

What we believe in

Mission Timothée

2001

Introduction and a short historical background

Introduction

Mission Timothée in France has existed now for nearly 30 years. Its position within the French evangelical world has aroused a growing interest in recent years. The lack of direct information about its doctrinal basis, the vision of its ministry and its ecclesiastical practice has become obvious. This is why Christians and leaders responsible for evangelical works encouraged us to publish writings in order to fill this gap.

We are happy to meet their requirements – if it is possible to do so – by publishing the present booklet in a brotherly spirit and according to the truth. Their wish is very similar to our concern to be known for what we are and not for what is said about us.

Examining in more detail the biblical basis of our faith and of our ministry in order to write this document, we were much strengthened through the living and permanent word of God and through the consultation of former Articles of Faith from the Reformation fathers:

- The Augsburg Articles of Faith (1530)
- The posterior Helvetian Articles of Faith (1566)
- The La Rochelle Articles of Faith (1559)
- The Dordrecht Canons (1618-1619)
- The Westminster texts (1643-1649)
- The Baptist Reformed Articles of Faith (1689)

Our wish is that our readers should be blessed in turn.

We are grateful that this work allowed the writing of texts which will be able to teach and strengthen members and friends of our Churches, as well as their children...

This first publication includes a short historical background of our Mission followed by our Articles of Faith. Specific themes will be the object of further distinct publications: the sins of the fathers, the perseverance of the Saints, pastoral practice, the cleansing of the soul, and a lot more....

The editorial team

A short historical background

Mission Timothée was founded within a small evangelical church in the south of France. It was and is the fruit of hardships and various meetings between some of God's servants which were not planned or organised. It is not the fulfilment of a dream, or the carrying out of a project. One of the founders had a car accident followed by some friendly visits at the hospital. Then there was the work of God in the suffering heart and the immediate fellowship between two men. All these have borne their fruit...

A touring missionary called a group of young people to devote themselves to serve God, to preach the Gospel. Camps were organised... At last a concrete answer, an open door! Under these circumstances, a vocation stands out and, approved by the local Church, the man thus called goes to a theological faculty. There, several zealous, active students met but they were in great personal difficulties. There were shadows and questions without answers.

Being helped by the man who became the founder of the Mission, these students allowed their lives to be set under the light of the Gospel, confessed their sins, and opened "*their heartfelt sorrow*" (Kings 8:38). God confirmed His Scripture and freed them from their difficulties. But their testimony was not well received, giving rise to a conflict sometimes growing more intense through their overzealousness in the joy of such experiences... Some students had to leave the university due to their piety and not to doctrine. Their call remained but they could not respond to it in their religious circles. Thus, the decision was made to work together. An association was made, and the Mission Timothée was born at that time.

Spiritual direction is given through the word of God:

- "*Enlarge the place of your tent: stretch your curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes*" (Isaiah 54:2);
- "*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable people, who will also be qualified to teach others*" (2 Timothy 2:2).

In this obedient spirit, Gospel preaching camps were organised and the young team met in Anduze to build a "welcoming centre" intended to welcome new converts, Christians with difficulties, "*people wounded on the road*", to organise biblical camps and later training sessions for fellow workers.

Mainly through this work, the Mission Timothée will develop. New calls will appear, Churches will be founded, and Christian groups already existing but a long way from a Church will ask for help and then will become fellow workers.

Working in a spirit of unity in the light and fellowship, devoting oneself to the Church as a whole, leading lost people to the personal knowledge of God, are our vocation, the one we want to fulfil, while seeking to discern, "*each one should build with care*" (1 Corinthians 3:10b).

God grant that "*the people who know their God will be strong and do exploits*" (Daniel 11:32b)

The Scriptures

Their inspiration and authority

The Bible in its entirety is the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, infallible and eternal¹. It is all that is necessary for our salvation and service to God²; thus, men are not allowed to add anything to it, to remove anything from it and to change anything to it, and the same for the angels³.

It follows from this that no human tradition, experience or new revelation can be opposed to it⁴, but on the contrary everything must be examined, settled or reformed according to Scripture⁵.

We acknowledge that all the books of the Bible without any distinction, except the Apocrypha⁶, are canonical and are the most certain rule for our faith, not only by mutual agreement and consent from the Church of Jesus Christ, but also through internal witness and persuasion (confirmation?) from the Holy Spirit. This allows us to distinguish them from the other ecclesiastical books in which we can not find any article of faith⁷. Accepting the Scriptures as our only criterion of the truth, we believe that the inspiration of the Scriptures is valid for both the Old⁸ and the New Testament⁹.

The Law

Jesus Christ did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfil it¹⁰. He fulfilled the requirements of the Law through His perfect life and His expiatory death in order to achieve the righteousness of these requirements in us, through the spirit of God¹¹.

Any person, justified or not, is under obligation to observe the universal law of obedience given to Adam and specified by the Ten Commandments and moral rules given to Moses¹²; Christ far from nullifying the law, upheld it forcefully¹³.

¹ Isaiah 8:20; 59:21; John 3:31; Luke 16:29, 31; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

² Deuteronomy 30:15-16; Matthew 4:4; Acts 20:27; Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:19.

³ Deuteronomy 4:2; 13:17 (there may be slight differences in biblical references); Proverbs 30:5-6; Matthew 5:17-19; Galatians 3:15-17; 1 Timothy 1:3; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 John 9-10; Jude 3; Revelation 22:18-19.

⁴ Matthew 15:3, 6, 9; Romans 3:4; Galatians 1:6-9.

⁵ Acts 28:23; 1 Corinthians 3:11; 11:1-2, 23; 15:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:2; 1 Peter 4:11; 1 John 4:1.

⁶ It concerns mainly the Apocrypha in the Old Testament i.e. 1, 2, 3 Maccabees, Tobit, Judith addition to the book of Esther, Ecclesiasticus, wisdom

⁷ Psalms 12:7; 19:8-9.

⁸ Psalms 103:7; Zechariah 1:4-6; Malachi 3:22 7 (there may be slight differences in biblical references); Luke 24:25-27, 32, 44; Romans 3:2.

⁹ Luke 1:1-4; John 3:31, 34; 15:15; 16:13-14; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Ephesians 2:20; 3:3-9; Philippians 1:7; Colossians 1:23, 25-2:3, 7; 3:16.

¹⁰ Matthew 5:17.

¹¹ Galatians 4:19; 5:5; Hebrews 4:15; 5:8-9; 13:21.

¹² Deuteronomy 5:32; Job 28:28; Romans 2:3-11, 14; 13:8-10; Ephesians 6:2; James 1:22-25; 2:8, 10-12; 1 John 2:3-8.

¹³ Matthew 5:20, 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44; Romans 3:31.

The requirements of the moral law on men's consciences¹⁴ as well as the providence of God refrain them from fully yielding to wrongdoings¹⁵. Non regenerated and sinful men are thus under the Law and under His guard¹⁶. In the present time, this kind of justice is necessary for men to be kept in the society¹⁷.

Through the Law, man becomes conscious of his sinfulness, his inability to desire or to do good, his guilt and in the end his perdition¹⁸. The law, thus acting, was put in charge to lead us to Christ and to His grace for salvation and justice¹⁹. Its strictness, even after regeneration, remains as a sting to take back the sinner to the Saviour's grace in the fear of the Lord²⁰.

Believers are no longer under the law²¹ as a covenant on the basis of works to be justified or condemned by the Law, since Christ freed them from the curse²² and that the law is carried out in their hearts through Christ's love²³ being the perfect achievement of it²⁴. Nevertheless, the Law is very useful to them since it is an unceasing reminder of God's will through: What is good, pleasant and perfect in order to observe them in loving kindness²⁵. This is obedience coming from faith²⁶ which is through the power of the spirit²⁷, with thankfulness²⁸, having his source in Christ and in His grace²⁹. Such behaviour is not legalistic³⁰ but in the conformity of the perfect law of love and freedom, the Law of Christ³¹.

Its interpretation

The scriptures are in themselves the infallible rule of the interpretation of the law. That is why when a problem arises about the real and complete meaning of any text from the Scriptures (not being incoherent, but being one question), the answer is to be looked for and found by examining more precise texts³². The internal illumination of the Spirit of God is necessary for understanding what is written in the Scriptures to find salvation³³.

¹⁴ Proverbs 16:9; Romans 2:15.

¹⁵ Psalms 34:16-17; 119:91; Proverbs 16:1; 20:24; 22:2; Jeremiah 10:23; Acts 17:28; 1 Timothy 4:10; Hebrews 1:3.

¹⁶ Ecclesiastes 11:9; 12:1, 7 (Colombe) or 12:1-9 (Segond); Romans 1:32; 2:16; 7:1; 1 Timothy 1:8-10.

¹⁷ Luke 20:20-26; Romans 13:1-7; Galatians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:13-17.

¹⁸ Romans 3:19-20; 7:7-25; James 1:23-24; Hebrews 4:12.

¹⁹ Galatians 3:19, 22-24.

²⁰ Psalms 119:33, 44, 57-60, 101, 112; Romans 6:12-23; Ephesians 4:25-5:6, 7; 1 Peter 3:8-13.

²¹ Romans 6:14; Galatians 2:16, 19, 21; 4:28, 30-31; 5:1, 13a.

²² Romans 10:4; Galatians 3:10-14.

²³ Ezekiel 36:26-27; Acts 13:38-39; Romans 7:25; 8:3-4; Galatians 2:21; 4:4-6; Hebrews 8:8-12 quoting Jeremiah 31:31.

²⁴ Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 9:12, 24; 10:12-14; Revelation 22:13.

²⁵ Ezra 9:13-14; Psalms 89:31-33; 119:4-6, 35, 47, 97, etc.; John 14:23; Romans 7:12, 22; 1 Corinthians 7:19; Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 12:28-29.

²⁶ Romans 1:5; 16:26.

²⁷ Romans 15:18-19; 2 Corinthians 3:6, 8-9, 17-18.

²⁸ Colossians 3:15; Hebrews 12:28.

²⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:10.

³⁰ Romans 6:14.

³¹ James 1:25.

³² Matthew 4:6-7; Acts 15:15; 17:11.

