

# The Christian Fundamentals, 1964

Third Annual Biblical Discipleship and Fellowship Ministerial Meeting  
Hartville, Ohio in 1964.

## A BRIEF STATEMENT OF BIBLE DOCTRINE

### ARTICLE I OF THE WORD OF GOD

We believe in the plenary and verbal inspiration of the Bible as the Word of God: that it is authentic in its matter, authoritative in its counsels, inerrant in the original writings, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We reject Neoorthodoxy, intellectualism, relativism, and other philosophies where the authority of the Word is rejected, questioned, or displaced by human reason. 1 Corinthians 2:5-7, 14; John 10:35; 2 Samuel 23:2; Psalm 12:6; 119:160; Jeremiah 1:9; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21.

### ARTICLE II OF THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF GOD

We believe that there is but one God, eternal, infinite, perfect, and unchangeable; Who exists and reveals Himself in three persons- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 90:2; Genesis 17:1; Isaiah 40:28; 57:15; Malachi 3:6; Genesis 1:2; Hebrews 1:8; 13:8; Matthew 28:19

### ARTICLE III OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God (John 1:1,2; Hebrews 13:8), that He was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:20), and born of a virgin – the perfect God-man (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; 1 Timothy 2:5); that He was without sin (2 Corinthians 5:21), the divinely appointed sacrifice (Galatians 3:13), who, by His death on the cross, made the only atonement for sin by the shedding of His blood (1 Peter 2:22-24), thus reconciling man to God (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20); that He was resurrected bodily from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Acts 3:26; 10:40) ascended to glory (Acts 1:11; Ephesians 1:19-21), and “ever liveth to make intercession for us” (Revelation 1:18; Hebrews 6:20; 7:26); and He is the only head of the church (Colossians 1:18).

### ARTICLE IV OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:3, 17; John 16:7, 8, 13, 14; 1 Corinthians 3:16), the third person of the Trinity (Matthew 28:19); that He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He exalts Christ and illuminates the Word of God (John 16:7-15); that He is received at the New Birth in Holy Spirit baptism (John 3:3-5; 1 Corinthians 12:13) and indwells and comforts the believer by a continuing work of grace in his heart (John 14:16-18); that He guides the believer into all truth, empowering him for service and enabling him to live a life of righteousness by His renewing and cleansing power (Acts 1:8; Romans 8:1-4). We believe in the gifts of Christ to His Church (Ephesians 4:8-11); distributed and administered by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4, 11). We warn against modern healing and tongues movements, and the second work of grace emphasis, which do not spring from the Spirit of God, but from the flesh, and are a reproach to the cause of Christ (2 Timothy 1:7; 1 Corinthians 14:40).

### ARTICLE V OF CREATION

We believe that the Genesis account of creation is a historic fact and literally true; that the Bible is a Book of Redemption, yet is scientifically accurate. Genesis 1:1, 21, 27; Exodus 20:11; Mark 10:6; John 1:3; Hebrews 1:10; 11:3.

### ARTICLE VI OF THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created by an immediate act of God (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:7; Psalm 33:6-9), in His own image, and after His likeness; that by one act of disobedience man became sinful in his nature (Genesis 2:16, 17), spiritually dead,

subject to physical death and to the power of the devil (Ephesians 2:1-3, 12), from which fallen condition he was unable to save himself (John 6:44; Romans 5:6); that this condition became the lot of all mankind (Romans 5:12; 1:18-32).

## **ARTICLE VII OF SALVATION**

We believe that man is saved by the mercy and grace of God through faith in the redemptive work of Christ (Acts 15:11; Ephesians 2:8; Matthew 1:21; Galatians 3:13), the power of the Word of God (1 Peter 1:22, 23), and the indwelling, renewing, and regenerating work of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4-7); that repentance precedes forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; Matthew 3:8; Luke 24:47), and includes “fruit” or evidences of a change of heart and life, and that faith issues in obedience (Acts 5:32; 6:7; 1 Peter 1:2; Romans 1:5; 16:25, 26), in yieldedness and complete surrender to God (Romans 6:13-22; 12:1, 2); that through this experience man becomes a partaker of eternal life and all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3; 2 Peter 1:4), and lives a life of victory over the flesh, the world, and Satan (1 Peter 5:9; Galatians 1:4; 2:20; 1 Timothy 4:10).

