70, 72, 74), but later he repented and was restored to Christ and to useful service, just as our Lord had prayed. I believe Jesus declaration is very clear on this issue of eternal security in (Jn 6:37, 38, 39) in which He said "All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day." God's will indeed will be done. Jesus later said, "I give eternal life to them [those who follow Him]; and they shall never perish (Double negative [ou me] makes this emphatic = "and they shall certainly **not** perish **forever**"), and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand" (John 10:28, 29). It is God Who provides salvation and God Who preserves it. I believe Paul teaches on eternal security in (Eph 1:13,14+) where he writes that "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, Who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory." Further Paul encourages all believers through the ages that we are secure in Christ because "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." (Php 1:6+). I believe Peter also echoes the truth of eternal security in (1Pe 1:5+) in which he emphasizes that believers "are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." A number of passages link the act of believing with "eternal life" (John 3:36, 5:24; 6:47; 10:28; 1Jn 5:13) and if God means what He says, that the life they receive is indeed eternal, then logically this new life lasts forever. To say that "eternal life" can be lost or does not last forever is to argue with the plain sense of what God states. I fear however that some people wrongfully conclude that "once saved always saved" is license to do anything one wants to once they are "saved". But short of a radical change in one's behavior and a holding fast to the end, I believe that these people were most likely never saved at the inception. So they could hardly lose what they never had. So many famous modern day "converts" have fallen back into their sinful lifestyles which has led some to use this as evidence that one can lose his or her salvation. But I believe that only those individuals who endure to the end were ever truly saved. James clearly links genuine salvation with good works, not saying that the "good works" save a person but that a person who is truly saved will be shown to be saved by those works. (see Jas 2:14, 15, 16, 17+, Jas 2:18, 19, 20+, Jas 2:21, 22, 23+, Jas 2:24, 25, 26+). Eternal security is only eternally secure if it reflects genuine salvation and thus the entire epistle of first John is written that we might clearly see the distinguishing marks of a true believer (1John 5:11). For example John writes that "Everyone who practices

(present tense = as their lifestyle, the habit of their life) sin also practices (present tense = as their lifestyle, the habit of their life) lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins (present tense = as their lifestyle, the habit of their life) has seen Him or knows Him. Little children, **let no one deceive** you (Read this warning again - the present imperative commands them to stop letting this happen, it is clear that some were trying to deceive others in the area of what constitutes genuine salvation); the one who practices (present tense = as their lifestyle, the habit of their life) righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices (present tense = as their lifestyle, the habit of their life) sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices (present tense = as their lifestyle, the habit of their life) sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot (present tense = as their lifestyle, the habit of their life) sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice (present tense = as their lifestyle, the habit of their life) righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother." (1Jn 3:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, cp Paul's not too subtle warnings to stop being deceived in Gal 5:21+ = where "practice" = present tense = as their lifestyle, 1Cor 6:9+, cp Eph 5:5, 6+). The apostle John could not have been much clearer regarding what constitutes genuine salvation. Many will still be deceived thinking that they can pray a prayer to receive Jesus and yet never have a change in their life and continue living their life just as they did before they prayed the prayer. Jesus sternly warned that "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does (present tense = as their lifestyle) the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART (present imperative = command in the continuous mood, continually depart from Him) FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE (present tense = as their lifestyle) LAWLESSNESS.'" (Mt 7:21, 22, 23+).

THE CHURCH THE BODY OF CHRIST

I believe that "the church" is not a building or an organization or a creed but is in essence an organism, the Body of Christ (Eph 4:12+, Col 1:18+), with Christ as the Head of the Body (Col 1:18+, Eph 1:22, 23+), and individual members of His Body, the Church composed of men and women called out of the domain of darkness (Col 1:13+) by God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation (Rev 5:9+, out of darkness - 1Pe 2:9+) unto salvation.