³³ Psalms 119:130; John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 1 John 2:20-21, 27.

God

God is One³⁴, He is Spirit³⁵, He is Eternal³⁶, He is Omniscient³⁷, Omnipresent³⁸, Omnipotent³⁹ and Supreme⁴⁰. He is Holy⁴¹, Faithful⁴², Righteous⁴³, Merciful⁴⁴ and Love⁴⁵. He is the Creator of all things⁴⁶, the seen and the unseen including the angels⁴⁷. Some of them kept obeying God⁴⁸. Satan and the devils are separated from God and have fallen into perdition through disobedience⁴⁹. Satan is the ruler of this world⁵⁰. Nevertheless God governs and rules everything⁵¹. He is the only wise God⁵². God possesses in Himself and by Himself all the glory and all created beings owe Him adoration, service and obedience⁵³.

There are three equal persons in the divine unity that are distinct, issued from a one and sole substance, power and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit⁵⁴.

The Father has not been begotten by anyone and hasn't come from anyone⁵⁵. The Son has been eternally begotten by the Father⁵⁶. The Holy Spirit has come eternally from the Father⁵⁷ and from the Son⁵⁸.

We confess:

- The Father, first cause or principle, origin of all things⁵⁹. The Son and the Holy Spirit, submitted to Him⁶⁰. He is the Father of believers⁶¹, our prayers are turned to Him⁶².

³⁴ Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29; Isaiah 45:21; 46:9; 1 Corinthians 8:4, 6; 1 Timothy 1:17.

³⁵ John 4:24; 2 Corinthians 3:17.

³⁶ Psalms 90:2; Jeremiah 10:10.

³⁷ Psalms 139:1-6; 15-18; 147:5; Ezekiel 11:5; Acts 15:18; Romans 11:33-34.

³⁸ Psalms 139:7-12.

³⁹ Romans 11:36; Revelation 4:11.

⁴⁰ Psalms 96:6; 115:3; Daniel 4:22-23, 31-32, 34 7 (there may be slight differences in biblical references) 1 Timothy 6:15.

⁴¹ Psalms 99:5; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8.

⁴² Nehemiah 9:33; Psalms 92:3; 2 Timothy 2:13.

⁴³ Psalms 97:2.

⁴⁴ Psalms 103:8-14.

⁴⁵ 1 John 4:7-16.

⁴⁶ Genesis 1; Job 33:4; Psalms 104; Isaiah 40:26; Acts 17:24-25; John 1:3, 10; Hebrews 3:4.

⁴⁷ Psalms 33:6; Colossians 1:16-17.

⁴⁸ Psalms 103:20-21; Hebrews 1:14.

⁴⁹ Matthew 25:41; Luke 8:31; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6.

⁵⁰ John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 2:2; 6:12; 1 John 5:19.

⁵¹ Genesis 50:20; Psalms 75:7-9; Proverbs 21:1; Isaiah 45:7; Lamentations de Jeremiah 3:37-38; Matthew 10:29-30; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; 8:26.

⁵² Job 12:13-25; Romans 8:28.

⁵³ Revelation 4:9-11.

⁵⁴ Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; Romans 8:9-11; 2 Corinthians 13:13; 1 John 4:13-14.

⁵⁵ Exodus 3:14; 1 Corinthians 8:6.

⁵⁶ John 1:14, 18; 14:11; Colossians 1:15.

⁵⁷ John 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:11.

⁵⁸ John 15:26; Galatians 4:6; Titus 3:5-6.

⁵⁹ Malachi 2:10; John 5:17, 19.

⁶⁰ John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 15:28.

⁶¹ Isaiah 63:16; Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5.

⁶² Matthew 6:8-15; Ephesians 3:14.

- The Son, His word⁶³ and His eternal wisdom⁶⁴. The Son has been eternally begotten by the Father and has not been created⁶⁵. Conceived by the Holy Spirit⁶⁶, born of the Virgin Mary⁶⁷, He is perfect with a divine nature⁶⁸ and with a human nature⁶⁹; He is genuinely God⁷⁰ and genuinely man⁷¹, without any confusion, transformation, division, or any separation in His two natures⁷². He is the sole mediator between God and men⁷³; He died and has risen from the dead for our salvation⁷⁴. He is, as Lord, at the right-hand side of God the Father⁷⁵, He is the Head of the Church which is His body⁷⁶. He will come back for the rapture of the church⁷⁷, for the final judgement⁷⁸ and restoration of God's kingdom⁷⁹;
- The Holy Spirit, His force, His efficient Might⁸⁰. Third person of the Holy Trinity⁸¹, He gives inspiration for the word of God⁸², He reveals the Son to us⁸³, convicts us of sin⁸⁴, brings about salvation to men⁸⁵, dwells in each believer to make him God's temple⁸⁶, leads us to the whole truth⁸⁷. He is the Comforter⁸⁸, fills us with power to be witnesses⁸⁹, grants us gifts⁹⁰ and works out miracles⁹¹.

Man and his sin

Man has been created to praise God⁹². God created him with a body, soul and spirit⁹³, in the conformity of his image⁹⁴, without the slightest stain⁹⁵.

⁶³ John 1:1-4.

⁶⁴ Proverbs 8.

⁶⁵ Psalms 2:7 (quoted in the New Testament); John 1:14, 18; Colossians 1:15-17.

⁶⁶ Matthew 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35.

⁶⁷ Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:27, 31, 43; Galatians 4:4.

⁶⁸ Philippians 2:6; 1 John 5:20.

⁶⁹ Philippians 2:7; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 2:14, 16-17; 4:15.

⁷⁰ Colossians 2:9.

⁷¹ Luke 24:39-43; Hebrews 10:5.

⁷² Matthew 1:23; Acts 17:31; Romans 1:3-4; 9:5; 1 Peter 3:18.

⁷³ 1 Timothy 2:5.

⁷⁴ Isaiah 53; Romans 8:34a; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Peter 2:24.

⁷⁵ Mark 16:19; Romans 8:34b.

⁷⁶ Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23.

⁷⁷ Acts 1:11.

⁷⁸ Matthew 16:27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Romans 14:9-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

⁷⁹ Matthew 13:41-43.

⁸⁰ Job 33:4; Isaiah 11:2; Ezekiel 1:12, 20; 3:12, etc.; John 4:24; 2 Corinthians 3:17.

⁸¹ Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:13; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2.

⁸² 1 Peter 1:12; 2 Peter 1:21.

⁸³ John 15:26; 16:14-15; Ephesians 3:16-17.

⁸⁴ Zechariah 12:10; John 16:8.

⁸⁵ Ezekiel 36:25-27.

⁸⁶ 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:22.

⁸⁷ John 14:17, 26; 16:13.

⁸⁸ John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7, 13.

⁸⁹ Matthew 10:20; Acts 1:8.

⁹⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.

⁹¹ Hebrews 2:4.

⁹² Joshua 7:19, etc.; Psalms 50:15; Isaiah 43:7, etc.; 66:19, etc.; Romans 15:6; Ephesians 1:6, 14; 5:19; 2 Thessalonians 1:10, 12; 1 Peter 4:11.

⁹³ 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

⁹⁴ Genesis 1:26; 9:7 (there may be slight differences in biblical references) Colossians 3:10.

⁹⁵ Genesis 1:31; 2:17, 25; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 2:14-15.

Due to his own sin⁹⁶, man has forfeited the grace he had been granted⁹⁷. Thus, far away from God⁹⁸, his nature is therefore fully corrupted henceforth⁹⁹. That's why he is unable to find God through his own intelligence, his mind¹⁰⁰ or his will¹⁰¹ being entirely trapped in sin, even if the thought of God, of Eternity and some discernment of good and evil still remain¹⁰².

All men are born in sin¹⁰³; Adam's sin is an hereditary vice covering the sinner with guilt¹⁰⁴.

They are born children of wrath¹⁰⁵, unable to do any salutary good work¹⁰⁶, inclined to wrongdoings¹⁰⁷, slaves of sin¹⁰⁸, thoroughly under the power of Satan¹⁰⁹ and spiritually dead¹¹⁰. Even after regeneration, this sinful nature remains and still yields corruption and rebellion¹¹¹.

The Work of Salvation

The objective work

In spite of this general corruption and this condemnation, God, in His grace¹¹², wants to complete a covenant with the fallen man¹¹³.

Through His sole and own kindness and mercy¹¹⁴, God wanted to lead to glory many sons¹¹⁵.

⁹⁶ Genesis 3:13, 17; Romans 5:12, 15; 2 Corinthians 11:3.

⁹⁷ Genesis 3:24; Luke 2:40, following Jesus' example; James 1:17.

⁹⁸ Romans 3:23.

⁹⁹ Genesis 6:5; 8:21; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19; Romans 3:9-19.

¹⁰⁰ Romans 3:11; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Titus 1:15.

¹⁰¹ Romans 7:15, 18-19.

¹⁰² Ecclesiastes 3:11; Isaiah 28:7; 64:5.

¹⁰³ Job 25:4; Psalms 51:7; Mark 10:18; Romans 3:9-10; 11:32.

¹⁰⁴ Genesis 5:3; Job 14:4; 15:14; Acts 17:26; Romans 5:14-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 49.

¹⁰⁵ Ephesians 2:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

¹⁰⁶ Isaiah 26:18; Romans 5:6; 8:7; Colossians 1:21; 2 Timothy 2:26.

¹⁰⁷ Ephesians 4:17-19; Titus 3:3; 1 Peter 4:3-4.

¹⁰⁸ Romans 7:14, 17, 20-21, 23-24, 25b.

¹⁰⁹ John 8:34, 44; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2b; Colossians 1:13; 1 John 5:19.

¹¹⁰ Genesis 2:17; Ephesians 2:1.

¹¹¹ Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 7; 2 Corinthians 1:17; Galatians 5:17, 19; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8, 10; 2:1.

¹¹² Psalms 113:4-9; Ephesians 2:4b, 7b-8; Titus 2:11.

¹¹³ The first covenant, called "covenant of the works", Galatians 3:12; Hebrews 9:1, 10; 10:1. The second covenant is generally called the "covenant of grace" or "new covenant", Hebrews 7:19, 22; 8:6-13; 9:15; 10:9, 16-18; 12:24.

