“What Do You Make of the Announcement That Noah’s Ark Has Been Found?”

Bill Crouse, a former Probe staff member and Ark hunter, has been studying this issue for years, including making several trips to Mt. Ararat. Here is his assessment of the announcement:

Noah’s Ark Discovered Again?

Bill Crouse and Gordon Franz

April 29, 2010

The discovery of Noah’s Ark was announced last Sunday (4/24/10) by a Chinese organization from Hong Kong (Noah’s Ark Ministries, International). The problem with this is that it seems like the “discovery” of Noah’s Ark is getting to be almost an annual event. What in the world is going on? We think it’s a question that is easy to analyze. Genesis 1-11 is the most attacked portion of Scripture for its historicity. Finding an antediluvian artifact like Noah’s Ark could be the greatest archaeological discovery ever. It evokes many wannabe Indiana Joneses to search for Noah’s Ark. We see no problem with this quest, and would welcome such a discovery. *The problem is not in the finding of the Ark, but in its substantiation*. Amateur archaeologists can and do find things that turn out to be fantastic discoveries. Witness the treasure hunter, Terry Herbert, in Staffordshire, England, who recently found a huge cache of Saxon gold artifacts that was reported in *National Geographic*. However, to properly document a discovery, the proper scientific protocol must be followed. Scientists are trained to gather and analyze evidence. They then publish their research so that other scientists can test their results. These “Indiana Joneses” invariably do not do

this. They put the cart before the horse by holding a spectacular press conference declaring what they discovered rather than publishing their results in a scientific journal. The news media, on the other hand, is all too eager to comply for what gets good ratings, and at the same time put evangelical Christians in a bad light.

This Hong Kong group claims they are 99.9 % sure that the wood they found belongs to the Ark of Noah. Since we have spent a few thousand hours digging into the subject of the Noah's Flood and the Ark, we have the following questions about the alleged discovery:

1. When archaeologists make a discovery they must be able to prove exactly where they took their specimen out of the ground. How do we know this video showing the rooms was filmed where they said it was?

2. It is claimed that this discovery was found in an ice and rock cave on Agri Dagh, also known as Mt. Ararat. It is a known fact among geologists that nearly all of the icecap on this mountain consists of moving ice, that is, glacier. A glacier is a river of ice which flows down the mountain. Any wooden structure inside this ice would be ground to bits from the glacial action. In their news releases they have reported this site to be at 13,000 feet and in another report at around 14,000. With these altitudes it would have to be on the ice cap or at the very edge.

3. Most geologists believe this mountain was formed in relatively recent times, i.e., after the Flood. It is a complex volcano with no clearly discernible layers of sedimentation that would have been laid down by flood waters.

4. The group claims they have had the wood carbon dated by a lab in Iran with the results being almost 5000 years old (with the Flood occurring about 3000 B.C.). Why did they

have the wood tested in Iran, we ask? Will other scientists have access to the lab results? Are there any good labs in Iran that can do this kind of testing? Or, was the wood tested in Iran because the lab results might be harder to trace by other scientists? Why wasn't a lab in the United States or the United Kingdom used? Just asking!

5. Is this wood coated with pitch (bitumen)? The Bible says God instructed Noah to treat the wood with pitch, either asphalt or pine pitch (Gen. 6:14). At least some of this wood should test positive for this coating. Also, has a botanist examined the wood to determine what kind of wood it is?

6. What about motives? Only God knows their true motives, but it sure makes one nervous when these groups looking for the Ark are planning a documentary video so early in the project before any truth claims are established. One of the members of this Chinese group just happens to be a filmmaker. Most readers interested in this subject probably notice that about once a year a new docudrama about Noah's Ark appears on one of the cable channels. They would not keep doing this if they didn't make money. Hopefully, this group's motives are other than financial.

7. What are the plans to publish this material in scientific peer-reviewed archaeological and geological publications? We would have hoped that this would have been primary to a news conference and videos. True archaeological is not forwarded by this sequence, but we certainly understand their excitement and the desire to be the first to report such a discovery.

In addition to the above questions, we have some reasons to question the integrity of this discovery for the following reasons:

1. This group had a local guide who is a known for his

deceit and fraud. It is this guide who initially informed the Chinese group that he knew the location of the Ark in 2008. However, since then he has led them to more than one location. The first location was a cave at a low altitude, a small cave with a tree growing in front! Apparently the current cave is at the 13,000 or 14,000 foot level on the icecap.

2. The specimens taken from this first cave (at the lower altitude) were claimed to be petrified wood from the Ark. In actuality, they were nothing than volcanic tuff.