I believe that only regenerate (Titus 3:5+) men and women, both Jew and Gentile (Eph 3:6, "formerly far off" = Gentiles Eph 2:13, 14+, Ep 2:15, 16+, Ep 2:17, 18+, cp Gal 3:28, 29), compose the true church and that the true church does not include unsaved individuals (Acts 2:41, 47).

Jesus predicted the church in (Mt 16:18+), and Pentecost was the inception of the church (Acts 2:1, 2, 3, 4ff+). I do not agree with Dr Wayne Grudem that "the church is the community of all true believers for all time," and thus includes both Old and New Testament saints. I believe that the church at its inception was composed of Jews but Gentiles later became "fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the [Corner Stone](#), in Whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord in Whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit (Eph 2:19, 20, 21, 22+). See related discussion with which I agree - [When did the church begin/start? | GotQuestions.org](#)

I believe that the NT Scriptures also teach that "church" can refer to a local assembly of believers (eg, Col 4:15, 16, cp Acts 2:42, 14:23, Re 1:4+). I believe that the church is the bride of Christ, which will live and reign with Him throughout all eternity (Ep 5:31+, Ep 5:32+; Rev 19:7+). I believe that the church is entrusted with the mission of world evangelization during this age (Mt 28:19, 20+; Acts 1:8+).

I believe that the church is not the new Israel. See related discussions with which I agree - [What is New Israel? | GotQuestions.org](#), [What is replacement theology / supersessionism? | GotQuestions.org](#), [What is spiritual Israel? | GotQuestions.org](#)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

I believe a spiritual gift (charisma) is a gracious from God our Father, supernaturally given to each and every believer by which the Holy Spirit ministers to the body of Christ, for "there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1Co 12:4+). A spiritual gift cannot be

earned, pursued, or worked up, "but to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1Co 12:7+), that the Holy Spirit distributes these gifts "to each one individually just as He wills" (1Co 12:11+), that "God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired" (1Co 12:18+), that "each one has received a special gift" and is to "employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1Pe 4:10+), that "whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to Whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen" (1Pe 4:11+), that we each "have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us" (Ro 12:6+), that the gifts include "prophecy ... service... teaching... exhortation he who gives... he who leads... he who shows mercy." (Ro12:7, 8+). (See chart on **Spiritual Gifts**)

ESCHATOLOGY (Last Things)

