

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH BRACKTOWN
3016 Bracktown Road
Lexington, Kentucky 40511**

Preamble

For the purpose of preaching, teaching, and spreading the principles and precepts of the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the Holy Bible, and that this group of baptized believers in Christ may covenant together to be governed in an orderly manner as a Missionary Baptist Church, and that the letter and spirit of local autonomy may be preserved for the body in general and the individual in particular, we, the members of First Baptist Church Bracktown do adopt and establish this Constitution and By-Laws. All biblical references are from the King James Version unless otherwise stated.

Article 1: Name and Affiliation

The official name of this church is First Baptist Church Bracktown (FBCB), which was organized in 1880, and has continually operated under that name to the present day. This church may affiliate with local, district, state, and national conventions as the body sees fit, but none of these entities shall have any ecclesiastical authority over this church.

Article 2: Purpose

The purpose of this church is to flesh out the Word of God in faith and fellowship. We are to be a local expression of the universal church in and through which Jesus Christ continues to minister to the world by His Holy Spirit. We will seek to fulfill this calling through corporate worship, through a biblically-guided program of Christian training by which church members may grow in faith and love, through witnessing of the gospel by word and deed, and through ministering to human needs in the name of Jesus. We choose to have a holistic ministry that aids the membership in daily living in their respective communities in a way that will attract others to Christ.

Article 3: Doctrine

FBCB embraces the Holy Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, as the inspired record of God's revelatory actions in human history and as the authoritative basis for our doctrine and practice. The church Covenant and the Articles of Faith, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, drawn up and adopted by this church are regarded as an expression of grace as set forth in the Scriptures. This document shall be subject to revision by the congregation as new insights from the Word of God shall indicate ways in which our faith and life may be brought into closer accord with the teaching of Scripture.

Further, our fundamental Biblical conviction holds that Christian marriage is defined as "the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime". The church believes that Scripture teaches that sexual intimacy shall only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other and that a man and woman shall not engage in intimate sexual activity outside of marriage.

First Baptist Church Bracktown is opposed to same sex marriage and shall not allow same sex marriage ceremonies to be performed within the confines of the church or church properties.

FBCB believes that Scripture also teaches that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, incest, or pornography is sinful and offensive to God. However, FBCB believes that Scripture requires that every person should be shown compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. FBCB believes that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking God's mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

Article 4: Membership

Section 1. Admission of members

- A. By Baptism = Any person who, according to Romans 10:9-10, publicly confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, that Jesus died for his/her sins, and that God has raised Jesus from the dead, and who agrees to be baptized by immersion and to accept the doctrines and practices of this church may be received into the fellowship of this congregation.
- B. By Letter = Any person who has been baptized in a missionary Baptist church shall be accepted for membership pending the request and reception of the letter from her/his former church. FBCB will make the request on behalf of the member.
- C. By Relationship = Any person who has been baptized in a missionary Baptist church who chooses to join FBCB but cannot receive a letter from his/her former church due to the former church going out of existence or refusing to respond to our request for the letter in a timely fashion may be taken in as a member contingent upon an active member of FBCB having knowledge of this person's membership in his/her former church.

Section 2. Dismissal of members

- A. By Death = Any member who dies shall have her/his name removed from the membership list.
- B. By Letter = Any member who unites with another missionary Baptist church and requests his/her letter from FBCB shall receive one complete with a true record of participation while at FBCB.
- C. By Exclusion = Per Matt 18:15-17, formerly known as withdrawal of the right hand of fellowship, a person who has violated the principles of our church covenant and is a legal, financial, or reputational risk to the church, and has been duly sought to be restored to a proper place within the fellowship but refuses to comply, by a majority vote of the active members present at a duly called meeting of the church may have his/her name removed from the membership list, revoking all privileges normally extended to members, as the church pledges to continue to love the dismissed former member. The charge(s) must be brought in writing with the accused given sufficient time to respond to the charges. The objective is always to gain a brother/sister. Never is our objective to lose one.

