BETHLEHEM
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Statement of Faith

A. The Holy Scriptures: The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to man. All Scripture is inspired by God and is totally true and trustworthy. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12)

B. God: There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe.

1. God the Father: God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. (Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 John 5:7.

2. God the Son: Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. (Matthew 1:18-23; Mark 1:1; 3:11; John 1:1-18)

3. God the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service. (Genesis 1:2; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; Hebrews 9:8, 14; 2 Peter 1:21; Revelation 1:10; 22:17)

C. Creation: We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11)

D. Mankind: Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. (Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3; 9:6)

E. Salvation: Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. (John 3:3-21,36; Romans 1:16-18; 5:8-10; 10:9-10,13; Ephesians 2:8-22)

F. Eternal Security and the Purposes of Grace: Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. (John 1:12-14; 10:27-29; Romans 5:1-10; 8:28-39; Hebrews 11:39–12:2)

G. The Church:

1. We believe that the local church, which is the body and the bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons. (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-

23; 5:25-27)

2. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. (1 Tim 2:9-14; 3:1-15)

3. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external ty or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)

H. The Kingdom: The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.(Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.)

I. Stewardship and Giving: God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth. (Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12)

J. Separation: We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, unbiblical behavior and appearance of evil. (Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Thess. 5:22)

K. The Second Coming and the Eternal Destiny of Man: God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth. (Ps 89:3-4; Dan 2:31-45; Zech 14:4-11; 1 Thess 1:10, 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev 3:10, 19:11-16, 20:1-6)

L. Education: Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. (Deuteronomy 4:1,5;; Nehemiah 8:1-8; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17)

M. Evangelism and Missions: It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11)

N. Cooperation: Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. (Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Mark 2:3; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35)

O. The Personality of Satan: We believe that Satan is a real being, the author of sin and the cause of the fall of man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man. (Job

1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Eph 6:12; Rev. 20:10)

P. Civil Government: We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. (Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7)

Q. The Christian and the Social Order: In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including but not limited to adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. (Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48;; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37;; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12–14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24;; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8)

R. Human Sexuality:

1. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

2. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)
3. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

S. Family Relationships

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

2. God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society.

It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

God's intention is for marriage to be the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ.

3. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through prayer, consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8;; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20;; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

T. Divorce and Remarriage. We believe that God disapproves of divorce. The Biblical exceptions for remarriage are the death or adultery of a spouse. God's standard for marriage requires sexual purity and faithfulness between husband and wife. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6; Heb 13:4)

U. Abortion. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

V. Love. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers and those who oppose us. Although we must sometimes confront people and or issues, we must do so graciously, gently, patiently, humbly and in a spirit of Christian love. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)

W. Lawsuits Between Believers. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)