

# **Church of God Militant Pillar and Ground of the Truth**

## **Doctorial Statement**

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### The Bible is the inspired word of the living God.

It is inerrant, and therefore infallible, and profitable for all doctrine and practices of the church, which is the body of Christ.

It was not written by men who decided to give the world their own personal thoughts or opinions about God, but rather by holy men of God who wrote as the unction of the Holy Ghost inspired them to write. (II Tim 3:16-17; II Pet 1:20-21)

The word of God is forever settled in heaven, so much so that heaven and earth may pass away, but God's word will never pass away. (Ps 119:89; Luke 21:33)

He performs and preserves His word, which He has given to us in the Bible.  
(Jer 1:12)

### The Church

It is the veracity of this statement that the rock upon which the church is built.

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt 16:16)

The church is that of which Christ spoke of when He declared unto Peter, "...and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt 16:18) Isn't an organization, a congregation, or a denomination nor is it a building of brick and mortar.

The church consists of lively stones that are built up as a spiritual house, as a habitation of God through the Spirit. It is a living organism, often referred to as the mystical body of Christ. Every Spirit-filled saint of God is a lively stone in this spiritual house. Every saint is a member of the church, which is His body.

Entrance or membership into this church is not by a vote or a right hand of fellowship, it's not by giving large sums of money, it's not by birth because of your parents are members nor is it by doing good deeds. It is only through the baptism by one Spirit, the Holy Ghost, into the one body, the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (I Tim 3:15) The new birth of which Jesus taught (John 3:3, 5) puts one into the church, which is His body. (I Peter 2:5; Galatians 2:19-22; I Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 1:17-18)

The foundation of the church, the body of Christ, is the teachings and practices of the apostles. And Jesus Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone. (Acts 2:42; Galatians 2:20; Isaiah 28:16) The must church follow the teachings of the apostles; for it is they who followed Jesus Christ and were personally appointed by Him to establish and lead His New Testament church. The apostles did not follow cunningly devised fables, but were eyewitnesses of His glory and majesty, and of His bodily resurrection. It is upon apostle's doctrine, teachings and practices that the church is established.

The local church is the assembly of the righteous to the preaching, teaching and the evangelizing of the world. We believe that every born again believer should not forsake the assembling of themselves together with other believers in a local assembly.

### The Godhead

There is no other God but the One God, who has manifested Himself by progressive revelation as Father, Son (the word made flesh), and Holy Ghost.

He is a Spirit; He manifested Himself in a fleshly body, and is presently the indwelling Comforter, the Holy Ghost. And indeed all the fullness of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) dwells bodily in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When we have seen Jesus, we have seen the Father. Christ is the express image of the substance, (Greek: hupostasis) of God.

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (I Timothy 3:16)

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Father, the Word (Son), and the Holy Ghost. He is the very embodiment of the living God, or God Incarnate.

## The Plan of Salvation

God's way into the church, which is His body, has not changed since the day of Pentecost as recorded in the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

We recognize the historical facts of all that men have done since the last of the apostles went home to be with the Lord. However, God's word has not changed, and neither has His way into the church.

One must repent of sin, be baptized by immersion in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, and receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the initial evidence of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance.

The continuing evidence will then be growth in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit. Indeed, this present dispensation of grace began on the day of Pentecost and will continue until the Lord's return.

John 3:3, 5; Acts 2:1-4; Acts 2:37-39; I Cor. 12: 13-14; II Pet 3:18; Gal 5: 16, 22-23

## Water Baptism

Jesus Christ Himself, who did no sin, was baptized of John in the river Jordan that He might "...fulfill all righteousness".

Certainly, He had no need of water baptism for anything that He had ever done; for He did no sin, and neither was any guile found in His mouth. Rather He was giving an example unto us who would follow Him. During His 3 ½ years of ministry, many were baptized, although He did not baptize them Himself, but His disciples. After His resurrection, He appeared to the apostles many times for a period of 40 days, showing Himself to be alive by many infallible proofs. It was during that time that He commanded them to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

A careful study of the scriptures finds the apostles fulfilling that particular command by baptizing repentant sinners in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12, 16; Acts 10:47-48; Acts 19:3-5) We find that He had opened the understanding of the apostles that they might understand the scriptures (Luke 24). We also find that the Holy Ghost, whom Jesus said would bring back to remembrance all things that He, had said. The Holy Ghost was given on the day of Pentecost. The apostles understood that the NAME of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is Jesus Christ. They understood that they were not commanded by Him to simply repeat His words, but rather to obey the command to perform baptism of repentant believers by using the NAME. The name Jesus (Yah, or Yahweh, means salvation) is the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Every instance of baptism recorded in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, taught in the NT epistles utilizes the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. On the Day of Pentecost, 3000 Jewish believers were added to the church after asking Peter and the apostles, "Men and brethren, what must we do?"

