

**EASTERN REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
ADVENT CHRISTIAN CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF FAITH**

Desiring to set forth clearly that which we regard as scriptural and therefore true, we affirm the following:

Concerning God

We believe in one God,¹ eternally existent as Father,² Son,³ and Holy Spirit.⁴

We believe in God the Father² Almighty,⁵ creator,⁶ ruler,⁷ and restorer of his total creation.⁸

We believe in God the Son,³ fully divine⁹ and fully human,¹⁰ who carried out the will of the Father in the redemption of human beings.¹¹

We believe in God the Holy Spirit⁴ who in this age convicts of sin,¹² testifies to the things of Christ,¹³ and distributes gifts for building up the church.¹⁴

Concerning Scripture

We believe that God revealed himself and his plans for his creation¹⁵ in the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments.

We believe that he superintended the process of revelation¹⁶ in such a way that the human authors recorded events and precepts without error.¹⁷

We believe that this inspired record is expressed in statements of fact which we can understand¹⁸ and which govern our theology and actions.¹⁹

Concerning human beings

We believe that people are rational beings²⁰ who are preeminent over the rest of creation as those who are created in the image of God.²¹

We believe that the physical and spiritual aspects of the person function together as a unit,²² neither the physical nor the spiritual capable of functioning apart from the whole.²³

We believe that humans were created good²⁴ with the prospect of living forever on the good earth,²⁵ that they forfeited that prospect by disobeying God.²⁶

We believe that all human beings are now by nature sinful,²⁷ subject to death as a consequence of sin,²⁸ and in need of salvation.²⁹

We believe that people are responsible to live holy and productive lives according to principles revealed clearly in Scripture.³⁰

We believe that the chief purpose of humans is to glorify God³¹ and to enjoy being his people.

Concerning salvation

We believe that Adam's decision to disobey God resulted in God's disapproval, spiritual and physical death for all humankind,²⁸ and an eternal destiny without hope apart from divine intervention on our behalf.³²

We believe that in keeping with the Father's plan,³³ Christ came to earth,³⁴ willingly accepted death³⁵ as a substitute for sinners,³⁶ spent three days in the grave,³⁷ and rose bodily from the dead,³⁸ as will the multitude of those who are his when he returns.³⁹

We believe that the Holy Spirit in this age prompts the preaching of the good news about Christ,⁴⁰ convicts of sin,¹² regenerates those who have received the gift of faith,⁴¹ and enables them to live a holy life.⁴²

Concerning the church

We believe that the universal church is composed of all those who have put their trust in Christ alone for salvation.⁴³

We believe that local congregations of believers are properly referred to as churches,⁴⁴ and that their chief responsibilities are to worship God,⁴⁵ to be instructed in the Scriptures,⁴⁶ to gather for fellowship,⁴⁷ to uphold one another in wholesome living,⁴⁸ and to testify to God's grace⁴⁹ in order to bring others to faith in Christ.⁵⁰

We believe that the only divinely instituted ordinances are the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion)⁵¹ and the baptism by immersion of those who come to faith in Christ.⁵²

Concerning the future

We believe that Jesus Christ will return to earth⁵³ to raise the dead,³⁹ judge all people,⁵⁴ eliminate evil,⁵⁵ and establish God's eternal kingdom on the earth made new.⁵⁶

We believe that at the Second Coming of Christ those without faith in him will be resurrected,⁵⁷ judged,⁵⁴ and punished consciously with a degree of pain appropriate to their guilt, then deprived of life altogether.⁵⁸

We believe that, in the interim between Christ's first and second coming, those who die, believer and unbeliever alike, unaware of the passage of time, await the resurrection in an unconscious state.⁵⁹

We believe that those who have faith in Christ alone will live forever⁶⁰ in the new heavens and upon the new earth,⁵⁶ that is, in the physical creation restored to its original perfection.⁶¹

¹ **Deuteronomy 6:4** – Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Deuteronomy 4:35 – To you it was shown, that you might know that the Lord is God; there is no other beside him. (cf. v 39; 1 Kings 8:60; Isaiah 45:5; 46:9)

Psalms 96:5 – For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens. (cf. Isaiah 40:18; 42:8)

Jeremiah 10:10a – But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. (cf. Zechariah 14:9)

John 17:3 – And this is eternal life, that they may know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