3. In one of the photos of the rooms straw is seen on the floor and even a spider web in one of the corners. Really! Do spiders live at 13,000 or 14,000 feet? Can they survive the freezing temperatures?

4. There is a real problem with evangelists (which is what they claim to be) who use this kind of discovery to prove the Bible, and hence convince non-believers of its authority, when in fact the truthfulness of the discovery had not been established. I [Bill Crouse] know firsthand of one “Indiana Jones” who spoke eloquently and emotionally about his adventures, and when he gave an invitation at the end of his presentation, many in the audience stood up to commit their lives to Christ. When the speaker was confronted about the truthfulness of some of the stories he told that night, he replied: “But look how many stood up to receive Christ.” This becomes very problematic when at some point the convert learns the real truth. They often become very embittered about all things Christian, and understandably so.

5. There seems to be more than the usual gullibility here in that the Hong Kong group was warned about this local guide who has led others astray. We say usual gullibility, because it seems to be a characteristic of some ark-hunters as well, in that they tend to uncritically accept all the local lore.

> While many of these ark-hunters mean well, it seems that they want to believe every report seemingly at all costs; putting everything through a rational grid often is avoided as being too skeptical.

At this point we are skeptical of these new claims but would rejoice in the end if they proved to be true. If this someday is the case, we will be the first to apologize for our doubts. We would strongly urge the Hong Kong group to follow proper scholarly procedures and publish this material in scientific, peer-reviewed archaeological and geological publications so that the scholarly community can examine the material first hand and critique it in order to offer helpful, and constructive, criticism. For the person in the pew, we caution you to not get too excited about something that is at best, unsubstantiated; and at worst, a fraud perpetrated by an enterprising local guide!

The authors are both members of the Near East Archaeological Society and the Evangelical Theological Society. We both believe that Noah was a real historical person and that the Flood was a literal event in space-time history. In our own research we came to a different conclusion about the landing place of the Ark. Nothing we have seen so far causes us to doubt or change our position. If you care to read of our research it can be found at www.rapidresponsereport.com.

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About Probe's Weekend Mind

Games Conference

The conference offers a Reasons to Believe track and your choice of the following other tracks:

Reasons to Believe
Whether this is your first exposure to apologetics or your favorite area of study, the Reasons to Believe track is fundamental. Learn the differences between three of the major worldviews and why the truth claims of Christ and the Bible are consistent, reasonable, and worth sharing with others.

Cults and World Religions
Chances are you know someone who is a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons or a non-Christian religion. This track gives an overview of the basic beliefs of other religions as well as some practical tips for how to dialogue with them about Jesus and His gift of salvation.

Faith and Science
Everyone's been exposed to the "facts" of evolution. Here's an opportunity to examine Darwinian teaching compared to the arguments for intelligent design. This track also investigates current scientific dilemmas such as cloning and environmentalism to evaluate them from a biblical perspective.

Faith and Politics
This track covers what most history books leave out. Learn about the often overlooked role Christianity played in the early development of the United States. Critical issues will be analyzed regarding church and state, civil disobedience and the Constitution of America.

Faith and Sexuality
Discover some of the current issues regarding gender, relationships, and challenges facing the family. A biblical perspective on LGBT issues calls for a balance of truth and grace, and the church needs to be equipped to think biblically

about sexuality lest people (and entire churches and denominations) depart from orthodox Christian teachings to embrace the world's perspective.

Typical Conference Schedule

FRIDAY EVENING	
6:30-7:00	Registration
7:00-7:30	Orientation
7:30-8:30	*Reasons to Believe*: **Worldviews**
	Faith and Science: **Science and Worldview**
8:30-8:45	Break
8:45-9:45	*Reasons to Believe*: **Evidence for the Existence of God**
	Faith and Science: **Origins**

SATURDAY MORNING	
8:30-9:00	Coffee and Donuts
9:00-10:00	*Reasons to Believe*: **Is Jesus the Only Way?**
	Faith and Science: **Intelligent Design**
10:00-10:10	Break
10:10-11:10	*Reasons to Believe*: **The Deity of Christ**
	Faith and Science: **Christian Environmentalism**
11:10-11:20	Break

11:20-12:10	*Reasons to Believe*: **The Authority of the Bible**	
	Faith and Science: **Christian View of Science and Earth History**	
12:10-12:30	Closing	

Who Should Attend?

The Mind Games conference is designed for students (at least 16 years old) and adults who want to learn to love God with their minds through the development of a Christian world view.