¹¹⁴ Job 35:5-8; Isaiah 38:16; Ephesians 2:4a; Titus 3:4.

¹¹⁵ Romans 8:29-30; Hebrews 2:10-13.

In His eternal and unchanging will¹¹⁶, before the foundation of the world He chose us in Christ¹¹⁷, and this without considering our works¹¹⁸. In His love, He predestined us to adoption as His sons through Jesus Christ in the praise of His glory¹¹⁹.

In Him, what was essential to our salvation¹²⁰ has been offered¹²¹ and communicated to us¹²². He is the source¹²³, the means¹²⁴ and the purpose¹²⁵.

God sent His son to demonstrate His justice¹²⁶; Jesus' death allows a total forgiveness and restoration thorough redress, and frees us from all our sins¹²⁷. He died once for all¹²⁸; His sacrifice of atonement¹²⁹ and His blood are necessary and fully sufficient for us to obtain redemption,¹³⁰ , forgiveness and purification from all our sins¹³¹.

Every sin deserves death¹³²; every sin will be forgiven¹³³, except blasphemy against the Spirit¹³⁴.

Jesus Christ redeems us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us¹³⁵. He set aside the commands and regulations condemning us¹³⁶.

At the cross, He has crucified the sinful nature with its pains¹³⁷; He freed us from sin¹³⁸. He overcame all the power of Satan who has been already judged¹³⁹. His reign will be fully established after he has destroyed his enemies (dominions, authorities, powers¹⁴⁰, and finally death¹⁴¹).

Now he has reconciled us to the Father through his blood shed on the cross¹⁴².

¹¹⁶ Ephesians 1:5b, 9-10, 11b.

¹¹⁷ Ephesians 1:4-5a, 11a.

¹¹⁸ Romans 2:18; 3:20; 4:2-6, 14-16; 5:9; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:9; Titus 3:5.

¹¹⁹ Ephesians 1:5-6.

¹²⁰ John 19:30; Romans 8:31-39; Hebrews 7:25; 10:14.

¹²¹ Acts 4:12; Romans 6:23b; 2 Corinthians 9:15; Ephesians 2:8b.

¹²² Romans 16:25; 1 Corinthians 1:8-9; Ephesians 1:6, 13b; Colossians 1:13b, 22; 1 Thessalonians 5:24.

¹²³ Colossians 2:3, 10, 17.

¹²⁴ Colossians 1:25-2:2; Titus 3:6.

¹²⁵ Ephesians 1:10; Colossians 1:16-19.

¹²⁶ Romans 3:25b-26; 5:18b, 19b, 21; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 1:11; Hebrews 1:9; 7:2; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 2:1.

¹²⁷ Romans 5:1, 6-11; 8:2; 1 Corinthians 6:11.

¹²⁸ Hebrews 9:26-28; 10:10.

¹²⁹ Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2.

¹³⁰ Romans 3:24; 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 9:12b, 22.

¹³¹ Hebrews 9:14; 12:24b; 13:12; 1 John 1:9.

¹³² Ezekiel 18:20; Romans 5:21a; 6:23a.

¹³³ Psalms 51:9; 130:3-4; 143:2; Isaiah 1:18; 1 John 1:9.

¹³⁴ Matthew 12:31-32; Hebrews 6:4-8; 1 John 5:16.

¹³⁵ Galatians 3:13; 4:5.

¹³⁶ Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14.

¹³⁷ Romans 8:3, 9, 12; Galatians 5:24.

¹³⁸ Romans 6:6-7, 10-11, 14, 18, 22; 8:2.

¹³⁹ Luke 10:19; John 12:31; Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8.

¹⁴⁰ Romans 16:20; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25, 27-28; Hebrews 2:8.

¹⁴¹ 1 Corinthians 15:26, 54-55.

¹⁴² Colossians 1:20, 22.

The subjective work

Those God predestined, He also called¹⁴³ through His word¹⁴⁴ and His spirit¹⁴⁵. He opened the way for them to believe¹⁴⁶ and to repent¹⁴⁷. In his godly sorrow¹⁴⁸, the hatred of his own sin and the shame which has offended God¹⁴⁹, the sinner confesses and condemns his sin¹⁵⁰, repents of his wrongdoings¹⁵¹, prays to the Lord to obtain forgiveness¹⁵². He is confident in God the Saviour¹⁵³; he remains in Christ¹⁵⁴.

Through faith the believer accepts Christ¹⁵⁵ relies on Him and only by Him is justified¹⁵⁶. Justification is a judiciary decision from God¹⁵⁷, through which Christ's righteousness is credited to our account¹⁵⁸ as an answer to our faith¹⁵⁹ and not as a token of gratitude for the man's personal righteousness¹⁶⁰. Christ being delivered over to death is the foundation of our righteousness¹⁶¹.

When the sinner repents, is converted (is saved from the world and sin)¹⁶² and is confident that he belongs to Jesus Christ, he is born again¹⁶³, the Living word of God regenerates him¹⁶⁴. This is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, so called in the Scriptures¹⁶⁵. Thus he is a new creature¹⁶⁶, Christ lives in him¹⁶⁷, he is then God's temple¹⁶⁸.

As soon as we are born again, we receive the Spirit bringing about our adoption to sonship and by him we cry: "Abba, Father", since those who are led by the Spirit are God's children. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children¹⁶⁹.

¹⁴³ John 5:6; 6:37; Romans 8:30; 9:11; 11:7; 2 Timothy 1:9.

¹⁴⁴ 1 Thessalonians 1:5a; 2:13.

¹⁴⁵ Acts 26:18; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.

¹⁴⁶ Acts 14:27; Romans 10:17; 12:3; 1 Corinthians 2:5; 2 Corinthians 4:13; Galatians 3:23, 25; Ephesians 6:23; 1 Thessalonians 3:10; 1 Timothy 1:14; 3:9; Hebrews 12:2; 2 Peter 1:1.

¹⁴⁷ Jeremiah 31:18; Matthew 3:11; 6:12; Acts 5:31; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Timothy 2:25.

¹⁴⁸ 2 Corinthians 7:9-10.

¹⁴⁹ Job 42:6; Jeremiah 8:6; 31:19; 50:4-5.

¹⁵⁰ Ezra 10:11; Nehemiah 9:2-3; Acts 19:19; Ephesians 5:12-14; James 5:16; 1 John 1:5-7, 9.

¹⁵¹ Leviticus 26:40-41.

¹⁵² Psalms 32:5-6a; 38; 51; Daniel 9:4; Hosea 14:2-8.

¹⁵³ Mark 16:16; Luke 1:47; 8:12; Romans 3:22; Jude 25.

¹⁵⁴ Mark 9:37; John 1:12, 16; 6:51, 53-58; 13:20; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Colossians 2:6.

¹⁵⁵ John 15:1-11; 1 John 2:6.

¹⁵⁶ Romans 5:1; 8:30; Galatians 2:21.

¹⁵⁷ Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:19, 21.

¹⁵⁸ Acts 13:38-39; Romans 4:5-11.

¹⁵⁹ Romans 3:30; 10:4; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9; Colossians 1:21-23.

¹⁶⁰ Romans 3:21, 28.

¹⁶¹ Romans 4:24-25.

¹⁶² Acts 2:40; Galatians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:9.

¹⁶³ John 1:12-13; 3:7.

¹⁶⁴ 1 Peter 1:23-25.

¹⁶⁵ Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5; 11:16; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Titus 3:5.

¹⁶⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15.

¹⁶⁷ Romans 8:9b-10; Galatians 4:6-7.

¹⁶⁸ 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, etc.

¹⁶⁹ Romans 8:14-15; Galatians 4:6-7.

The first born Son is our brother¹⁷⁰; He allows us to approach the Lord's sanctuary¹⁷¹. From now we are co-heirs with Christ¹⁷² and are sealed for the day of redemption¹⁷³.

Our fellowship is with God the Father and with His son¹⁷⁴, since whoever believes in the Name of God's Son is given eternal life¹⁷⁵. Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life¹⁷⁶.

God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms¹⁷⁷. We stand firm through faith in the blood of Christ, so that we can take our stand against the devil's schemes¹⁷⁸.

The sanctifying work

The believers, through their position in Christ, are eternally set apart for God, i.e. sanctified once for all through the offering of Jesus Christ's body. Jesus Christ sanctified Himself for them¹⁷⁹.

God is holy¹⁸⁰ and we are holy through His calling¹⁸¹, we are consecrated to God and belong to Him¹⁸². That is why the believer purifies himself and separates himself from any unclean practice, any evil and from the world¹⁸³. He walks everyday in the light of God's word¹⁸⁴ revealing the deeds of darkness¹⁸⁵ and the acts of the sinful nature¹⁸⁶. The believer exposes these deeds¹⁸⁷ and obeys the truth¹⁸⁸.

Sanctifying means applying holiness to our actual life¹⁸⁹. The believer experiences sanctifying through the Holy Spirit acting in him¹⁹⁰ by means of the Scriptures¹⁹¹. The God of peace sanctifies us thoroughly,¹⁹² through discipline from the Spirit which puts to death the misdeeds of the body¹⁹³. Being sanctified is the result of Christ growing into

¹⁷⁰ Hebrews 2:11-17.

¹⁷¹ Hebrews 10:19.

¹⁷² Romans 8:17.

¹⁷³ Ephesians 1:13; 4:30.

¹⁷⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 John 1:3.

¹⁷⁵ 1 John 5:10-13.

¹⁷⁶ 1 John 5:20b.

¹⁷⁷ Ephesians 2:6.

¹⁷⁸ Ephesians 6:11, 13, 16; Revelation 12:11.

¹⁷⁹ John 10:36; 17:19; Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 1:4; Philippians 1:1; Hebrews 2:11; 10:10, 14.

¹⁸⁰ Leviticus 19:2; 20:26, etc.; 1 Samuel 2:2; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8.

¹⁸¹ Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2, etc.; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2:9.

¹⁸² Deuteronomy 26:19; Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 3:17; 2 Timothy 2:21; 1 Peter 2:5.

¹⁸³ Luke 1:75; Romans 16:2; 2 Corinthians 1:12; Ephesians 5:3, 27; 1 Thessalonians 2:10; 4:4, 7; Titus 2:3; 2 Peter 3:11.

