

# Higher Vision Beliefs

a. That the Holy Scriptures is the inspired Word of God, both Old and New Testaments were written by holy men inspired by the Holy Spirit and are God's revealed word to man.

b. That Scripture teaches that there is one and only one true and living God, Who is self-existent, and the eternal "I AM," the creator of heaven and earth and the redeemer of mankind. That He has chosen to reveal Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the same in essence, though distinct in personality (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10-11; Matthew 28:18-19; Luke 3:22). These three are one God, having the same nature, attributes, and perfection and are worthy of the same homage and obedience (Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3,4; II Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 1:4-6).

c. Creation

1. Of the World

God spoke into existence the world and all things that it contains, for His own pleasure, and the enjoyment of His creatures (Revelation 4:11; I Timothy 6:17).

2. Of Man

God created man in His image according to Genesis 1:26 as a triune being consisting of spirit, soul (which is made of the mind, will and emotions), and a body.

3. Primitive Man and His Fall

Our first parents, in their original state, were upright. They naturally preferred and desired to obey their creator, and had no preference or desire to transgress His will until they were influenced and inclined by Satan to disobey God's commands. Previous to this, the only tendency of their nature was to do righteousness. In consequence of their first transgression, the state under which the posterity of Adam came into the world is so different from that of Adam that they have not that righteousness and purity which Adam had before the fall; they are not willing to obey God but are inclined to do evil. Hence, none, by virtue of any natural goodness and mere work of their own, can become the children of God (Genesis 1:26-31; 3:1-7; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Psalms 51:5; John 6:44; Romans 5:12-21; I Corinthians 2:14).

d. That Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the son of Man, was born miraculously of the Virgin Mary (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35). He lived a sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; I Peter 2:22). That He came into the world to save men from the guilt and condemnation of sin (John 3:16), offering His blood as an atonement (I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21) and making it available to all who exercise faith in Him. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; I Corinthians 15:4). His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3). That He is presently seated at the right hand of God the Father, interceding for His redeemed.

e. The Holy Spirit

1. The Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Spirit the acts and attributes of an intelligent being. He guides, knows, moves, gives information, commands, forbids, sends forth, reproves, as the instrumental segment of the God Head in the liberal dispensation of spiritual gifts, and can be sinned against (John 16:13; I Corinthians 2:11; Genesis 1:2; Acts 10:19; 13:2; 16:6; 13:4; John 16:8; Mark 3:29; Acts 7:51; Ephesians 4:30; I Corinthians 12).

2. The works of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; creation; inspiration, giving of life, and sanctification (Job 33:4; II Peter 1:21; I Peter 3:18; I Corinthians 6:11).

3. Of Sanctification: That sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we become partakers of His holiness; that it is begun at regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the continual use of the appointed means especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer (I Thessalonians 4:3; I John 2:29; Romans 8:5; Philippians 2:12-13).

f. The Salvation of Man. Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God. Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by Grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life. The inward evidence, to the believer, of his salvation, is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of unconditional love, righteousness, and true holiness, demonstrated by the fruit of the Spirit (John 13:35; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:24). The spirit of the believer who dies in Christ immediately goes to be with the Lord (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Luke 23:42-43; II Corinthians 5:8).

g. The Doctrine of Baptisms. We believe the New Testament teaches at least three baptisms. First, there is the baptism whereby the repentant sinner, upon trusting Jesus Christ as his Savior, is baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13). Secondly, there is water baptism by immersion for believers only. This we believe to be an ordinance of the church, whereby the believer experiences the reality of co-crucifixion and co-resurrection with the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-6). Thirdly, there is the filling or baptism in the Holy Spirit by the Lord Jesus Christ, which may occur at or subsequent to conversion. We believe that speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance is the evidence of this baptism.

h. The Promise of the Father. All believers are entitled to, and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the Promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, and the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5; I Corinthians 12:1-31). This wonderful experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 2:38; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-8).

i. Sanctification. Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of a dedication unto God (Romans 12:1-2; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Ghost we are able to obey the command: "Be ye Holy, for I am Holy" (I Peter 1:15, 16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection and by faith reckoning daily upon that fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11, 13; 8:1-2, 13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 12:12-13; I Peter 15).

j. The Church and the Ministry. We believe that all who are united by the new birth to Jesus Christ are covenant fellowship partners of the Universal Church, the Body of Christ. We also believe that the local congregation of Christian believers is divinely instituted and is the chosen instrument of God for the furtherance of God's work here on Earth. While appreciating the work of para church groups, we believe that the local church is God's chosen vehicle for world evangelization and the nurture of Christians. We further believe in the spiritual unity of all believers and in working together with others who believe in salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ for the causes of evangelism, missions and benevolence (Matthew 16:16-18; John 17:21; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15). The church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission and purpose. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the church of the firstborn, whose name is written in heaven. As such, the Bible reveals that we are covenant fellowship partners one of another and the basis of our fellowship is in Christ in the power of the Spirit (Ephesians 1:22; 2:19-22; Hebrews 12:23). A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the three-fold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) Evangelization of the world, (2) Worship of God, (3) Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (I Chronicles 16:29; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 14:23; John 4:23-24; Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28).

k. Five-Fold Ministry. The church is to be taught and led by the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the purpose of every believer seeing and exercising

their priestly and kingly ministry as outlined in I Peter 2:5,9 and Revelation 16. The five-fold ministry is to teach and train its people to do the work of the ministry with maturity and unity in mind. Working with these ministries will be elders, deacons, and the gifted men and women of the church (Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12:2; Ephesians 4:11-13; I Timothy 3:2-12; Titus 2:15).