## **ARTICLE VIII OF ASSURANCE**

We believe it is the privilege of all believers to know that they have passed from death unto life (1 John 3:14; 5:13; Romans 8:16), that God is able to keep them from falling (Jude 24), but that obedience of faith is essential to the maintenance of one’s salvation and growth in grace (Galatians 3:11; John 8:31, 32; 2 Peter 1:5-11; Romans 1:5; 16:26): that the teachings of (absolute) predestination and unconditional eternal security of the believer give false assurance of salvation (Revelation 22:17; John 15:6).

## **ARTICLE IX OF THE CHURCH**

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ, composed of all those who through repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ have been born again and baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Corinthians 12:12, 13). Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and therefore the supreme and final authority in His Church (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:23). He has vested in the local body of faithful believers the responsibility to form a congregation, set up standards, and administer discipline according to the principles already established in His Word (Matthew 16:18, 19; 18:17-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4, 5, 11-13).

We believe that the Church in neither an ecclesiastical hierarchy where ministers, bishops, boards, committees, church councils, or conferences arbitrarily rule (1 Peter 5:3; 3 John 9, 10), nor a democracy where rule is by popular majority (2 Timothy 4:3, 4). But the Church is a Theocracy in which the triune Godhead is directly active; Jesus Christ as the Head (Ephesians 5:23), subject to the Father (Hebrews 1:1-8), and by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-15), commands, directs, and controls His Church by His Word through a chosen and called ministry (Acts 1:17, 20-26; 6:1-6; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13). We consider inter-congregational and inter-fellowship counselling and conferring both Scriptural and necessary (Acts 15:2-4).

We believe it is the Church’s divinely appointed mission to preach the Gospel to every creature, teaching obedience to all His commandments (Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Acts 20:27, 28).

## **ARTICLE X OF DISCIPLINE**

We believe that in order to Scripturally observe the ordinances and to maintain true doctrine and consistent practice, the local body of believers has the God-given authority and responsibility according to Scriptural teaching: (1) to choose officials (bishops, ministers, and deacons)- the use of the lot is recommended where there is more than one qualified nominee (Acts 1:15-26; 6:1-6; 13:1-4; 14:23; Titus 1:5); (2) to regulate the observances of the ordinances (1 Corinthians 11); (3) to exercise wholesome discipline (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5); (4) to organize and conduct her work in a manner consistent with her high calling and essential to her greatest effectiveness (Acts 20:28-32; Galatians 2:7-14; Ephesians 4:11-16).

Therefore, having the “keys of the kingdom,” the Church must guard the door of entrance into her fellowship. She must also “bind and loose,” make consistent application of Scriptural principles to everyday living, and maintain a pure

and holy fellowship by exercising impartial, loving, Scriptural discipline (Matthew 16:19; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15; Hebrews 12:5-11; 2 Corinthians 7).

We believe that a member who transgresses against another and refuse to be reconciled, or a member who is an unrepentant, or an open, sensual sinner, must, according to the Scripture, be excommunicated from the fellowship of the believers (Matthew 18:15-18; Titus 3:10; 1 Corinthians 5).

## ARTICLE XI ON SEPARATION

We believe that we are called with a holy calling to a life of separation from the world and its follies, fashions, sinful practices

and methods (1 Peter 2:9; Titus 2:11-14), that the Scriptural teaching on the unequal yoke forbids courtship or intermarriage with unbelievers, membership in secret orders, and worldly business or labor associations, and also cooperation with religious organizations who do not hold to the whole Gospel (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11).

Therefore, since Christians are called to be strangers and pilgrims in this world and stewards of material things, we believe that luxury and ostentatious display are inconsistent with our calling (1 Peter 2:11; 4:10; 1 John 3:17).

Since the attire of the world is largely governed by the sensual appeal of the flesh (1 John 2:15-17; Ephesians 2:2,3), we must avoid such a course and endeavor to follow the Scripture (Romans 12:1, 2). The Word teaches the propriety of modesty (covered bodies, 1 Timothy 2:9), and that flashy or superfluous clothing or makeup on the body is not for saints (1 Peter 3:3-5; 5:5, 6). We believe that the principles of nonconformity, modesty, and simplicity can best be maintained by uniformity, therefore, we believe uniform plain attire in the congregation is necessary.

We believe that the current cultural practice of the wedding ring is a violation of the Scriptural command prohibiting the wearing of jewelry (1 Timothy 2:9).

Our church buildings are dedicated to the service of God, and so ought not be used for carnal entertainment or any weddings and funerals which detract from the simplicity of the Gospel.