1 Corinthians 8:4-6 – . . . we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. (cf. Romans 3:30; Galatians 2:20; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; James 2:19)

1 Timothy 2:5 – For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

Matthew 28:19 – Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name [sing.] of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Luke 1:35 – And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

Matthew 3:16-17 – And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and

coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

2 Corinthians 13:14 – The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

1 Peter 1:2 – according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for the sprinkling with his blood.

² **Exodus 4:22** – Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son, (cf. Jeremiah 31:9c; Hosea 11:1; Malachi 1:6)

2 Samuel 7:14a – I will be to him a father, and he will be to me a son. (cf. Psalm 2:7; 89:26-27)

Matthew 6:9 – Our Father in heaven, . . .

Romans 8:15 – . . . you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" (cf. Galatians 4:6)

Romans 15:6 – the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (cf. 2 Corinthians 1:3; 11:31; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:3)

³ **Mark 1:1; Luke 1:35; 4:41; Matthew 14:33; 16:16; 26:63-64; 27:54; John 1:14, 49; 11:27; 20:31.**

Romans 1:4 – and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hebrews 1:2 – but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom he created the world.

⁴ **John 14:16-17** – And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

John 16:7 – Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

Acts 5:3-4 – Peter said to Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit . . .? You have not lied to men but to God.

1 Corinthians 2:11-12 – For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

Ephesians 4:30 – And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

⁵ **Genesis 17:1-2** – When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."

2 Corinthians 6:18 – and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty." [expanding on 2 Samuel 7:8, 14]

Revelation 1:8 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

⁶ **Genesis 1:1** – In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Revelation 4:11 – "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

⁷ **Exodus 15:18** – The Lord will reign forever and ever. (cf. Psalm 10:16; 29:10; 45:6; 146:10)

1 Chronicles 29:11-12a – Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all.

1 Timothy 1:17 – To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

⁸ **Romans 8:19-23** – For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Revelation 21:1 – Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. (cf. Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:10; Matthew 17:11; 19:28; Acts 3:21)

⁹ **John 1:1** – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 – The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:18 – No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 10:30 – I and the Father are one. . . . ³⁷ If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; ³⁸ but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father. (cf. 5:17-18; 8:58-59; 14:9-11)

John 20:28 – Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God.”

Matthew 1:23 – “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means God with us).

Romans 1:3-4 – concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 9:5 – To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Philippians 2:5-11 – Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Colossians 1:15-17 – He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Colossians 2:9 – For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,

Titus 2:13 – waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Hebrews 1:3a – He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

2 Peter 1:1 – Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:20 – And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Old Testament texts applied to Yahweh which are applied to Jesus in the New:

Psalms 45:6-7 (Hebrews 1:8-9); Psalm 102:25-27 (Hebrews 1:10-12); Isaiah 6:10 (John 12:40-42)
Isaiah 8:13-15 (1 Peter 2:8); Isaiah 40:3 (Matthew 3:3); Isaiah 44:6 (Revelation 22:13); Isaiah 45:23 (Philippians 2:10). (cf. Psalm 110:1 [Hebrews 1:13; Matthew 22:41-46])

¹⁰ **Galatians 4:4-5** – But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Genesis 3:15 – I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

Luke 2:40 – And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him. (cf. v 52)

Acts 17:30-31 – The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

Philippians 2:6-7 – who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, being born in the likeness of men.

1 Timothy 2:5 – For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 2:14-18 – Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hebrews 4:14-15 – Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

1 John 4:2-3 – By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of antichrist, which you have heard was coming and now is in the world already.

¹¹ **Matthew 26:39** – And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.” (cf. v 42; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42)

John 5:30 – I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

John 6:38 – For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. (cf. John 4:34; 5:17, 19)

John 12:27 – Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.

John 12:44-50 – And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken of my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father told me.

Philippians 2:8 – And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Hebrews 5:8 – Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.

1 John 4:9-10 – In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

¹² **John 16:8-11** – And when he [the Helper] comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

1 Corinthians 12:3 – Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

¹³ **John 15:26** – But when the Helper comes, who I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

John 14:26 – But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 16:12-15 – I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

¹⁴ **1 Corinthians 12:4-7** – Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. [For a sample of manifestations, read on; cf. Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:4-16.]