I believe that God declares "the end from the beginning and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure'" (Isa 46:10, 42:9, 45:21) and that He alone can declare "the things that are coming and the events that are going to take place." (Isa 44:7), that He separated the Jews out from all of mankind as a chosen people (Dt 7:7, 8), that He made covenant promises to them that will yet be fulfilled in the last days (Je 31:31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 26, 37, cp Ro 11:25, 26, 27+), that He punished them for 70 years in Babylon (2Chr 36:20,21, Da 9:2, Je 25:11, 12, 29:10), that the Babylonian exile marked the beginning of the times of the Gentiles which will terminate at the end of the Great Tribulation (Lk 21:24), that God will yet punish Israel 7 x 70 years (Da 9:24+), 483 years of which have already come to pass (including the incredible prediction of Christ's first coming in Da 9:25; Zech 9:9 and His crucifixion and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD in Da 9:26), that the Seventieth Week of Daniel, the last 7 years (Da 9:27+) often termed the Tribulation (the end of which brings to fulfillment the prophecy of the 490 years which summarized in 6 accomplishments listed in Da 9:24+) will be for the purging and purification of a believing **remnant** of Israel (Da 12:10+), one-third being saved (Zech 12:10, 13:8, 9, cf Ro 11:25, 26, 27+) out of the the last 3.5 years (Great Tribulation Mt 24:21, 29 which begins with the Abomination of Desolation Mt 24:15, Mk 13:14, 17, Re 7:14+, the time of Jacob's distress, Jer 30:7, the "time of distress" Da 12:1+), that the promises to Israel have not been "forfeited" to the church (Ro 11:27+), which is not the **Israel of God**, that the church will be raptured out of the world (Rapture vs Second Coming) probably prior to Daniel's 70th week (Timing - Pre-, Mid- or Post-Tribulation), that the Seventieth Week of Daniel will be inaugurated by a covenant between the "antichrist" and Israel (Da 9:27+), establishing peace for three and one half years and reinstituting temple sacrifices in the rebuilt Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, that the diabolic character and intentions of the antichrist will be revealed at the midpoint of Daniel's 70th week initiating the "Great Tribulation" (Mt 24:15, 2Th 2:3,4), that this Great Tribulation will culminate in the pouring out of God's wrath on the **Earth Dwellers** (unbelievers in the Revelation), that the 7 year period Seventieth Week of Daniel will be terminated with the triumphant return of Christ as King of kings (Re 19:11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16+, Mt 24:30), with the defeat of the antichrist and armies of the world (Re 19:19, 20, 21+), that after that Satan will be bound for 1000 years (Re 20:1, 2, 3+), that during this 1000 years Christ will establish His Messianic (Millennial) kingdom on earth (Re 20:4+, Re 20:5+, Re 20:6+), that the Abrahamic Covenant promises to Israel in regard to the land will be fulfilled (Ge 15:18), that David will reign as king over Israel (Je 30:9, Ezek 34:23, 37:24, 25, Ho 3:5), that the saints will rule and reign with Christ on His throne (Rev 5:10+, Re 20:6+), that the Messianic kingdom will be a time of unprecedented peace (cp Is 11:6, 7, 8, 9 - click for multiple Scriptures describing the Millennium), then after 1000 years Satan will be released and gather together as many as the sands of the seashore against the reigning Christ (Re 20:7, 8, 9+), that Satan will be summarily defeated and thrown into the Lake of Fire where the beast and false prophet have been for 1000 years (Re 20:10+, Re 19:20+) and they will be tormented forever and ever (Re 20:10+), that heaven and earth will be destroyed by fire (2Pe 3:10+, cp Re 20:11+ = "no place"), that there are two resurrections - one to life and the other to judgment (Jn 5:29, Da 12:2+, Ac 24:15 - see The Two Resurrections - "First" and "Second" - on a timeline), that all unbelievers will be judged according to their deeds at the Great White Throne (Re 20:12, 13+), that they will be thrown into the Lake of fire and punished eternally away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (Re 20:14+, 2Th 1:9), that after the 1000 year (Millennium) Christ will deliver up the Millennial Kingdom to His Father (1Co 15:24), that all saints of all ages will dwell forever in the new heaven and new earth (Re 21:1, 2, 3+), and that He will wipe away every tear (Re 21:4+)

I believe that the practical import of prophecy is to cause us to develop "20/20 vision," which I like to call vertical vision, and that as we come to understand God's sovereign plan for the ages, we are transformed by this truth renewing our mind and we are thereby enabled/motivated to focus less and less on this present evil age (Galatians 1:4+) and more and more on our eternal home in glory (Ro 8:18+, Ro 8:23, 24, 25+). In fact Scripture teaches us that what we are **looking** for will determine what we are **living** for --

"The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the Blessed Hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus Who gave Himself for us, that He might

redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds... Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God... eagerly waiting for the hope of righteousness... waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body... longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven... for our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ... from heaven, Whom (God) raised from the dead, that is Jesus, Who delivers us from the wrath to come... Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless... there is laid up... the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to... all who have loved His appearing." (Titus 2:11+, Titus 2:12+, Titus 2:13+, Titus 2:14+, 2Pe 3:11, 12+, Gal 5:5, Ro 8:23+, 2Co 5:2+, Php 3:20+, 1Th 1:10+, 2Pe 3:14+, 2Ti 4:8+)