To schedule a Mind Games Conference or
to request further information, please contact us:

Probe Ministries
2001 W. Plano Parkway, Suite 2000
Plano, TX 75075
(972) 941-4565
mindgames@probe.org

If you e-mail us for more information, be sure to provide a physical mailing address.

"What About Hindus' Claim that Hinduism is the Oldest Religion?"

Indian Hindus claim that Hinduism is the oldest religion, but Bible teaches us that God created all this in Jewish form. If so, why do those Vedas and upanishads say they are older than the Bible?

Your question seems to be a complex question with multiple implications and I think we need to be careful to define some of our terms. First of all, even though God did create Adam and did place a special calling, promise and blessing on Abraham and his descendents, the Bible doesn't say that "God created all this in Jewish form." When God created Adam, Judaism was not in complete form yet, even though Judaism would descend from Adam and Abraham's blood. Judaism carefully traces its roots all the way back to the creation of the universe, and the creation of man, connecting Adam to Abraham. This started out as oral tradition which was written down much, much later. So that needs to be taken into account.

Second, even among scholars of the writings of the Vedas, there is some dispute about when the actual writings of the Vedas were written. Some of them might date back to 1500 BC, but some Biblical scholars date the Exodus of the Hebrews around this time. Conservative Biblical scholars (and I) hold that Moses was the primary author of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible.) This would date the Pentateuch as being as old as some of the Vedas. But it is true that Christianity was started with Christ or, technically, after his resurrection. The New Testament was written in the first century. So, in one sense, one might claim that Hinduism is older than "CHRISTianity" because it dates back before Christ. [However, Christianity's roots are in Judaism, which, again, traces *its* roots all the way back to the first man and woman.]

But if a Hindu apologist uses the phrase "Hinduism is older than Christianity" kind of as a "gotcha" statement, trying to make something more credible because of its age, their implications include a couple fallacies. First, Hinduism has changed and added books with their Vedas over the years, and it's difficult to say all the Vedas are older than the Torah. Second, just because something is older doesn't make something more true. This is the logical fallacy *"Argumentum ab Annis"* (argument because of age). Just because a religion, a thousand

years ago from a primitive group, taught that child sacrifice to the gods was good, this didn't make their belief or their practice true or good. And not just because of the argument that one religion being older makes it better. However, God's existence, his creation, the existence of Adam, and calling of Abraham existed in reality years before Moses documented them in the Torah.

Hope you find this helpful.

Dave Sterrett

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"How Can My Hindu Friend Justify Her Unethical Behavior?"

I had an associate for 3 years who was a devoted Hindu…. On the surface they seem nice, but over time it became apparent they allowed for violations of ethics and contracts that I would not have expected. How is this allowed in their culture? They follow the "Laughing" form of Hinduism. The husband laughed at everything as a way to create good karma. I witnessed to them both with very limited effect. I am now planning a trip to India and these questions seem most relevant. Can you help me understand this seeming contradiction in their thought?

Note from the Web coordinator, Byron Barlowe: We asked our Indian friend Rajesh Sebastian to reply. Not only is Rajesh from the predominantly Hindu culture of India and thus highly

qualified to comment, but he is also trained in worldview apologetics. Rajesh worked for Ravi Zacharias Ministries and remains a resource person for them in India. He also received his Th.M. from Dallas Theological Seminary.

1. Regarding Contradiction in Indian-Hindu culture: Your friend mentions contradiction. For a Hindu, it is not a problem to live with contradictions. According to Hindus, you talk about contradictions because you are narrow-minded (so it is your fault!). Hindus believe that god can be one and many! God is both good and evil! We see a total collapse of the Law of Non-contradiction in India. Truth is relative (Gandhi and other Indian philosophers made long argument to prove the argument). Therefore, it is possible for a Hindu to be religious and still manipulate ways to make extra income/profit. After all, what is wrong according to one god will be right according to another god. Such attitude in business help many to become more successful than others who might go by the law and make less profit.

A good example I can think of is this one: A thief goes to steal. On the way, he stops at a temple and offers prayers and makes a promise. If he is not caught, he will give a share from the loot to that god/goddess or temple. So, Indians can be very religious and very corrupt at the same time without feeling bad about being corrupt. In fact, Mr. I. K. Gujral, who was the Prime Minister of India in the 90s for a couple of years, said that “corruption is in the blood of every Indian.” Indians believe in “both-and” logic (disagree with “either-or” logic) and can peacefully live with contradictions. This is why you will find even highly educated Hindus involved in superstitions.