1 Corinthians 14:26 – What then brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

Ephesians 4:11-16 – And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with

which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

¹⁵ **Hebrews 1:1** – Long ago, at many times and in many way, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

Amos 3:7 – For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets. (cf. Genesis 18:17f)

¹⁶ **2 Timothy 3:16-17** – All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:20-21 – knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁷ **Psalms 12:6** – The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.

Proverbs 30:5 – Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

John 17:17 – Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

Titus 1:2 – in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began

¹⁸ **1 Timothy 3:15** – and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 – And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Deuteronomy 30:11, 14 – For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. . . . But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

Psalms 19:7b – the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. (cf. Proverbs 1:2-6)

¹⁹ **2 Timothy 3:16** – All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness,

Psalms 119:11 – I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

2 Peter 1:10 – Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

²⁰ **Deuteronomy 6:5** – You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (cf. Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27)

²¹ **Genesis 1:26-28** – Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

Psalms 8:6-8 – You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and all the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

²² **Genesis 2:7** – then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Job 33:4 – The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

²³ **Ecclesiastes 12:7** – and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

James 2:26 – . . . the body apart from the spirit is dead, . . .

²⁴ **Genesis 1:31** – And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Ecclesiastes 7:29 – See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.

²⁵ **Genesis 2:8-9** – And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

²⁶ **Genesis 3:17, 19** – And to Adam he said, “Because you have listen to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain shall you eat of it all the days of your life; . . . By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Genesis 3:22-24 – Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

²⁷ **Psalms 51:6** – Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Ephesians 2:1-3 – And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you one walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

²⁸ **Romans 5:12** – Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned. (cf. Romans 3:23; 6:23)

Romans 3:23 – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

James 1:15 – Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

²⁹ **Job 4:17-19** – Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his maker? Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his angels he charges with error; how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed like the moth.

Psalms 14:1-3 – The fool has says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside;

together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one. (cf. Romans 3:9-20)

Isaiah 64:6 – We have all become as one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

³⁰ **Exodus 19:4-6** – You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagle's wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed hear my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel. (cf. Deuteronomy 28:9)

Leviticus 11:45 – For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. (cf. 20:26; Deuteronomy 14:2)

Micah 6:8 – He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Romans 6 – What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 12:1 – I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

2 Corinthians 7:1 – Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 – For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.

1 Peter 1:14-16 – As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, so also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

1 Peter 2:9 – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 John 3:2-3 – Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

³¹ **Romans 11:36** – For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

1 Corinthians 10:31 – So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

³² **Isaiah 59:2** – but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

Ephesians 2:12 – remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Ephesians 5:5-6 – For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on the sons of disobedience.

Romans 5:6, 8, 10 – For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. . . . but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. . . . For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

³³ **John 3:16** – For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Ephesians 1:3-10 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

³⁴ **John 3:13** – No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

John 6:38 – I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. (cf. vv 33, 62)

1 Corinthians 15:47 – The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.

³⁵ **John 10:17-18** – For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.

John 5:30 – I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

Matthew 26:39, 53-54 – And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will. . . . Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?

³⁶ **Isaiah 53:4-6** – Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

2 Corinthians 5:21 – For our sake [God] made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

³⁷ **1 Corinthians 15:3-4** – For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised of the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

Mark 8:31 – And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.

³⁸ **Acts 1:3** – To [the apostles] he presented himself alive after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 15:5-8 – and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

[cf. Matthew 28, Mark 26, Luke 24, John 20-21.]

³⁹ **1 Corinthians 15:20-23** – But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:14, 16 – For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. . . . For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

John 6:40 – This is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

⁴⁰ **1 Corinthians 2:4-5, 10-13** – and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. . . . these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might freely understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart these words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

⁴¹ **John 3:5-6** – Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Titus 3:5-6 – he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

⁴² **Ezekiel 36:26-27** – And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Romans 8:2-4, 12-14 – For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be met in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. . . . So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

1 John 5:4, 18 – For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that overcomes our world—our faith. . . . We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

⁴³ **Acts 2:38, 41, 47b** – And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. . . .” So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. . . . And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Galatians 3:26-28 – for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (cf. Colossians 3:11)

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 – For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

⁴⁴ Multiple references to churches in cities (Acts 8:1; 11:22, 26; 13:1; 14:23, 27; 15:3, 4, 22; 16:5; 18:22; 20:17; Romans 16:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14), provinces (Acts 9:31; 15:41; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 19; 2 Corinthians 8:1; Galatians 1:2, 22), and households or meeting in homes (Romans 16:5, 10, 11, 14, 15; 1 Corinthians 16:15, 19; Colossians 4:5; Philemon 2).