Section 3: A member in good standing is one who has regularly and consistently supported this church within the last 90 days either with their presence or their finances. Such a one is extended voice and

vote as well as all other privileges pertaining to an active member. Extenuating circumstances may be considered by the body or designated person(s) thereof.

Article 5: Pastor and Officers

The officers of FBCB shall consist of a pastor, church clerk, deacons, trustees, treasurer, assistant treasurer, financial secretary, and assistant financial secretary. The pastor and the church clerk shall be elected by the church body. The deacons shall be selected by the church and appointed by the pastor, per Acts 6:1-6. All other officers shall be recommended by church members and/or pastor and approved by the membership at large. The pastor and all officers are expected to tithe to the church. All paid staff, including the administrative assistant to the pastor who is not an officer, shall serve the church as specified by written contract. Any erring pastor or officer must be afforded the same courtesy of Matthew 18:15-17 as any other church member.

Section 1. Pastor is the leader of the church and the job description for a pastor is found in Acts 20:28 and in the pastoral epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus). The pastor can be hired and fired only by a plurality of active members of the church present in a duly called meeting for the stated purpose of calling or dismissing a pastor. Only the pastor or the church clerk may call a church meeting. The pastor is an ex-officio member of all auxiliaries and departments in the church. Delivering sermons, teaching bible lessons, and representing the church in the community and abroad are but a few of the public duties of the pastor.

The pastor may be dismissed by the church with or without cause but must be paid a full salary plus benefits for ninety (90) days.

Should the pastor choose to resign, a minimum of ninety days' notice shall be given to the church unless mutual agreement between the pastor and the church can be reached.

Section 2. Church Clerk is the only officer other than the pastor who is elected by the body. Therefore, if the pastor's position is vacant, the church clerk is the highest ranking officer. However, the church body may choose who they want to be in charge. The primary duty of the church clerk is to keep an adequate record of all official meetings and to take notes as directed by the pastor in unofficial meetings that will be reported to the church at the proper time. Due to the nature of the possible position the church clerk may acquire by the vacancy in the pastoral position, the church clerk shall be a trustee of the church and a member of First Baptist Bracktown.

Section 3. Deacons are pastor's helpers. They have no scriptural authority. Their authority resides in the one who appoints them. Therefore, deacons cannot hold their office in the absence of a pastor. The new pastor may reappoint the same deacons at the pastor's pleasure. All deacons of FBCB must be members of FBCB. The duty of the deacon is to do whatever the pastor assigns him to do, within biblical and reasonable bounds of course. This includes assisting the pastor in ministering the ordinances of the church, baptism and Lord's Supper, as well as visiting the sick and the elderly. The body of deacons is not the pastor's boss. The pastor answers only to God and the church body. There are no boards in FBCB. A board is a governing body, and this church has local autonomy with democratic tendencies and

biblical guidelines. The number of deacons may vary according to the perceived need. Deacons may constitute a standing body, yet they may also serve on a staggered or rotating basis.

Section 4. Trustees are primarily charged with overseeing the business of the church and the upkeep of the church. Trustees should work closely with the pastor as directed by the pastor. Trustees may be a standing body or may serve on a staggered and/or rotating basis. All of the aforementioned trustees must be members in good standing with FBCB. Additionally, persons who are not members of FBCB may be asked by the pastor or a body-designated officer to serve as a trustee to engage their special expertise for a certain business venture for a certain time of engagement.

The body of trustees shall hold in trusts the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. The trustees shall affix their signatures to all legal documents involving the business transactions for the church. All trustees shall be appointed by the church membership based upon a recommendation from the body of trustees.

The trustees shall recommend a chair and secretary for approval by the church body. Each trustee shall be guided by 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They shall be persons of honesty, practicality, thriftiness and good judgment; persons with financial know-how and ability for business; they must possess a working knowledge of the law or have access to a person with working knowledge of the law.