The New Testament emphasis is on a spiritual worship (John 4:24), with the personal participation of the individual (Acts 17:24, 25; 1 Corinthians 14:15), and we conclude that instrumental music ought not be used in our worship services.

Since commercial entertainment, including sports, movies, television, and radio, are largely used for the pleasure of an unregenerate society, and even the so-called religious movies and broadcasts are so often mixed with the false, we believe they are as a whole detrimental to the life and growth of the church (3 John 11; 1 Thessalonians 5:22; 2 Timothy 2:22; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 Corinthians 10:31).

The Scriptures teach that church and state are distinct and separate (John 18:36; Romans 12 and 13), and so we believe that by holding public office, by voting, or in applying pressure upon the government in the regulation of their affairs, but rather that we should give ourselves to prayer on their behalf (1 Timothy 2:1, 2). We further believe that we should keep aloof from all movements which seek the reformation of society independent of the merits of the death of Christ and the experience of the New Birth.

In regard to life insurance, we believe that it is inconsistent with filial trust in the providence and care of our Heavenly Father (Psalm 118:18; Jeremiah 17:5, 7), and further that we should not depend on human organizations or government, but that the church should assume responsibility where genuine material needs exist in the brotherhood (Matthew 6:24-34; Galatians 6:10).

## ARTICLE XII ON ORDINANCES

The Ordinance of *Water Baptism* was commanded by Christ (Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:19, 20), and was intended as an outward sign of a previous inner cleansing by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and by it the applicant testifies to the church and to all men that he has forsaken the world and his own carnal will and desires and has voluntarily placed himself under the lordship of Jesus Christ until death. As this rite initiates members into the visible body, care should be exercised that conversion has been genuine and that there has been a definite cutting off from the old life and walking in the new life in Christ Jesus in sincerity before admittance. We believe that pouring is the Scriptural mode

(Acts 2:16-18, 41; 10:45, 47; 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2; 1 Peter 3:20, 21). We believe further that children are spiritually safe prior to the age of accountability, being covered by the blood of Christ, and that baptism should not be administered until there has been a clear experience of conversion and commitment to Christ. We reject the formal, public dedication of children as having no New Testament authority for its practice.

The *Lord's Supper* as instituted by Christ is a memorial of the Lord's sacrifice and a testimony of the participants' faith in His death and future return (Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). We commune with the Lord and one another. The emblems denote, among believers, unity and oneness in the Lord. There needs to be peace among members of the congregation as well as a common standard of faith and conduct. 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17, 21; Matthew 5:23, 24; 18:15-35; Hebrews 12:14. Since participating unworthily is serious (1 Corinthians 11:27, 28), the necessity of self-examination and the purging out of the unrepentant is obvious (1 Corinthians 5:8-13). We believe in close communion (limited to those who are one in faith) and clean communion (where the church has dealt with known sin).

The Ordinance of the *Washing of the Saint's Feet* was established by the same authority as communion and is to be literally observed with equal regularity. It teaches the principles of humility, equality, and loving service. John 13:1-17; 1 Timothy 5:10.

The *Holy Kiss* is a Christian greeting commanded in the Scripture, and is a token of a loving, holy Fellowship in the Lord. It is not to be limited to church leaders, and is not to be replaced by some greeting of our culture, but is to be practiced regularly by all Christians as they meet together. Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14; Acts 20:37.

The *Woman's Veil* (1 Corinthians 11:1-16) is a veil of religious significance and is not a weather garb. It signifies the principles of headship. The Scripture teaches that the veil should be a covering for the head (v. 5) and suggests that it be patterned after nature's covering, the hair (vv. 14, 15). The Scriptures also teach that the cutting of woman's hair is contrary to the will of God (vv. 5, 6). Since the principle of headship, the attitude of prayer, and the alertness to witness are to be continual on the part of Christian women, the veil should be worn at all times.

The *Anointing With Oil* (James 5:13-16) is to be administered by the elders of the church to a sick brother or sister who calls for it in faith. On the part of all involved, there must be confession of all sin and complete submission to the will of God. The oil is symbolical, not of medicine, but of the healing power of God.