¹⁸⁴ Psalms 119:105; Ephesians 4:24; Hebrews 4:12-13.

¹⁸⁵ Psalms 36:10; John 8:12; 9:5; Romans 13:12.

¹⁸⁶ Galatians 5:19; Revelation 3:2.

¹⁸⁷ John 3:20-21; Ephesians 5:11-12.

¹⁸⁸ 1 Samuel 15:22; Romans 15:18; 16:19; 2 Corinthians 2:9; 10:5; Philemon 21; Hebrews 5:9; 1 Peter 1:2, 14, 22.

¹⁸⁹ Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 4:17; 5:3, 8-11, 15; Philippians 1:27; 2:12-16.

¹⁹⁰ Romans 15:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:29b; 1 Peter 1:2.

¹⁹¹ John 17:17, 19; Ephesians 5:26; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 4:5.

¹⁹² 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

¹⁹³ Romans 8:13; Ephesians 4:21b-5:7; Colossians 3:5-8.

us¹⁹⁴ to attain to the whole measure of His fullness¹⁹⁵. We perfect holiness all our life long,¹⁹⁶ experiencing repentance, faith and obedience¹⁹⁷. Without holiness no one will see the Lord¹⁹⁸, holiness is essential to our salvation¹⁹⁹, we must desire it eagerly²⁰⁰.

Les croyants attendent la venue du Seigneur pour la réalisation complète de leur sanctification²⁰¹.

The perseverance of the saints

The perseverance of saints consists in keeping God's commandments and faith in Jesus Christ²⁰². The person who stands firm to the end will be saved²⁰³. God is the guarantee of this faithfulness, since nothing can separate God's child from God the Father's love²⁰⁴. However, a number of biblical texts warn: the regenerated man who separates himself from Christ can fall away from grace²⁰⁵, if he wants to be justified by law²⁰⁶ or out of carelessness²⁰⁷, if his mind is set on the flesh, since he puts up resistance to God²⁰⁸. Such a situation which shocks the mind, prompts the believer who receives Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith²⁰⁹, to expect everything from God, to base his hope only on Him and to walk fearing God "*working out his salvation with fear and trembling*²¹⁰".

Practice of the Christian Life

The believer's godliness

Genuine godliness is the fair relationship of the regenerated believer to God²¹¹. Godliness is required from any man justified by faith²¹².

¹⁹⁴ Philippians 1:20; 3:10; Colossians 1:27; 3:4, 11; Hebrews 3:14; 1 Peter 3:15.

¹⁹⁵ 2 Corinthians 13:9, 11; Ephesians 4:13.

¹⁹⁶ 2 Corinthians 7:1; Philippians 3:12; Revelation 22:11.

¹⁹⁷ Romans 6:16-22, etc.

¹⁹⁸ Hebrews 12:14.

¹⁹⁹ 1 Thessalonians 4:3.

²⁰⁰ 1 Thessalonians 5:15; Hebrews 12:14.

²⁰¹ Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 15:49; Philippians 3:21; Colossians 1:22; 3:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 John 3:2-3.

²⁰² Revelation 14:12.

²⁰³ Matthew 24:13.

²⁰⁴ Psalms 55:23; Jeremiah 32:40; Malachi 3:6; Matthew 7:23; 15:13; 24:22-24; Luke 22:32; John 6:39; 10:28; 17:2, 6, 9, 12, 15; Romans 5:9-10; 8:30, 34-39; 9:11, 16; 11:29; 1 Corinthians 1:8; 7:10; 10:13; Philippians 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:13, 19; Hebrews 6:17-18; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 John 2:19; 3:9; 5:18; Jude 1, 24.

²⁰⁵ Exodus 32:32; Psalms 69:29; 139:16; Isaiah 4:3; Ezekiel 33:18; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 13:1-23; 18:23-35; Luke 10:20; John 15:1-6; Romans 11:20-22; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Philippians 4:3 (Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27); Colossians 1:22-23; 1 Timothy 1:15, 19; 4:1; 6:10, 21; 2 Timothy 2:12; Hebrews 3:6, 12, 14; 6:11; 10:23, 35-39; 12:3; Revelation 2:4; 3:2, 10, 16.

²⁰⁶ Galatians 5:4.

²⁰⁷ 1 Corinthians 6:9; Ephesians 5:5.

²⁰⁸ Romans 8:7; 10:3; Galatians 5:19; 6:7.

²⁰⁹ Hebrews 12:2.

²¹⁰ Philippians 2:12.

²¹¹ Hosea 6:6; John 14:20; 1 Timothy 2:2; 6:3; 2 Timothy 3:5; Titus 2:12; Hebrews 12:28; 2 Peter 1:6.

²¹² 2 Peter 3:11.

Godliness expresses the life of Christ in ourselves²¹³, is administered²¹⁴ in love²¹⁵ and gratitude towards God²¹⁶ through constant and untiring practice of prayer²¹⁷ and obedient meditation of the Bible²¹⁸.

Prayer is an offering to God the Father²¹⁹ sanctified through faith²²⁰, made in the name of the Son²²¹ and led by the Holy Spirit²²². Prayer is the sign of our dependence on the Lord²²³ and doesn't express our requirements²²⁴ which would tend to take over God's power²²⁵. Prayer enables us to participate in the work of God and links us to His cause²²⁶.

The Christian who prays bows down²²⁷ and worships²²⁸, he confesses his faith²²⁹, without anger or disputing²³⁰. He confesses his sin²³¹. Without babbling²³², he turns to God; with thank offerings, and addresses petitions, requests, pleas for mercy, any legitimate question²³³. The Christian prays for every living person²³⁴ and not for the dead²³⁵.

He who prays making a vow must not commit himself thoughtlessly: He must fulfil his vows; otherwise he commits a sin²³⁶.

He who loves God obeys His commands²³⁷. He looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and does what it says persistently²³⁸. If accepted humbly²³⁹, the word of truth makes us disciples²⁴⁰, sets us free²⁴¹ and sanctifies us²⁴².

²¹³ 1 Timothy 3:16.

²¹⁴ 1 Timothy 4:8.

²¹⁵ Psalms 16:3; 1 Timothy 5:4; 6:11; 2 Peter 1:7.

²¹⁶ Hebrews 12:28.

²¹⁷ Psalms 32:6.

²¹⁸ Acts 22:12; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; James 1:19-27.

²¹⁹ Hebrews 5:7.

²²⁰ Romans 5:1-2; Hebrews 10:19-23; James 5:16.

²²¹ John 14:13-14; 1 Peter 2:5.

²²² Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:17.

²²³ Matthew 7:7-11.

²²⁴ Matthew 6:10b; 26:39, 42, 44; Hebrews 10:9; 1 John 5:14.

²²⁵ Job 12:6; Matthew 6:7b; Acts 8:18-24.

²²⁶ 1 Kings 8:49; Ezekiel 22:30; 36:37; Daniel 9:23; 10:12-14; Colossians 2:1.

²²⁷ Psalms 96:9; 99:5, 9; Revelation 19:4, etc.

²²⁸ Matthew 4:10, etc.; Revelation 19:10; 22:9.

²²⁹ Romans 10:9; Philippians 2:11; Hebrews 13:15.

²³⁰ 1 Timothy 2:8; 1 Peter 3:7b.

²³¹ Leviticus 26:40; Nehemiah 1:6; 9:2-3; Daniel 9:20; Acts 19:18; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9.

²³² Matthew 6:7a.

²³³ Philippians 4:6, etc.

²³⁴ 1 Timothy 2:1-4.

²³⁵ Isaiah 8:19-22; Luke 16:25-26.

²³⁶ Psalms 61:9; 66:13-14; Ecclesiastes 5:4-6; Isaiah 19:21; Ezekiel 17.

²³⁷ John 14:21; 1 John 2:3-6; 5:3.

²³⁸ James 1:22-25.

²³⁹ James 1:21.

²⁴⁰ John 8:31.

²⁴¹ John 8:32, 36.

²⁴² John 17:17, 19; Ephesians 5:26; 1 Peter 1:22.

Such godliness, having value for all things²⁴³, is not a means to financial gain, but is a promise for the present life and for eternal life²⁴⁴.

Works from faith

Our works are by no means credited by God as righteousness²⁴⁵, but are the necessary consequence of righteousness²⁴⁶: faith without deeds is dead²⁴⁷, it obviously finds expression in works that praise the Lord²⁴⁸. Works give evidence for a regenerated life²⁴⁹. Works do not result from our zeal, or express our desires²⁵⁰. They result from grace²⁵¹ and works are prepared in advance by God for us to do²⁵², in order that we can do them depending on Him²⁵³ and being still in faith²⁵⁴.

No work has value or strength without love²⁵⁵ which comes from God²⁵⁶. Love is expressed giving thanks to the Lord²⁵⁷, through love towards everyone, mainly towards our brothers in the faith²⁵⁸. In Christ's image²⁵⁹, love leads us to serve our neighbour²⁶⁰ and to offer our bodies as living sacrifices²⁶¹.

Witness

The believer has to glorify God as the salt of the earth and the light of the world²⁶²; he testifies to the Gospel to men, holding out the word of life and doing what is right²⁶³. God urges the believer to behave blamelessly²⁶⁴, with gentleness and wisdom²⁶⁵, with no grumbling or arguing²⁶⁶, with respect and in obedience to the authority²⁶⁷.

²⁴³ 1 Timothy 4:8b.

²⁴⁴ 1 Timothy 6:3-11.

²⁴⁵ Romans 3:27-28; 4:6; Ephesians 2:9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5.

²⁴⁶ Proverbs 19:17; Ecclesiastes 12:147 (there may be slight differences in biblical references) Jeremiah 48:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 2:21; 3:17; 2 Peter 1:5-8; Revelation 2:5; 3:2.

²⁴⁷ James 2:14, 17, 20, 26.

²⁴⁸ Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; 1 Corinthians 9:1; Philippians 1:11; Colossians 1:10; 1 Peter 2:12.

²⁴⁹ 1 Timothy 5:25; Titus 1:16; 2:14; James 2:21-22, 24-25; 2 Peter 1:9-11; 1 John 3:14.