The chair and the body of trustees shall manage the business affairs of the church. The trustees shall hold in trust all property belonging to the church and shall take all necessary measures for its protection and management.

On behalf of the church, they shall execute all contracts, deeds, mortgages or other instruments when authorized and shall in cooperation with the pastor and finance committee advise ways and means of raising funds for the support of the church and for benevolences and for the disbursement of funds as appropriated.

If a vacancy exists, the body of trustees may appoint an interim trustee(s) with approval of the church body.

Section 5. Treasurer and Assistant treasurer = shall be members of FBCB who are known to be good stewards and trustworthy. Both shall be bonded by the church. They are charged to receive church money from the finance committee after the financial secretary has recorded the amount and to put the money in a designated bank at a designated time following designated procedures. No one person is to handle any money alone unless the money is in a locked bank bag to which he/she does not have access.

Section 6. Financial Secretary/Assistant Financial Secretary = shall record all monies received and all expenditures paid. This person may also serve as the check writer for the church. At the appropriate time in January, he/she shall give out financial statements to members who have made donations to the church the previous year. The financial secretary and the treasurer should present a concerted report to the pastor, officers, and church body on demand.

Article 6: Auxiliaries/Ministries

Various ministry opportunities are available at FBCB and others may be added as deemed necessary to meet the needs of the community and the church. Each ministry has its own organizational structure but is intertwined with the overarching goals of FBCB as a whole. Listed below are the presently existing ministries and a brief note on their objectives.

1-Audio-Visual ministry provides good quality sound and visual aid at all FBCB events and CDs and DVDs for our sick and shut-in members and all others who wish to purchase them. Periscope is the latest added feature that provides live-time ability for non-attendees to view our service.

2-Beautifying Ministry ensures that the interior and exterior of FBCB exemplify the beauty of Christ by providing for seasonal changes and assisting other auxiliaries as needed for their special events.

3-Bethesda Health Ministry is comprised of health professionals who minister to the sick at church as needed and promote healthy lifestyles and disease prevention. This ministry renders valuable service to the neighborhood schools.

4-Children and Youth Ministry helps our younger attendees grow from "immature chumps to spiritual champs" by exposing them to bible principles applicable to their daily lives.

5-Christian Life Witness Counselors Ministry assist those desiring to become members of FBCB by walking them down the aisle and through the process.

6-Cullinary Ministry serves nutritional and succulent meals for all occasions from continental to buffet and 5 to 7 course dinners, teaching proper dining etiquette along the way.

7-Hospitality Ministry is comprised of Parking, Greeters and Ushers who are the face of FBCB for all who come here to worship. Each of these persons have the opportunity to make a positive lasting first impression on all our guests as well as members who may have had a tough week.

8-Library Ministry has the stated goal of contributing to the personal enrichment by promoting literacy and education as they provide information and resources for the members of our church and community. A stocked and well organized library is available to all. Intentional efforts are made to challenge the membership to read.

9-Liturgical Dance Ministry allows artistic expression of the Word of God through dance as worship.

10-Married Couples Ministry aka Homebuilders is committed to help build stronger families on godly principles of tending the biblically prescribed roles in the home. Stronger homes will lead to stronger churches which lead to stronger communities.

11-Men's Ministry is designed to allow "Iron to sharpen iron" as men come together in a common bond to learn how to better lead their families spiritually. Talking through the necessity of prioritizing their wife and the challenge of raising their children give encouragement to these godly men.

12-Music Ministry, led by the Minister of Music, endeavors to maximize the musical gifts and talents in FBCB to enhance the worship experience and to do so with such humility as to always yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit, giving all glory to God.

13-Scholarship and Tutoring Ministry encourages academic excellence for all students pre-school through post-grad by offering services and support for every level.

14-Senior Ministry aka I-Care is designed to keep senior members engaged and involved in church activities and outings. Events and services are designed and provided to enhance the quality of life these treasured servants deserve in their senior status.