I. Levitical Ministry and Distribution. The Bible relates that covenant fellowship partners of the Levitical order were to be paid from the tithes and offerings presented (Numbers 18:21-24; Deuteronomy 12:19; 18:1-2) by the people to the men of God at the church. The church believes that the Word of God sets forth that the sacerdotal functions to be performed by the Levites are:(a) The care of the sanctuary (Numbers 1:49-53; 18:2-4; I Chronicles 6:48; 23:27-32); (b) The ushers in the temple (I Chronicles 9:17-27, 26:12-19); (c) Treasurers (I Chronicles 26:26-28); (d) Singers (I Chronicles 9:33-34); (e) Instructors in the Law (Leviticus 10:10; Ezekiel 44:24); (f) Assistants to the Priests (Numbers 3:9; I Chronicles 23:28-32); (g) Secretaries (I Chronicles 2:55; II Chronicles 34:13); (h) Overseers of building and repairing temple (I Chronicles 23:2-4; Ezra 3:8-9); (i) Inquirers of God (Exodus 28:30, Numbers 27:21, Ezra 2:63, Nehemiah 7:65); (j) Ministers before the ark (I Chronicles 16:4); (k) Musicians (I Chronicles 15:16, 16:42); (l) Protectors of the tabernacle (Numbers 1:53); (m) Ministers of God (Numbers 3:12, 39-49); (n) Prayer (II Chronicles 30:27; I Chronicles 23:30); (o) Teachers (II Chronicles 35:3, Nehemiah 8:9); (p) Praise (II Chronicles 8:14); (q) Providers of music for worship (II Chronicles 5:12; 7:6; 29:30; 30:15-27). Therefore all persons participating in the above functions of the Levites in the church shall be candidates for commissioning into the ministry and shall be eligible for receipt of the Levitical distribution from the church. The amount of such distribution shall be determined by the pastor.

m. Divine Healing. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement and is the privilege of all believers. The ministrations of the laying on of hands accompanied with the anointing of oil for the healing of the sick shall be granted as request is made and the need may require (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 16:17-18; James 5:14-15).

n. The Total Prosperity of God. We believe that the Gospel of the kingdom is God's absolute answer to man's total need and total prosperity NOW:

1. Spiritually - John 3:3,11; II Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 10:9-10
2. Mentally - II Timothy 1:7; Romans 12:2; Isaiah 26:3
3. Physically - Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:17; I Peter 2:24
4. Financially - 3 John 2; Malachi 3:10-11; Luke 6:38; II Corinthians 9:6-10; Deuteronomy 28:1-14
5. Socially - Proverbs 3:4; I Samuel 2:26; Romans 14:18; II Corinthians 8:21

r. The Blessed Hope. The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and the blessed hope of the church (I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 15:51).

s. Laying on of Hands. A simple belief that power or anointing of any other necessary quality can be transmitted from one person touching another. First practiced by the Levitical priesthood (Numbers 8:10-11, 27:22-23). Jesus practiced it as a blessing, Mark 10:13-16, and it has been used by Him and others for healing (Mark 5:22-23; 16:18; Acts 14:3; 19:11-12; 28:8; Luke 4:40), conferring office (Acts 8:16-18), receiving anointing (I Timothy 4:14) and for ordination (I Timothy 4:14).

We believe in the doctrine of the laying on of hands for:

1. The confirming of believers to commitment and ministry in the local church.
2. The confirming of one's call by God to special ministry in the local church (Acts 13:1-3).
3. The imparting of spiritual gifts (I Timothy 4:14; II Timothy 1:6).
4. The experiencing of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17-18).
5. The ministry of healing of the sick through the Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 16:16).
6. The blessing and dedicating of children to the Lord (Mark 10:16).

t. Gifts of the Spirit. The nine gifts of the Spirit set forth in I Corinthians 12 should be and must be operative in the church to enjoy the fullness of God. These gifts are imparted by the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit and only work or are operated by this one and the self-same Spirit (I Corinthians 12:11).

u. The Millennial Reign of Christ. The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope. Followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27, 30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of the national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21-22; Zephaniah 3:19-20; Romans 11:26-27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-7; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3-4).

v. The Final Judgment and Eternal State. We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body, when Jesus Christ comes for His own. Whereupon soul and body reunited shall be with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; II Thessalonians 1:7-8; Jude 6, 7; Revelation 20:11-15). There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

w. The New Heavens and the New Earth. "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:22).

x. Tithing, Offerings and Alms. Both the Old and New Testament Scriptures teach tithing as God's financial plan for the support of His work. These are to be practices continually by all believers and are outward expressions of the unity of the church, the Body of Christ, as it joins together in support of the work of the Lord (Malachi 3:8-10; I Corinthians 16:2; Genesis 28:22; Matthew 23:23; Deuteronomy 26; 14:28-29; 15:7-11; Numbers 18:8-11; Ezekiel 44; Proverbs 14:21; 29:7; Luke 11:41; 12:33).

y. Death. As a result of original sin, all mankind is subject to the death of the body. The soul does not die with the body, but immediately after death enters into a conscious state of happiness or misery according to the character here possessed either by rejection or acceptance of the Savior (Romans 5:12; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Philippians 1:23).

z. Of the World to Come. We believe that the end of this age is rapidly approaching (I Peter 4:7). We believe in "That Blessed Hope" -the personal, imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:13-18). We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost without Christ (Acts 24:15; Matthew 24:31-46; Revelation 22:11).