²⁵⁰ 1 Samuel 15:21-23; Matthew 15:9; John 15:4-6; Romans 10:2; 1 Corinthians 3:13; 15:58; 1 Peter 1:17; Revelation 22:12.

²⁵¹ Luke 17:10; 1 Corinthians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 3:5; Philippians 2:13; 4:13; Hebrews 13:21.

²⁵² Isaiah 28:21; Habakkuk 1:5; 3:2; Acts 13:2; Ephesians 2:10.

²⁵³ John 5:19, 30; 8:28; 14:10.

²⁵⁴ Exodus 14:14; Isaiah 26:3, 12; Hebrews 4:10-11.

²⁵⁵ 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

²⁵⁶ 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; 1 John 3:16; 4:7-11.

²⁵⁷ Psalms 45:2; 116:12-14; Colossians 3:17.

²⁵⁸ Matthew 25:40, 45; 2 Corinthians 8:6-7; Galatians 6:9-10; 1 John 3:16-17.

²⁵⁹ Luke 24:19; John 4:34; 14:12; 17:4; 1 Corinthians 4:16.

²⁶⁰ Luke 10:29-37; Acts 9:36; 1 Timothy 5:10; 6:18; Titus 3:8, 14; Hebrews 6:10-11; 10:24.

²⁶¹ Romans 12:1-2.

²⁶² Matthew 5:13-16; Mark 9:51; 2 Corinthians 4:5-6.

²⁶³ Romans 12:17b; Philippians 2:15-16a; 1 Peter 2:12.

²⁶⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:8; Philippians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:10; 3:13; 5:23-24; 1 Timothy 5:7; 6:14; 2 Timothy 2:21; Titus 2:1-10; 2 Peter 3:14.

²⁶⁵ 2 Corinthians 1:12; Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 4:5; Colossians 3:12; Titus 2:12; 3:2; James 3:13; 1 Peter 3:15.

²⁶⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:10; Philippians 2:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:11.

²⁶⁷ Ephesians 5:21-24; 6:1, 5-8; Colossians 3:18, 20, 22-25; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:18; 3:1; 5:5.

The Christian and the world

Sin entered the world through the fall²⁶⁸. Satan is the prince of this world²⁶⁹ holding it through the power of death²⁷⁰. Unbelieving humanity lives under his power and thus is slave to sin²⁷¹.

The sinful nature is linked to the world through flesh, which having fallen is unable to please God²⁷² and cannot enter the Kingdom of God²⁷³.

The world is powerful and spreads its corrupting influence²⁷⁴ through the cravings of sinful people, the lust of their eyes, their boasting about what they have and do²⁷⁵. That is why Christ came to the earth in the likeness of sinful humanity and became a sin offering, crucifying the sinful nature²⁷⁶. Thus, as the misdeeds of the body were put to death²⁷⁷, God's child no longer lives controlled by his sinful nature²⁷⁸.

Any confidence in the flesh is forbidden²⁷⁹. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God; they are His enemies²⁸⁰. The believer has been crucified to the world and is still living in the world²⁸¹ but he no longer belongs to the world²⁸². He separates from the world²⁸³, keeping himself from being polluted from the world²⁸⁴ and purifying his heart from it²⁸⁵. He uses the things of the world although he is not engrossed in them²⁸⁶, he no longer drinks from its fountain²⁸⁷, since his citizenship is in heaven²⁸⁸.

Toutefois, à l'exemple de Christ, Dieu nous envoie dans le monde, pour y porter la bonne nouvelle de Son amour et donner notre vie²⁸⁹.

²⁶⁸ Romans 5:12; 1 John 5:19.

²⁶⁹ John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:1-2.

²⁷⁰ Hebrews 2:14.

²⁷¹ Romans 6:6, 17, 20.

²⁷² Romans 8:7-8.

²⁷³ John 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 15:50.

²⁷⁴ Ephesians 4:22; 2 Peter 1:4.

²⁷⁵ 1 John 2:16.

²⁷⁶ Romans 8:3; Galatians 5:24.

²⁷⁷ Romans 8:12.

²⁷⁸ Romans 8:5-14; Galatians 5:16-18.

²⁷⁹ Philippians 3:2-10.

²⁸⁰ Romans 8:7-8.

²⁸¹ John 17:11, 15-18.

²⁸² Galatians 2:20; 6:14.

²⁸³ 1 Corinthians 6:14-7:1.

²⁸⁴ James 1:27b.

²⁸⁵ James 4:4-10.

²⁸⁶ 2 Corinthians 7:29-35.

²⁸⁷ Psalms 87:7; Jeremiah 2:13; 1 John 2:15.

²⁸⁸ Psalms 137:6; Philippians 3:19-21; Colossians 3:1-4.

²⁸⁹ Matthew 10:16; John 17:15, 18, 21; 20:21; Romans 10:15; 1 Corinthians 1:17.

The Christian in the city

God has established authorities²⁹⁰; the believer must submit himself to every human authority²⁹¹, honour it²⁹², pray for it²⁹³ pay taxes and other owed sums²⁹⁴.

His citizenship being in heaven²⁹⁵, the Christian always keeps his conscience clear before God and people²⁹⁶. Legitimately, he obeys laws as long as they are not against God's law²⁹⁷; he does not join with rebellious officials²⁹⁸. The fruit of righteousness is sowed in peace by peacemakers²⁹⁹.

The Christian and the family

Marriage being instituted first of all by God should be honoured³⁰⁰. God gave the man a complementary person, i.e. the woman within the couple³⁰¹.

Marriage ensures mutual support to the couple³⁰², increasing of mankind³⁰³; it is an obstacle to sexual immorality, gives sexuality its true orientation. Rejoicing in one's husband or wife is legitimate³⁰⁴.

It is a public and free commitment³⁰⁵, made by mutual consent before the authorities³⁰⁶; marriage is followed by conjugal life, common and faithful³⁰⁷.

When the Christian gets married, it should be in the Lord, in order to serve Him³⁰⁸. Marriage is a lawfully indissoluble covenant; only death can break the marriage covenant³⁰⁹. Nevertheless, if believers decide to part, each of them must remain alone or be reconciled to each other³¹⁰. However, the believer falling victim to marital unfaithfulness³¹¹ or being left is not bound; he or she is free to marry again³¹².

²⁹⁰ Romans 13:1-3.

²⁹¹ 1 Peter 2:13-14; 2 Peter 2:10; Jude 8.

²⁹² Romans 13:7; 1 Peter 2:17.

²⁹³ 1 Timothy 2:2.

²⁹⁴ Matthew 17:24-27; Mark 12:17; Romans 13:6-7.

²⁹⁵ Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 13:14; 1 Peter 2:11.

²⁹⁶ Acts 23:1; 24:16; Romans 9:1; 13:5; 1 Corinthians 8:12; 2 Corinthians 1:12; 4:2; 1 Timothy 1:5, 19; 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:3; Hebrews 13:18; 1 Peter 2:19; 3:16, 21.

²⁹⁷ Daniel 3:18; Acts 4:19; 5:29.

²⁹⁸ Proverbs 24:21.

²⁹⁹ James 3:18.

³⁰⁰ Hebrews 13:4.

³⁰¹ Genesis 1:27; 2:20-24.

³⁰² Genesis 2:18; Romans 1:26-27.

³⁰³ Genesis 4:1-2; 9:1; Malachi 2:15.

³⁰⁴ Proverbs 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 7:2, 9.

³⁰⁵ Genesis 24:8, 57-58; 1 Timothy 4:3.

³⁰⁶ Genesis 24:59-60.

³⁰⁷ Genesis 2:24; 24:67; Matthew 19:6a; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5.

³⁰⁸ 1 Corinthians 7:39b; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1.

³⁰⁹ Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 19:6b, 8-10; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39.

³¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 7:10-11.

³¹¹ Matthew 1:18-20; 5:32; 19:9.

³¹² Ecclesiastes 7:16; 1 Corinthians 7:15-16; James 2:12-13.

The couple is the image of the relationship of Christ to His church. The husband loves his wife as his own body, exercises authority, takes care of his wife and keeps her³¹³. In the same way, the woman was given as a help to her husband³¹⁴; she loves him, respects him and is submitted to him³¹⁵.

The problems linked with the couple's life must be solved on the basis of biblical principles³¹⁶, having in mind grace, compassion and mutual forgiveness³¹⁷. The couple can find help by turning to the members of the church³¹⁸.

Upbringing children is first of all the responsibility of the parents. The children must be taught in the way of the Lord³¹⁹, parents should endeavour to be loving and faithful Christians³²⁰. Correcting the children is legitimate for them to be gently imparted with wisdom according to righteousness³²¹.

The Church

What is the Church?

The Church is the community of all believers of the New Covenant whose names are written in heaven³²². The believers are a chosen people, a people belonging to God, a holy nation³²³. They are called out of the world by God, to devote themselves to Him, to be a royal priesthood³²⁴.

People become members of the Church through the Holy Spirit giving renewal as fruit from the union with Christ in a death like His and in a resurrection like His³²⁵. The fellowship of the members of the Church is with the Father and with His son Jesus Christ³²⁶.

The Church is the body of Christ; the Lord is head over everything for the Church and believers are its members, who are united and are given life by the Lord³²⁷. The Church is the bride, the one He loves, He will be united to it when He comes back³²⁸. It is a holy temple in the Lord, Christ being its chief corner-stone and the children of God being its living stones built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets³²⁹.

³¹³ 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23, 25-33a.

³¹⁴ Genesis 2:18; 1 Corinthians 11:9.

³¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 11:5, 10; Ephesians 5:22, 24, 33b; Titus 2:4-5; 1 Peter 3:1-6.

³¹⁶ 1 John 1:5-7.

³¹⁷ Ephesians 4:31-5:2.

³¹⁸ Galatians 6:2; James 5:16.

³¹⁹ Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:7; 11:19; Psalms 22:31; 48:14; 71:18; 78:4, 6; 102:19; Ephesians 6:4b.

³²⁰ Ephesians 6:4a; 1 Timothy 4:12, 16.

³²¹ Proverbs 6:23; 13:24; 22:15; 23:13; 29:15.