Phillip, in Acts 8, baptized Samaritan believers; Peter, in Acts 10, baptized Gentile believers in the name of the Lord; Paul spoke of his baptism in the name of the Lord in Acts 22; and Paul himself re-baptized certain believers who had only known of John's baptism unto repentance in Acts 19.

The biblical principle of establishing doctrine is in the mouth of two or three witnesses, letting every word be established. Numerous witnesses bear record in the word of God that baptism must be performed in the name of Jesus Christ.

Baptism is to be performed by immersion of the candidate in water in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission (forgiveness and removing) of sin. The word of God teaches us that it is the shedding of Jesus' blood on the cross that remits sin. But for one to be a personal partaker of the benefit requires the new birth of water and Spirit.

Water baptism saves because it is the response (answer) of a good conscience toward God. Faith and repentance brings the purging power of the blood of Christ to an individual; and the response of that purged conscience is to submit to water baptism by immersion in water. All thanks belong to God; once one has been born again, the purging power of the blood of Christ continually operates in that one's conscience.

Baptism by sprinkling was a practice introduced by the apostate church in an effort to gain members (not converts to the faith). Baptism by sprinkling has no foundation in scripture; only in the acts of the "church fathers". The Bible admonishes us to prove all things (by the word of God), and to hold fast to that which is good!

Nevertheless, it is our prayer that submission to the leading and unction of the Holy Spirit of God will indeed bring all believers to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man. It is our prayer that the Lord will enlighten the eyes of every believer's

understanding, and that we will all humble ourselves before Him. Let us examine ourselves by the rightly divided word of truth, and endeavor to speak the same thing; that there will be no division among us, but that we be all joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

*Note: We thank the Lord for our faithful Spirit-filled brethren who have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost in obedience to the words of Christ as they have understood them. Nevertheless, it is our prayer that submission to the leading and unction of the Holy Spirit of God will indeed bring all believers to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man. It is our prayer that the Lord will enlighten the eyes of every believer's understanding, and that we will all humble ourselves before Him. Let us examine ourselves by the rightly divided word of truth, and endeavor to speak the same thing; that there be no division among us, but that we all may be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

### Remission of Sin

Remission (forgiveness, removal) of sin was accomplished through the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross. Indeed, only His sinless blood could be the propitiation of for the sins of mankind. Indeed, it is recorded that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission. It is important to recognize that the water baptism itself does not remit sin, for water does not put away the filth of the flesh. Rather, it is the response to the gospel of obedient faith; yea, even the answer of a good conscience toward God that brings remission of sin to everyone who submits to water baptism in Jesus' name. Obedient faith, not merely mental assent, is the appropriate response to the gospel message of those who would be saved.

Hebrews 9; Acts 2:38; I Peter 3:21

### Grace

It is by God's grace (unmerited favor; His love, power, and faithfulness) that men are saved. There are no works of righteousness which we can do to earn, merit, or be worthy of salvation. Sadly, many have mistakenly classified such vital elements of the plan of salvation as repentance, water baptism, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, prayer, assembling together, etc. as works, and therefore teach that these things are unnecessary to be saved. Still others have mistakenly believed that the mere performance of these things without faith is sufficient.

The word of God teaches that it is by God's grace that we have received Christ's fullness. (John 1:16-17) Indeed, it is by His grace that we are

saved. (Ephesians 2:1-10; Titus 3:3-7) The works mentioned in this portion of scripture are a result of being saved, not the cause of one being saved. It has been said that Grace plus nothing equals salvation. (sic) Rather, it is Grace plus obedient faith that equals salvation. There are no works of righteousness that any man can perform to make himself worthy of salvation. Rather the saved are admonished by God's word to maintain good works. (Titus 3:8)

### Baptism of the Holy Ghost

Jesus taught that it was expedient that He go away; for if He went not away, the Comforter would not come. We find the Holy Spirit of God has been ever present throughout the word of God, OT and NT. However, He was never the abiding Comforter until after the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus commanded the apostles to wait in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. (John 20:19-23; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8) In response to the questions concerning the events recorded in Acts 2:1-4 when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit of God gave them utterance, Peter responded that "...This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel..." (Joel 2:28; Isaiah 28:9-13) Peter went on further to teach that the promise of the indwelling Comforter was fulfilled in what they were seeing and hearing (Acts 2:33)