15-Transportation Ministry provides a safe ride to and from our worship services and other church events. This ministry also serves all auxiliaries as needed.

16-Women's Ministry allows women to form new bonds as they share insights on being the heart of the home while nurturing children, supporting their husband, and juggling their own career. For single mothers, this ministry is often the village that helps them raise their children.

Article 7: Committees

FBCB shall put in place such standing committees as may be deemed necessary to execute the various phases of the church program efficiently and effectively, namely: Benevolence, Budget and Finance, Personnel, and Publicity. This is not an exhaustive list.

Article 8: Guide Books for Orderly Execution of Business

Section 1. The Holy Bible is our primary guide for how we function at FBCB – 1 Cor 14:40.

Section 2. Robert's rules of order 7th edition guides our parliamentary procedure.

Section 3. Other worthy references are The Hiscox guide for Baptist Churches by Edward T. Hiscox; Baptist Church Manual by J. M Pendleton; and Broadman Church Manual by Howard B. Foshee.

Article 9: Business Meetings

Church-wide business meetings shall be held as frequently as the church chooses to designate, currently twice a year, January and July. In between those times, the pastor and officers shall constitute an executive-board type that shall carry on the necessary business of FBCB. The pastor and officers shall meet no less than quarterly with monthly, if not weekly, informal updates among pastor and officers. Special called church-wide business meetings may be held as deemed necessary. Notice of the regular business meetings shall be announced and posted at least two weeks in advance so all who desire to attend and are eligible to attend may do so.

Article 10: Church Year

The fiscal year of FBCB shall be the calendar year, January 1 through December 31.

Article 11: Amendments

This constitution may be amended at a regularly scheduled or a special called church meeting provided a thirty (30) day public notice has been given of the intent to amend. Such notice shall contain the article to be addressed and shall be verbally announced and posted in a conspicuous place. A two-thirds vote of those eligible voters present at the meeting is required for ratification of the amendment.

Article 12: Validation

The adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws by FBCB shall supersede all previously adopted rules in conflict herewith. However, no actions taken by the church or its agent prior to this date shall be invalidated by this document.

Approved: 12-31-16

Church Clerk: Onelia Franklin

Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior,

And on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,

We do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness and comfort;

To promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines;

To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the gospel to all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances;

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment;

To avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger;

To abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love;

To remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech;

To be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

I. THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us, and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried.

II. THE TRUE GOD

We believe the Scriptures teach there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, The Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

III. THE FALL OF MAN

We believe the Scriptures teach that Man was created in holiness under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgressions fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

IV. THE WAY OF SALVATION

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God; who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made full atonement for our sins; that having risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, he is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and all sufficient Savior.

V. JUSTIFICATION

We believe the Scriptures teach that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification: that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

VI. THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own determined depravity of voluntary rejection of the Gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

VII. REGENERATION

We believe that the Scriptures teach that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith, and newness of life.

VIII. REPENTENCE AND FAITH

We believe the Scriptures teach that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger and helplessness and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our prophet, priest, and king, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.

IX. GOD'S PURPOSE OR GRACE

We believe the Scriptures teach that election is the eternal purpose of God, according of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the Gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.