³²² Matthew 11:11; 16:18; Luke 10:20; Galatians 4:26; Philippians 4:3; Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 3:5; 21:27.

³²³ 1 Peter 2:9-10.

³²⁴ John 17:6, 14-15; 1 Peter 2:5, 9.

³²⁵ Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 5:25.

³²⁶ 1 John 1:3.

³²⁷ Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:15-16; Colossians 1:18.

³²⁸ John 3:29; 2 Corinthians 11:2-3; Ephesians 5:22-32; Revelation 19:7-8.

³²⁹ 1 Corinthians 3:10-11; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:4-6.

The union of believers is to be achieved according to the union of the Father to the Son “*So that they may be one as we are one*”³³⁰. This union is the work of God the Father³³¹. This union is the fruit of Christ’s presence, through the Holy Spirit in each of its members³³². It cannot be a compromise or an institution resulting from human efforts³³³. The part of man in it is to purify his heart by walking in the light and by obeying the truth; to have sincere love for one another³³⁴. Man must endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace³³⁵; he watches out for those who cause divisions and keeps away from them³³⁶.

Being the pillar and foundation of truth³³⁷, the Church proclaims the manifold wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms³³⁸. The Church preaches the Gospel for the salvation of the world until the second coming of Christ.

The Church is said to be universal since its members belong to every nation, tribe, people and language³³⁹. It is composed of the redeemed people of every generation from the day of Pentecost to the second coming of the Lord³⁴⁰. The Church is invisible to its members already gathered to the Lord³⁴¹ and to those who haven’t come to repentance yet³⁴². It is nevertheless visible inasmuch as it is incarnate on earth through its living members who serve God³⁴³. However, only God knows who are His³⁴⁴. The Church is also local, since God has asked his children to meet in particular places of meeting³⁴⁵, also called churches³⁴⁶, to offer worship, to praise by song and prayer, to proclaim the Word of God and to strengthen one another³⁴⁷.

Jesus promises His presence³⁴⁸ and is revealed in the Church, granting each believer the anointing and the teaching from the Spirit³⁴⁹.

³³⁰ John 17:11, 21-23.

³³¹ Romans 15:5-6.

³³² Ephesians 2:13-22; 4:13-16.

³³³ Genesis 11; Joshua 9:15-16; Isaiah 30:1.

³³⁴ 1 Peter 1:22.

³³⁵ 1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:3.

³³⁶ Romans 16:17.

³³⁷ 1 Timothy 3:15.

³³⁸ Ephesians 3:10.

³³⁹ Revelation 7:9.

³⁴⁰ Acts 2:37-47, etc.; Revelation 19:7-9.

³⁴¹ Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:22; Revelation 14:13.

³⁴² John 10:16; 2 Timothy 2:10; 2 Peter 3:9.

³⁴³ Revelation 2-3.

³⁴⁴ Matthew 13:29; 2 Timothy 2:19.

³⁴⁵ Hebrews 10:25.

³⁴⁶ Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:2; Ephesians 1:1, etc.

³⁴⁷ 1 Corinthians 14:26-35; Ephesians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:16-17; Hebrews 10:25; 13:15-16; 1 Peter 2:4-5.

³⁴⁸ Matthew 18:20; 28:20b.

³⁴⁹ 1 Corinthians 1:4-9; Ephesians 3:14-19; 1 John 2:20-27.

Worship

God, the ruler over everything³⁵⁰, compassionate and gracious³⁵¹, claims that He is believed in³⁵², loved³⁵³, feared³⁵⁴, praised³⁵⁵, called on³⁵⁶, and served by men with all their heart, all their soul and with all their strength³⁵⁷. The members of the Church meet and worship Him for this purpose.

God himself ordered and notified by His own will the way to worship Him, far from any human idea or will to worship³⁵⁸, far from any temptation from Satan³⁵⁹, far from any image³⁶⁰. The worshippers must worship in Spirit and in Truth³⁶¹, freely, and being submitted to the Scriptures³⁶². The worship is not attached to a specific place or building³⁶³.

As members of the body, we become temples of the Holy Spirit³⁶⁴, called to build a spiritual house³⁶⁵. In the New Covenant, observing religious festivals is cancelled, no special way of worshipping is requested as well, provided that any meeting is held in an orderly and suitable way³⁶⁶. Sunday, the day of the Lord, a privileged time when the members of the Church meet, doesn't however replace the Sabbath³⁶⁷. The Sabbath is the shadow of the rest we enjoy every day through faith in Jesus Christ³⁶⁸.

Worship is addressed only to God, the Father and the Son³⁶⁹ through the Holy Spirit³⁷⁰, and not to angels, to saints or to any other created thing³⁷¹; and this only through the

³⁵⁰ 1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalms 97:9; 1 Timothy 6:15.

³⁵¹ Exodus 34:6, etc.

³⁵² Romans 1:18-32; Hebrews 11:6; James 2:19.

³⁵³ Deuteronomy 6:5, etc.; Psalms 31:24.

³⁵⁴ Psalms 34:10, etc.; Jeremiah 10:7.

³⁵⁵ 1 Chronicles 16:25; Psalms 22:4; 30:5; 66:2; 69:31, etc.; Ephesians 5:19.

³⁵⁶ Genesis 4:26; Psalms 50:15, etc.; Isaiah 26:13; 55:6; Joel 3:5 7 (there may be slight differences in biblical references); Acts 22:16; Romans 10:12.

³⁵⁷ Deuteronomy 11:13; Matthew 4:10.

³⁵⁸ Deuteronomy 12:1-13:1; 7 (there may be slight differences in biblical references) 1 Samuel 6:1-9; 1 Chronicles 15:1-15; 1 Samuel 13:9-13; 15:22-23; Matthew 15:9; Colossians 2:23.

³⁵⁹ Matthew 4:1-11; 16:23.

³⁶⁰ Exodus 20:4-6; Deuteronomy 4:15-20; 1 Samuel 7:3-4.

³⁶¹ John 4:23-24.

³⁶² Matthew 15:1-9; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Colossians 3:17.

³⁶³ John 4:21; Acts 7:48-50; 17:24-25.

³⁶⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19.

³⁶⁵ 1 Peter 2:5.

³⁶⁶ Romans 14:1-13; Galatians 4:9-11; Colossians 2:16-23.

³⁶⁷ Matthew 28:1; John 20:19, 26; Acts 2:1; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2.

³⁶⁸ Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 4:7-11.

³⁶⁹ Matthew 5:16, 45; 6:6, 9; 11:27; John 5:19, 23; 6:65; 8:19; 10:38; 12:26; 14:9, 10-11; 15:16, 23-24; 16:23; 1 John 1:3; 2:22-24; Revelation 3:21.

³⁷⁰ Luke 10:21; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Ephesians 2:18; Jude 20.

³⁷¹ Romans 1:25; Colossians 2:18; Revelation 19:10.

Son³⁷². It includes prayer and thanksgiving³⁷³, voluntary offering of our bodies³⁷⁴, setting apart of our deeds and fruit³⁷⁵.

Blessings and promises to be heard are especially linked to joint prayer³⁷⁶. Any uttered prayer must be clear to the people present³⁷⁷. Generosity³⁷⁸, expressing our love towards God³⁷⁹, is effected in a free way³⁸⁰, without pressure or sadness³⁸¹. It supplies the material needs of the Church and the work of service³⁸²; its final purpose is thanksgiving to God³⁸³.

Ministries and gifts

Ministries are performed in the Church. They are given by God to teach, strengthen and improve, all this aimed at leading to its unity and growth, for it to attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ³⁸⁴.

Each member is given one or several gifts from the Spirit in order to be involved in the work for God through his ministry³⁸⁵. God gives out gifts to whom He wishes, as He wishes and when He wishes³⁸⁶, but any believer must eagerly desire them³⁸⁷.

All ministries are not required to be found in every Church, and some of them go beyond the local Church³⁸⁸.

Each gift is expressed in an orderly way³⁸⁹, humbly³⁹⁰ by members submitted to one another in the Church³⁹¹; each gift must be tested and be proved right by the Church³⁹².

The Church must be wisely organised according to the biblical pattern³⁹³. Elders and deacons must be appointed according to whom God has chosen and to the call of God³⁹⁴; the Church acknowledges their ministry according to the direction from the Holy Spirit,

³⁷² John 14:6; Ephesians 2:18; Colossians 3:17; 1 Timothy 2:5.

³⁷³ Philippians 4:6; Colossians 3:16-17.

³⁷⁴ Romans 12:1.

³⁷⁵ Hebrews 13:15-16; 1 Peter 2:5b.

³⁷⁶ Matthew 18:19-20; Acts 4:31.

³⁷⁷ 1 Corinthians 14.

³⁷⁸ 2 Corinthians 8:2; 1 Timothy 6:18; Titus 3:13-14.

³⁷⁹ 2 Corinthians 8:5; Hebrews 13:16; 1 John 3:16-18.

³⁸⁰ Romans 16:1-2.

³⁸¹ 2 Corinthians 9:7.

³⁸² Romans 15:26; 2 Corinthians 9:1, 12a; 3 John 6.

³⁸³ 2 Corinthians 9:11, 12b-13; Philippians 4:18.

³⁸⁴ Ephesians 4:7-16.

³⁸⁵ Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 12:4-5, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:5.

³⁸⁶ Romans 12:3b; 1 Corinthians 12:11b; Ephesians 4:7.

³⁸⁷ 1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1; 1 Timothy 3:1.

³⁸⁸ Romans 1:11-12; 15:27; 1 Corinthians 16:12; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; 2 Timothy 4:11; 2 Peter 3:15-16; 3 John 9-10.

³⁸⁹ 1 Corinthians 14:26-40.

³⁹⁰ Romans 12:3, 6; 15:15-16; 1 Corinthians 14:32; 15:8-10; Ephesians 3:8; 1 Peter 5:5b.

³⁹¹ Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5a.

³⁹² 1 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 3:6-7, 10, 13; 5:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:2, 15.

³⁹³ 1 Timothy 3:15.