⁴⁵ **Ephesians 5:19-20** – addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Corinthians 14:26 – What then brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

⁴⁶ **Colossians 3:16** – Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

1 Timothy 4:13– Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.

⁴⁷ **Acts 2:42** – And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Philippians 1:3, 5 – I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, . . . because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

1 John 1:3 – that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. (cf. vv 6-7.)

⁴⁸ **Hebrews 10:23-25** – Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 3:13 – But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

2 Timothy 4:2 – preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

⁴⁹ **1 Peter 4:10** – As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

Galatians 6:10 – So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

1 Timothy 6:18 – They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,

⁵⁰ **Matthew 28:18-20** – And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Mark 16:15 – And [Jesus] said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”

⁵¹ **1 Corinthians 11:23-25** – For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” (cf. Luke 22:14-23; Mark 14:22-25; Matthew 26:26-29.)

⁵² **Mark 16:16a** – “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, . . .” (cf. Matthew 28:19 above note 50; Acts 2:38 above note 43.)

Romans 6:3-4 – Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Colossians 2:11-12 – In [Christ] also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

⁵³ **John 14:2-3** – In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

Acts 1:10-11 – And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

⁵⁴ **Acts 10:42** – And [God] commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that [Jesus of Nazareth] is the one appointed by God to be the judge of the living and the dead.

Acts 17:30-31 – The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

2 Corinthians 5:10 – For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Revelation 22:12 – Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done.

⁵⁵ **1 Corinthians 15:24-26** – Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Revelation 19:20; 20:10; 21:8 – And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. . . . and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. . . . But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.

⁵⁶ **Isaiah 65:17** – For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.

Isaiah 66:22-23 – For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain. From new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath all flesh shall come to worship before me declares the Lord.

2 Peter 3:13 – But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Revelation 21:1-4 – Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

⁵⁷ **Daniel 12:2** – And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28-29 – Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

Acts 24:14-15 – But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.

⁵⁸ **Isaiah 65:15; 66:16, 24** – You shall leave your name to my chosen for a curse, and the Lord God will put you to death, but his servants he will call by another name. . . . For by fire will the Lord enter into judgment, and by his sword, with all flesh; and those slain by the Lord shall be many. . . . And they shall go out and look at the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

Malachi 4:1 – For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.

Matthew 10:28 – And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 – since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

⁵⁹ **Job 3:11, 13-15, 17-19** – Why did I not die at birth, come out of the womb and expire? . . . For then I would have lain down and been quiet; I would have slept; then I would have been at rest, with kings and counselors of the earth who rebuilt ruins for themselves, or with princes who had gold, who filled their houses with silver. . . . There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. There the prisoners are at ease together; they hear not the voice of the taskmaster. The small and the great are there, and the slave is free from his master.

Job 14:10-12 – But a man dies and is laid low; man breathes his last, and where is he? As waters fail from a lake and a river wastes away and dries up, so a man lies down and does not rise again; till the heavens are no more he will not awake or be roused out of his sleep.

Psalms 6:5 – For in death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who will give you praise?

Psalms 146:4 – When his breath departs he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish.

Ecclesiastes 9:1-6 – But all this I laid to heart, examining it all, how the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God. Whether it is love or hate, man does not know; both are before him. It is the same for all, since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so is the sinner, and he who swears is as he who shuns an oath. This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that the same event happens to all. Also, the hearts of the children of man are full of evil, and madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead. But he who is joined with all the living has hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten. Their love and their hate and their envy have already perished, and forever they have no more share in all that is done under the sun.

New Testament references to death as “sleep”: Matthew 9:24 (=Mark 5:39; Luke 8:52); 27:52; John 11:11-14; Acts 7:60; 13:36 (cf. 2:29, 34); 1 Corinthians 7:39 (Greek); 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14, 15; 2 Peter 3:4.

1 Corinthians 15:17-18 – And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

⁶⁰ **Romans 2:6-8** – [God] will render to each one according to his works: to those who by persistence in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.

1 Corinthians 15:50-57 – I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

“O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁶¹ **Romans 8:19-23** – For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Revelation 22:1-5 – Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.