X. SANCTIFICATION

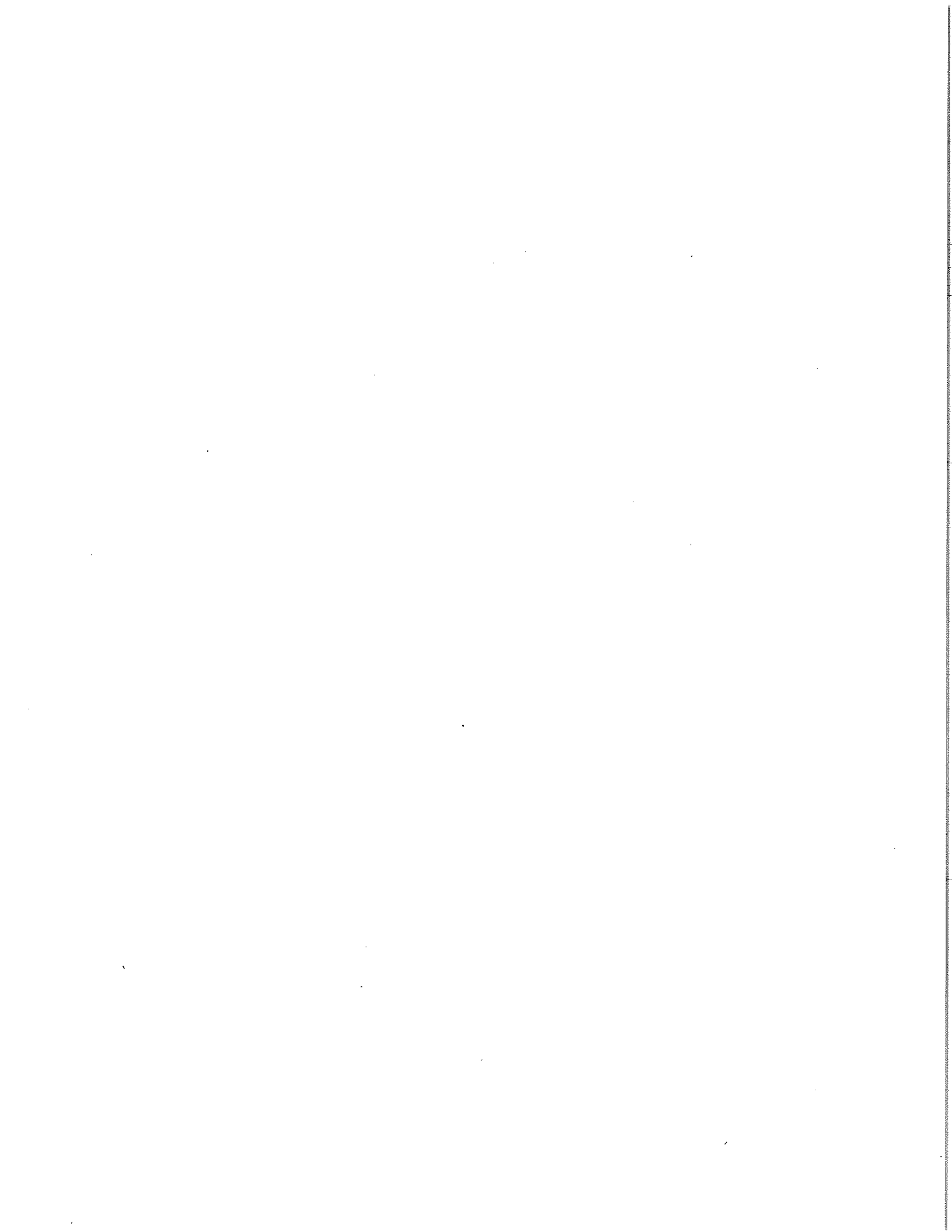
We believe the Scriptures teach that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer.

XI. PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

We believe the Scriptures teach that such only are real believers as endure to the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

XII. THE LAW AND GOSPEL

We believe the Scriptures teach that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arise entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the Means of Grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.



XIII. A GOSPEL CHURCH

We believe the Scriptures teach that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Words; that its only scriptural officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons whose Qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

XIV. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe the Scriptures teach that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect, in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is a prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

XV. THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

We believe the Scriptures teach that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public, and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

XVI. CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe the Scriptures teach that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the Kings on the earth.

XVII. RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED

We believe the Scriptures teach that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

XVIII. THE WORLD TO COME

We believe the Scriptures teach that the end of the world is approaching; that at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave for final retribution; that solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy, and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.