³⁹⁴ Acts 13:2; 16:10; 20:28; Romans 1:1; 12:7; 1 Corinthians 1:1; 7:17; Galatians 1:15; Ephesians 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:12.

through the faithful service and the fruit borne³⁹⁵. The members test the persons wishing to be involved in a ministry, then sets them apart by placing their hands on them³⁹⁶ and appoints them³⁹⁷ giving them the right hand of fellowship³⁹⁸.

Elders and deacons serve their brothers without ruling over them, devotedly, humbly, as was Christ, being examples to the flock³⁹⁹, keeping watch over their souls, since they will have to give account about them to God⁴⁰⁰. They accept the right of inspection from all the Church upon their life and teachings⁴⁰¹. However, no accusation can be made against them unless it is brought by two or three witnesses⁴⁰². As a token of their gratitude and faithfulness, the elders and deacons are worthy of honour, respect, material support when their service needs it⁴⁰³. The church submits to its leaders and obeys them⁴⁰⁴. Shepherds as Christ was, the elders lead the Church in dependence on the Great Shepherd⁴⁰⁵.

God grants ministries and gifts to men and women as well⁴⁰⁶. The women undertake their ministries being submitted to their husbands and under the elder's authority⁴⁰⁷.

Authority and discipline

The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, apart from any other king or head⁴⁰⁸, gave it spiritual power and authority over visible and invisible rulers⁴⁰⁹, enabling it to bind and to loose. The Lord Jesus entrusted the Church with the preaching of the Gospel and the celebration of worship⁴¹⁰. Its ministers have received the keys of the Kingdom of heaven⁴¹¹ in order to lead sinners to salvation and to discipline the members gently far from any passion and wickedness⁴¹². For this purpose God supplied commandments and precepts in order for them to use their power legitimately⁴¹³, to correct brothers who have sinned and to bring them back to their senses⁴¹⁴, to prevent others from

³⁹⁵ Romans 16:1-12; 1 Corinthians 16:10, 15-18; Philippians 2:25-30; 4:2-3; Colossians 1:7b; 4:9-13; 2 Timothy 1:16-18; 3 John 12.

³⁹⁶ Acts 13:3; 1 Timothy 4:14; 5:17, 22; 2 Timothy 1:6; 2:21.

³⁹⁷ Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5-9.

³⁹⁸ Galatians 2:9.

³⁹⁹ Ephesians 4:1-3; Philippians 2:1-11; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

⁴⁰⁰ Hebrews 13:17b.

⁴⁰¹ 1 Timothy 5:20.

⁴⁰² 1 Timothy 5:19.

⁴⁰³ 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 3 John 5-8.

⁴⁰⁴ 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13a; Hebrews 13:17a.

⁴⁰⁵ John 10:1-13; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4.

⁴⁰⁶ Acts 2:17; 9:36; 21:9; Romans 16:1-2, 6-7, 12, 15; 1 Corinthians 11:5; 1 Timothy 3:11; 5:3-16.

⁴⁰⁷ 1 Corinthians 11:3, 5-17a; 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

⁴⁰⁸ Isaiah 9:5-6; Ephesians 4:5; Revelation 19:16.

⁴⁰⁹ Matthew 18:18; John 20:21-23; 1 Corinthians 4:21; 5:1-5, 13; 6:1-9; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8, 10; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13; 2:15.

⁴¹⁰ Romans 10:15; Philippians 4:15; 1 Timothy 2:7; 5:17; 2 Timothy 1:11.

⁴¹¹ Matthew 16:19.

⁴¹² Matthew 7:1-5; 2 Corinthians 12:20-21; 13:10; Galatians 6:1-2; Hebrews 13:7; James 2:12-13; 3:13-18.

⁴¹³ Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12; Titus 3:12.

⁴¹⁴ 2 Corinthians 13:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; James 5:19-20; Jude 22-23.

committing the same sins⁴¹⁵, to keep the Church from any profanity⁴¹⁶, and to have the sound doctrine of the Lord honoured in its whole⁴¹⁷.

The members of the Church must submit to the disciplinary decisions of the Church and persevere in fellowship⁴¹⁸, hoping that the lost sinner will repent and will be healed⁴¹⁹.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been instituted by Jesus Christ and have His command⁴²⁰, the necessary external witness⁴²¹ about our union with Christ in His death and resurrection⁴²² and of our belonging to His body which is the Church⁴²³. Although these signs are not a vehicle for grace, their value is obvious. If we perform them by faith, God grants us really through His Holy Spirit, the promised blessings linked to them⁴²⁴.

Immersion baptism⁴²⁵ in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit⁴²⁶ follows repentance and conversion⁴²⁷. It does not effect the purification of our sins but demonstrates it⁴²⁸. It witnesses in the Church that we have been born again, that we are in conformity to Christ in His death and resurrection⁴²⁹, and is asking God for a clear conscience toward Him⁴³⁰.

The Lord's supper is a holy meal⁴³¹. Its celebration is a blessing for the Church. It is giving thanks for a participation in the blood of Christ and in the body of Christ⁴³² who made His life an offering for our sins once for all⁴³³. It commemorates and proclaims the Lord's death until He comes⁴³⁴; it is a visible witness of our commitment to the new covenant⁴³⁵. It is the supreme place where the members of the Church share, forming the body of Christ. Only born again believers can celebrate it⁴³⁶: Thus it is appropriate to have been baptised to take part in it. In order to participate in a worthy manner, one must be conscious of one's unworthiness and grief, while putting one's trust in Christ's

⁴¹⁵ 1 Timothy 5:22b.

⁴¹⁶ Hebrews 12:16.

⁴¹⁷ Titus 2:1, 5b, 8, 10b.

⁴¹⁸ Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 11:16; 2 Corinthians 10:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15.

⁴¹⁹ Romans 14:4; James 4:12; 1 John 5:16.

⁴²⁰ Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23.

⁴²¹ Matthew 3:15; Luke 7:29-30.

⁴²² Romans 6:3-11.

⁴²³ 1 Corinthians 10:16-17.

⁴²⁴ Romans 1:5; 6:16; 15:18; 16:19, 26; 2 Corinthians 2:9; Hebrews 5:9; 1 Peter 1:2.

⁴²⁵ Mark 1:5b, 10; Acts 8:39a.

⁴²⁶ Matthew 28:19.

⁴²⁷ Acts 2:38; Acts 8:37-38; Titus 3:5-6.

⁴²⁸ Ephesians 5:26; 1 Peter 3:21.

⁴²⁹ Galatians 3:27.

⁴³⁰ 1 Peter 3:21.

⁴³¹ 1 Corinthians 10:20-22.

⁴³² 1 Corinthians 10:16.

⁴³³ Hebrews 9:26.

⁴³⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:24b, 25b-26.

⁴³⁵ Matthew 26:28.

⁴³⁶ Romans 6:1-2.

forgiveness⁴³⁷. Eating the bread or drinking the cup in an unworthy manner⁴³⁸, without discerning the body which is the Church, means eating and drinking judgement upon oneself. Doing wrong to the members of the Church and despising them is a major hindrance⁴³⁹. That is why it is necessary to examine and judge oneself. The warning of the Word of God involves our individual responsibility⁴⁴⁰.

The fate of men after their death

Man has no power over his breath⁴⁴¹. He has no right to shorten his life⁴⁴² or others' lives⁴⁴³. Due to sin⁴⁴⁴, people are destined to die once, after that they face judgement⁴⁴⁵. The body returns to dust⁴⁴⁶. The soul which is everlasting⁴⁴⁷, returns to God⁴⁴⁸, either for life, or for death.

Unlike the godless⁴⁴⁹, the believer who dies in the Lord triumphs over death⁴⁵⁰. He doesn't long for death but hopes in eternal life⁴⁵¹. Full of confidence⁴⁵², he would prefer to be away from this body and at home with the Lord⁴⁵³.

The regenerated believer meets Jesus in paradise⁴⁵⁴. With his deeds, he knows happiness and rest⁴⁵⁵, expecting immortality⁴⁵⁶, adoption and redemption of the body⁴⁵⁷.

At the first resurrection⁴⁵⁸, the body of the righteous will be raised imperishable, full of power and spiritual⁴⁵⁹. It will be transformed like the glorious body of Christ⁴⁶⁰ and will be clothed with immortality⁴⁶¹.

⁴³⁷ John 6:47-51, 53-58, 68.

⁴³⁸ 1 Corinthians 11:27.

⁴³⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:27, 29. In the text, the word "body" means on the one hand Christ's body having been crushed for us and on the other hand His "body" which is the Church.

⁴⁴⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:28, 30-32.

⁴⁴¹ Deuteronomy 32:39; Job 14:5; Ecclesiastes 3:1-2; 8:8; 9:12.

⁴⁴² Job 36:20; Psalms 55:24; Proverbs 10:27; Ecclesiastes 7:17; John 8:44; 1 John 3:15.

⁴⁴³ Genesis 9:5-6; Exodus 20:13; Romans 13:4; Revelation 21:8; 22:15.

⁴⁴⁴ Romans 5:12, 14.

⁴⁴⁵ Hebrews 9:27.

⁴⁴⁶ Genesis 3:19.

⁴⁴⁷ Isaiah 14:9-10; Ezekiel 32:21-31; Matthew 10:28.

⁴⁴⁸ Numbers 16:22; Ecclesiastes 12:7 (there may be slight differences in biblical references)

⁴⁴⁹ Job 1:21; 27:8; Psalms 37:13; Romans 2:9; Hebrews 2:14-15.

⁴⁵⁰ Proverbs 14:32; Psalms 23:4; 116:15; Isaiah 57:2; John 6:50-58; 8:51; 10:28; 11:25-26; Acts 6:15; 7:54-60; Romans 8:1, 38-39; 14:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:10.

⁴⁵¹ 2 Corinthians 5:4.

⁴⁵² Numbers 23:10; Psalms 48:15.

⁴⁵³ Acts 21:13; 2 Corinthians 5:2-9; Philippians 1:19-24; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Revelation 12:11.

⁴⁵⁴ Luke 16:22, 25; 23:43; Acts 7:59; Hebrews 12:23.

⁴⁵⁵ Revelation 14:13.

⁴⁵⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:53b.

⁴⁵⁷ Romans 8:23.

⁴⁵⁸ Revelation 20:6.

⁴⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:42-44.

⁴⁶⁰ Philippians 3:20-21.