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

I believe that every saint (cp Php 1:1+) is in **Christ Jesus** and as a result of their new position in the Kingdom of light (Ep 5:8+, 1Th 5:5+, cf their transfer at the time of their new birth in Col 1:13+, Acts 26:16, 17, 18, esp verse 18) are involved in an invisible war with the **world system** opposed to God, the **fallen flesh** and the fallen angel, the **devil** and his demons, so that this supernatural struggle is "not against flesh and blood" but against a hierarchy of organized demonic forces composed of "rulers... powers... the world forces of this darkness... the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ep 6:12+, cf 2Co 10:3, 4, 5+), that **Satan** is a real enemy who was created (cp the Christ the Creator - Col 1:16+) a perfect angel (Ezekiel 28:13, 14, 15, 16, 17), that he desired to be God which led to his fall (note repetition of "I will" in Isaiah 14:12, 13, 14, 15, 16), that he led one-third of the angelic hosts (who are commonly referred to as **demons** or evil spirits, cp Acts 19:12, 13) to rebel against God and be cast out of heaven (Re 12:4+), that these demonic forces are organized and commanded by Satan (the devil, the serpent of old, the great dragon - Re 12:9+) "who **deceives** the whole world", that he "prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to **devour**" (1Pe 5:8+), that he is the father of lies (Jn 8:44), but that his lies ("fiery missiles" or "flaming arrows") can be extinguished by taking up the **shield of faith** and obeying what God says is true (Ep 6:16+), that in this invisible war believers are called to **humble** themselves (depending on and receiving His "greater grace" Jas 4:6+, cf 2Cor 12:9+, 2Co 12:10+), that believers are to submit to God and resist the devil who will flee (Jas 4:7+), that Christ "through death" on the Cross rendered "powerless" the devil "who had the power of death" (Heb 2:14, 15+), that believers also battle against the evil, godless **world system** (which hates Jesus and His followers Jn 15:18,19) but which has been overcome by Christ (Jn 16:33, Gal 6:14+), that believers battle against "fleshly lusts (Jas 1:13, 14+, cp Gal 5:17+), that these **lusts** relentlessly **wage a strategic war** against our **souls** (1Pe 2:11+), but that the power of **Sin** (which is personified as a powerful, ruthless tyrant or slave master) and the **fallen flesh** have been broken by Christ's death, burial and resurrection (which equates with the "**Gospel**" - 1Co 15:1+, 1Co 15:2+, 1Co 15:3, 4, 5+, cf Ro 6:11+, Ro 6:12, 13+, Ro 6:14+), so that believers can now walk as overcomers (1Jn 4:4, 5:4), as "more than conquerors through Him Who loved us" (Ro 8:37KJV+) and as they walk by the Spirit of Christ, they are enabled to **not** fulfill the desires of the flesh (Gal 5:16+ - Beware, do not "invert" the order, i.e., try in your strength to "not carry out the desire of the flesh", but **first** continually surrender your will to the Spirit Who will empower you to overcome the lust of the flesh.) In short, believers are charged to "**be strong** (present imperative = Continually.) in the Lord, and in the strength of His might" (Ep 6:10+) and to "**put on** (aorist imperative = command. Do this now! It is urgent! Don't leave the house without putting on your "battle gear" beloved!) the **full armor** of God" (Ep 6:11+ cf Ro 13:12+, Ro 13:13, 13:14+), that you may be able to stand firm against the **schemes** of the devil." (Ep 6:11+), to "**take up** (aorist imperative) the **full armor** of God that you may be able to **resist** in the evil day" and "stand firm" (Ep 6:13+), to "gird your loins with truth" (Ep 6:14+ cf Mt 4:4, Jn 8:31, 32, 36), to "put on the breastplate of righteousness" (living "right" by His power) (Ep 6:14+), to "shod your feet with the preparation of the **Gospel of peace**", to "take the **helmet of salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **Word of God**" (Eph 6:17+) and finally "with all **prayer** and **petition pray** at all **times** in the Spirit, and... be on the alert with all **perseverance** and petition for all the **saints**." (Ep 6:18+, cf 1Th 5:17+, Php 4:6+, Php 4:7+)