Prior to the Lord's passion, the Holy Ghost only came upon men to empower them for service, or to give them a word of wisdom or knowledge. But afterwards, He would depart. Even John the Baptist, who was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, had to decrease that Christ might increase. (Luke 7:18-23) But the dispensation of grace, which began on the day of Pentecost, is the same dispensation in which we are living in this day. And in this dispensation, Jesus promised us that the Spirit of truth would abide with us forever. (John 14: 15-18)

In every instance of the baptism of the Holy Ghost being received in the book of Acts, the initial manifestation or evidence of the baptism is speaking with other tongues as the spirit gave utterance. Some also prophesied. (Acts 2:1-4, Acts 8:14-18a; Acts 10:44-48; Acts 11:15-18; Acts 19:1-7)

The tongues which accompany the baptism of the Holy Ghost should not be confused with the unknown tongues of which Paul taught and gave instructions concerning their use in the service of the Lord as recorded in I Corinthians 14. The instructions written to the Corinthians were written to believers who had already received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Those who have not experienced the new birth (John 3:3, 5) must be referred to

the book of the Acts of the Apostles and commanded to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. There can be no genuine gifts of the Spirit present in one's life without first having received the gift-giver, the Spirit of truth. (I Corinthians 12: 1-13) Likewise, there can be no genuine manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit without having first received the Spirit (Romans 8:9-11; I Corinthians 12:3; Galatians 5: 22-25)

Indeed, these (tongues) are among the signs that shall follow them that believe. (Mark 16:15-20)

### Holiness

God's standard of living for His people is a life of holiness. We are admonished by His word to be a holy people, sanctified and set apart from ungodliness and from the world for His glory. It is a dedicated life manifested by holy living, separation from the world and worldliness, and the denial of self and all ungodliness and worldly lusts. It cannot be lived through the power of flesh, nor is it made possible by laws written in tables of stone or volumes of documentation; it can only be lived by the authority and strength of the indwelling Comforter, the Spirit of truth (Holy Ghost) cf.

I Peter 1:15-16; Hebrews 12:14; Luke 9:23-26; II Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1; I John 2:15-17; Jeremiah 31:31; John 3:3; Acts 1:8

### The Lord's Supper

One of the ordinances instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, on the very night in which He was betrayed, is the observance of the Lord's Supper. This ordinance has also been referred to as Communion or sacrament. It is not just a ritual to be observed, but has purpose! The Following Scripture references provide the basis for this sacred ordinance: Matthew 26:17-29; Mark 14:12-25; Luke 22:9-20; I Corinthians 10:16-21; I Corinthians 11:8-34.

If one were to only read Matthew and Mark's account, a logical conclusion would be that Jesus changed the Passover observance into the Lord's Supper. However, comparing these passages with Luke's account demonstrates that the Lord did the same thing on that fateful night that He had done throughout His earthly ministry, i.e. fulfill the old, and institute the new. Jesus ate the Passover with His disciples; He then instituted the new covenant observance by taking the bread and the cup after supper:

#### **Luke 22:19-20**

*19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me".*

*20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you".*



The bread and cup of the Lord's Supper were instituted after the Passover supper had been eaten.

The contents of the cup given on that night, according to scripture, are described as the New Testament in His blood, the cup of blessing, and as the communion of the blood. (cf. Luke 22:20, I Cor. 10:16)

Communion is defined as fellowship or agreement. The question, then, becomes, what has fellowship or agreement with the blood of Christ according to the scriptures? John wrote in his epistle:

***1 John 5:8***

*And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.*

The Holy Ghost, the water, and the blood of Christ agree in one. Therefore, the communion of the blood of Christ, according to the scriptures, is water. The Church of God M.P.G.T therefore participates in the Lord's Supper utilizing unleavened bread and water. For the scriptures bear witness that the New Testament in His blood, and the communion of the blood in the cup of blessing which the church blesses, is water.

**Note:** *We recognize that other churches see fit to use wine or grape juice for communion. We are not attempting to fight our brethren who see this doctrine differently than ourselves; we believe that the authority of scripture shows that water is the only substance which has fellowship or agreement with the blood of Christ, and therefore feel safe in utilizing it for this sacred ordinance. May the Lord speed the day when we all come into the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man. Amen.*