⁴⁶¹ Luke 20:35-36; 1 Corinthians 15:53-54; Revelation 21:4.

The soul of godless people is immediately taken to a place of torment⁴⁶² with no possibility of return from it⁴⁶³. Being conscious, it keeps in memory the past and experiences useless remorse⁴⁶⁴. It is expecting with terror the last judgement⁴⁶⁵ which will throw it, as a raised body⁴⁶⁶ into a place of torment called eternal Punishment⁴⁶⁷ where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth⁴⁶⁸, destruction⁴⁶⁹ and everlasting burning⁴⁷⁰, burning sulphur⁴⁷¹, blazing furnace⁴⁷² unquenchable fire⁴⁷³ where the worm will not die⁴⁷⁴ ...

The last times

The prophetic writings teach us in several ways about the times to come. They urge us to pay much attention to these times⁴⁷⁵ and to be kept from any particular interpretation⁴⁷⁶. They mainly concern the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ⁴⁷⁷.

The second coming of Christ, or rapture

The Church, bride of Christ, expects, in a steadfast hope the second coming of Christ⁴⁷⁸. The Church prays and acts in order to speed His coming⁴⁷⁹. Christ is coming back to catch up His own⁴⁸⁰, to judge sinners⁴⁸¹ and to establish His eternal righteous and peaceful reign⁴⁸².

No one knows that day or hour⁴⁸³, since He will come like a thief in the night⁴⁸⁴. But there will be warnings, in order that we might stand up and lift up our heads because our redemption is drawing near⁴⁸⁵:

⁴⁶² Revelation 14:11; 20:10.

⁴⁶³ Job 16:22; John 8:24.

⁴⁶⁴ Luke 16:19-31.

⁴⁶⁵ Revelation 20:11-15.

⁴⁶⁶ Daniel 12:2; Matthew 10:28; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Revelation 20:5, 12-13.

⁴⁶⁷ Matthew 25:46.

⁴⁶⁸ Matthew 13:42, 50; 22:13.

⁴⁶⁹ 2 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Peter 3:7.

⁴⁷⁰ Isaiah 33:14; Luke 16:24.

⁴⁷¹ Revelation 14:10; 19:20; 20:15, etc.

⁴⁷² Matthew 13:41-42, 50.

⁴⁷³ Matthew 3:12; 18:8; 25:41.

⁴⁷⁴ Isaiah 66:24; Mark 9:43, 45, 48.

⁴⁷⁵ 1 Peter 1:10-13; 2 Peter 1:19.

⁴⁷⁶ 2 Peter 1:20-21.

⁴⁷⁷ 1 Corinthians 16:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-2:8.

⁴⁷⁸ Revelation 22:17, 20.

⁴⁷⁹ 2 Peter 3:12.

⁴⁸⁰ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

⁴⁸¹ 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; 2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12.

⁴⁸² 2 Peter 3:13.

⁴⁸³ Matthew 24:36.

⁴⁸⁴ Matthew 24:42-25:13; Luke 12:39; 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 4; 2 Peter 3:10, 17; Revelation 3:3; 16:15, etc.

⁴⁸⁵ Luke 21:28-31.

- In the world, great disasters (wars, famines, earthquakes, epidemics...) ⁴⁸⁶, difficult times ⁴⁸⁷, a deceptive peace ⁴⁸⁸ and the coming of antichrist ⁴⁸⁹;
- For Israel, its coming back to the Promised Land and the blooming again of the wilderness, Jerusalem given back to the Jewish people ⁴⁹⁰...
- In the Church, development of apostasy (apparition of false Christs and false prophets, love growing cold) ⁴⁹¹, the Gospel to be preached in the whole world ⁴⁹², religious persecutions ⁴⁹³, increasing of knowledge ⁴⁹⁴.

The rapture of the Church

At a fixed time, very quickly, with a loud command, the Lord himself will come down from heaven to catch up the Church.

The dead in Christ will rise first, imperishable. After that, we, who are still alive, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and so we will be with the Lord forever ⁴⁹⁵.

If, due to the work of Christ, through mere grace, we escape the condemnation of the sinners ⁴⁹⁶, we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ to receive what is due for the things done in the body ⁴⁹⁷. The motive of men's hearts will be exposed ⁴⁹⁸. Some will be saved but only as if they escape through the flames, the others will be rewarded ⁴⁹⁹ (praise ⁵⁰⁰, crowns ⁵⁰¹, glory ⁵⁰², etc.).

Then Jesus-Christ will allow the Church to present itself, as a radiant bride, without stain or wrinkle ⁵⁰³ and he will be united to it at the supper of the Lamb ⁵⁰⁴.

⁴⁸⁶ Matthew 24:6-8.

⁴⁸⁷ 2 Timothy 3:1.

⁴⁸⁸ 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

⁴⁸⁹ 2 Thessalonians 2:5-12.

⁴⁹⁰ Isaiah 14:1-2; 34:16-17; 35:1-10; Ezekiel 34:13-14; 36:10-11, 24-27, 33, 38; 37:1-14, 25; 39:28-29; Zechariah 12:10; 13:8-9; Romans 11:11-15, 23, 25-31.

⁴⁹¹ Matthew 24:4-5, 11-12, 23-26, 37-39; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 4:3-4; 2 Peter 3:1-4; Jude 17-19.

⁴⁹² Matthew 24:14.

⁴⁹³ Matthew 24:9-10.

⁴⁹⁴ Daniel 12:4.

⁴⁹⁵ 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17.

⁴⁹⁶ John 3:36; 5:24; Romans 5:8-9; 8:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9; Hebrews 7:25; 8:12; 1 John 4:17-18; 2:28.

⁴⁹⁷ 2 Corinthians 5:10.

⁴⁹⁸ Matthew 18:23; 25:19; Luke 16:2; Romans 14:10-12; Hebrews 10:30-31; Revelation 22:12.

⁴⁹⁹ Matthew 5:11-12; 6:4; 10:32; 24:45; Luke 6:34-35; 12:33-34; 14:13-14; Romans 2:5-7, 16; 8:18; 1 Corinthians 3:8-9, 10-15; 15:58; Galatians 6:9-10; Ephesians 6:8; Philippians 2:15-16; 3:13-14; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; 2 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 6:10; 10:34; 10:35; 1 Peter 4:13; Revelation 14:13.

⁵⁰⁰ Matthew 25:21; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Peter 1:7.

⁵⁰¹ 1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10; 3:11.

⁵⁰² Daniel 12:3; Matthew 13:43; Romans 2:10; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; 1 Peter 1:7; 5:4.

⁵⁰³ Ephesians 5:27.

⁵⁰⁴ Revelation 19:7-9; 21:9.

The sinning world is judged

Jesus-Christ triumphed over Satan on the cross⁵⁰⁵. Henceforth He reigns in the heavens until He has put all his enemies under His feet⁵⁰⁶.

All judgement has been entrusted to the Son⁵⁰⁷. He was judged to be able to open the seals for God's wrath to come to earth through many kinds of plagues⁵⁰⁸. Satan's power, the Dragon⁵⁰⁹ will reach its climax through the reign of the Antichrist (the beast)⁵¹⁰ and of the false prophet⁵¹¹ allied to Babylon the great prostitute⁵¹². They will fight the Lamb and the Lamb will triumph over them through His glorious coming⁵¹³. When, with all the holy ones⁵¹⁴, His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives⁵¹⁵, he will overthrow the coalition of Armageddon⁵¹⁶. The beast and the false prophet will be thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulphur⁵¹⁷. The dragon, the ancient serpent that is the devil will be bound for a thousand years⁵¹⁸.

The Millennium

Israel as people living now on the earth, has already been restored on its land according to the promises of Scripture, but remains unbelieving. It will be nearly destroyed by the nations' coalition⁵¹⁹, but the surviving remnant will convert⁵²⁰. The Jews will know the One they have pierced and God will rescue Jerusalem surrounded by armies. Then Christ will reign for a thousand years⁵²¹.

The last judgement

After one thousand years, Satan, released from his prison for a last rebellion, will eventually be defeated⁵²². The earth and the heavens will flee and the godless dead will rise to be judged according to their deeds. Death and Hades, and Satan will be thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulphur⁵²³.

⁵⁰⁵ Genesis 3:15; Luke 10:18; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14.

⁵⁰⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:24-27, 54-57; Hebrews 2:8-9.

⁵⁰⁷ John 5:22.

⁵⁰⁸ Revelation 5:5; 6:1-17; 8:1.

⁵⁰⁹ Revelation 12:3; 20:1-3.

⁵¹⁰ Revelation 13:1-9; 14:9-11; 16:2, 10; 17:3, 8-13, 16-17; 19:20; 20:10

⁵¹¹ Revelation 13:11-18; 16:13; 19:20; 20:10.

⁵¹² Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:1-18:24; 19:2.

⁵¹³ Revelation 19:11-21.

⁵¹⁴ Zechariah 14:5b; Revelation 17:14; 19:14.

⁵¹⁵ Zechariah 14:4.

⁵¹⁶ Revelation 16:14, 16.

⁵¹⁷ Revelation 19:20.

⁵¹⁸ Revelation 20:2.

⁵¹⁹ Zechariah 14:1-16.

⁵²⁰ Isaiah 14:1-2; 34:16-17; 35:1-10; Ezekiel 34:13-14; 36:10-11, 24-27, 33, 38; 37:1-14, 25; 39:28-29; Zechariah 12:10-13:9; Romans 11:11-15, 23, 25-31.

⁵²¹ Revelation 20:3, 4b, 7.

⁵²² Revelation 20:7-10.

⁵²³ Revelation 20:11-15.

Heaven

A new heaven and a new earth will appear and the New Jerusalem as well, that is God's bride and tabernacle with men. Everything will be made new. God will dwell with His and will comfort them. The almighty God will be their temple and the Lamb as well. The glory of God will be their light, and the Lamb will be their lamp. His servants, whose foreheads will be marked with His name, will serve Him and will reign for ever and ever⁵²⁴.

Conclusion

If we know these things, we will be blessed if we do them⁵²⁵.

⁵²⁴ Revelation 21:1-22:5.

⁵²⁵ John 13:17.