*Marriage* between one man and one woman is an institution of God, dissoluble only by death; on the part of the Christian it should be "only in the Lord"; and consistency requires that the marriage relation be entered into only by those of like precious faith (1 Corinthians 7:39; Amos 3:3; Romans 7:2, 3). Marriage is entered into by way of an outward ceremony that signifies a covenant relationship. The binding together of husband and wife for life is a type of the union of Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:22, 23). Divorce and remarriage were permitted in the Old Testament because of the hardness of their hearts, but Jesus reestablished the creation standard of the permanence of marriage (Mark 10:3-12). We find in Matthew 19:9 and in 1 Corinthians 7:11, 14, 15 two possible exceptions, permitting separate living (not divorce), but no exception for remarriage while the former companion is living. Remarriage while the former companion is living is a state of adultery (Mark 10:11, 12; Romans 7:2, 3).

### **ARTICLE XIII ON THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH**

We believe that every born-again child of God is an Ambassador of Jesus Christ; therefore his responsibility as a Christian is to glorify God (1 Peter 2:9) and to seek reconciliation of sinful men to Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5: 18-20). This can be accomplished only by taking advantage of every opportunity (Ephesians 5:16) to personally witness to the saving grace and glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8), by word of mouth (Romans 10:8-10), and by living a consistent Christian life (Titus 2:1-12; 1 Timothy 4:12).

Furthermore, we believe that each local fellowship, in order to facilitate the carrying out of the above mentioned responsibilities, ought to have a Scriptural and an orderly program of "lengthening the cords and strengthening the stakes." (Isaiah 54:2). Such a witness, subject to congregational approval, could include one or more of the following:

Sunday Schools, prayer meetings, Bible meetings, revival and evangelistic meetings, Bible study fellowships, cottage meetings, street meetings, services in jails and convalescent homes, hospital visitation, tract distribution, and Christian schools.

We believe that any faithful publishing work is very helpful and should be supported. We believe that evangelization by colonization is a good work and should be encouraged and promoted.

#### **ARTICLE XIV ON APOSTACY**

We believe that the latter days will be characterized by general lawlessness and departure from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5); that on the part of the world, "Iniquity shall abound" (Matthew 24:12) and "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13; Mark 13:22); that on the part of the church, there will be a falling away (2 Thessalonians 2:3), and the "love of many shall wax cold"; that "false teachers shall abound" (Matthew 24:11, 24; Acts 20:28-30; 2 Peter 2:1).

Present-day evidences of such apostasy are quite prevalent. Many church organizations are dominated by a compromising leadership seemingly intent on maintaining organizational unity at the expense of faithfulness and obedience to the Scriptures. Such compromise leads to exaltation of leaders and blind denominational loyalty rather than loyalty to the Word of God. We also see many of the church institutions, once faithful, now succumbing to world pressures and trends, unequal yokes, other unholy alliances, and the pursuit of accreditations. The emphasis on higher education (colleges, universities, and seminaries) has resulted in the acceptance of ungodly philosophies and centralization of power that has undermined the faith of many. The present-day ecumenical movements that ignore doctrinal unity and purity of practice are unscriptural. Such conditions and trends, church and world-wide, indicate that we are now living in these perilous times, and warrant our withdrawal from all such fellowship (Romans 16:17, 18). We believe that the coming of the Lord is imminent (Matthew 24: 29-31, 44).

#### **ARTICLE XV OF THE RESURRECTION**

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and in the bodily resurrection of all men, both of the just and the unjust – of the just to the resurrection of life, and of unjust to the resurrection of condemnation. John 20:20, 24-29; Luke 24:30, 31; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44; Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23.

#### **ARTICLE XVI OF THE COMING OF CHRIST**

We believe in the personal, imminent coming of our Lord as the blessed hope of the believer; that we who are alive and remain, together with the dead in Christ who will be raised, shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and thus ever be with the Lord. John 14:2, 3; Acts 1:11; Matthew 24:44; Hebrews 10:37; Titus 2:11-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

#### **ARTICLE XVII OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE**

We believe that in the interval between death and resurrection, the righteous will be with Christ in a state of conscious bliss and comfort, but that the wicked will be in a place of torment, in a state of conscious suffering and despair. Luke 16:19-31; 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:1-8; 1 Thessalonians 5:10; 2 Peter 2:9 (R.V.).

#### **ARTICLE XVIII OF THE FINAL STATE**

We believe that hell is the place of torment, prepared for the devil and his angels, where with them the wicked will suffer the vengeance of eternal fire forever and ever, and that heaven is the final abode of the righteous where they will dwell in the fullness of joy forever and ever. Matthew 25:41, 46; Jude 7; Revelation 14:8-11; 20:10, 15; 2 Corinthians 5:1,2; Revelation 21:3-8; 22:1-5.