Lesson to learn: When doing business with them, be careful. They do not believe in moral absolutes. “What works is right” and “end (more profit) justifies the means.” Moreover, it is possible for someone believing in karma to cheat you and live peacefully, thinking that you are

suffering now because of your bad karma in the last life and that they are benefiting from it now because of their good karma in the last life! Indians are successful businessmen. A large percentage of motels in the US are already owned by Indians from a particular state where they worship a "goddess of wealth." If money is your god, then you might do anything to get it.

2. Regarding the Laughing form of Hinduism: Hinduism is like a vast sea. There are lot of practices and beliefs that might be contradictory or different from each other. For example, there is a temple in India where they have a festival every year. Devotees go there during this festival that goes for a week and utter curses and abuses to the god in that temple. These are the worst words (@#$&*^#%) you can imagine. They do it with the belief that this is a way of bringing out all the evil thoughts and anger in them and this god can take it so that they can get cleaned from all the dirt inside them.

Similarly, there are different yoga practices. If you walk around a park in Delhi, or any other cities in India, you will find groups of people standing together and just shouting. They practice it as a form of yoga. Those who practice laughing believe that doing so will help them to control their anger and also will help them to see the positive side of life. Hinduism is all about getting things done. Practitioners look for success even if that includes bribing gods. If gods can be bribed, why can't people cheat? Remember, you cannot be better than the gods you worship. In fact, the Bible says that you will be like the gods you worship. "Contradiction" is an alien concept to Hindus. They will mock you and say you are saying "contradiction" because you are not tolerant of other views. You say there can be only one God because you are not tolerant of the opposite belief!! The only thing Hinduism can not tolerate is exclusivism.

3. In order to communicate the gospel to Hindus, a worldview approach starting with one common Creator might be a better way to go. Starting with Jesus as "Son of God" (they believe there are many sons, why only one?) or man as sinner does not make sense to them. Tell about a Father trying to save the lost ones through the sacrifice of Christ. It is important to abolish polytheistic worldview by showing that polytheism is a self-defeating belief as it teaches that all the minor gods were created by some major gods and finally points down to One Ultimate Being. You have to start from there and then show what that ultimate one will be like and what he has spoken to mankind.

Hope this helps little bit to clear some of the great confusion surrounding Hinduism. However, do not underestimate the system. Hinduism is like the great serpent that can swallow all systems except exclusivism and that is why Hindus are now fighting exclusive viewpoints in academic circles all over the world.

See the following resources from Probe on Jesus as the only way, or exclusivism vs. pluralism:

• Christianity and Religious Pluralism by Rick Wade
• Do All Roads Lead to God? The Christian Attitude Toward Non-Christian Religions by Rick Rood
• What's the Difference Between Moral Relativism and Pluralism? by Don Closson
• How I Know Christianity is True by Dr. Pat Zukeran. Note particularly the bibliography section, Is Jesus the Only Way?

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Resources Related to the Jesus Tomb Controversy

Outside Sources on the Supposed Jesus Family Tomb and Ossuary



• Hollywood Hype: The Oscars and Jesus' Family Tomb, what do they share?

Blog post of Biblical scholar Darrell Bock. Stay up-to-date at his blog's homepage: blogs.bible.org/bock.

• "No need to yell, only a challenge for some who need to step up and could"

Blog post of Biblical scholar Darrell Bock.

• "The Jesus Tomb? Titanic Talpiot tomb theory sunk from the start"

Blog post of Biblical scholar Ben Witherington. Stay up-to-date at his blog's homepage: benwitherington.blogspot.com..

• Christian Newswire: Ten reasons why the Jesus tomb claim is bogus.

• Remains of the Day: Scholars dismiss filmmakers' assertions that Jesus and his family were buried in Jerusalem.

• The Jesus Family Tomb? From respected scholarly apologetics

site, *Leadership University*.

Probe Articles on Christ's Resurrection, Biblical Archaeology and the Bible

• Cruci-Fiction and Resuscitation by Russ Wise

If Jesus' remains do inhabit a tomb anywhere, that demands an explanation of what really happened after his crucifiction. In 1997, a paid advertisement in a campus newspaper declaring Christ's resurrection a hoax was deeply disturbing to its readers. This essay raises nine problems with the ad and answers them, and addresses one aspect of the current debate in so doing.

• Evidence of Jesus' Existence? by Rusty Wright

An ancient bone receptacle (ossuary) from Israel announced in 2002 contains the inscription, "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." It could be the earliest extra-biblical archaeological evidence of Jesus. This article notes the speculative nature of determining the authenticity of such finds, even with the best of evidence. Yet, time after time, archeology attests to what even a Jewish expert describes as the "almost incredibly accurate historical memory of the Bible."

• Jesus' Resurrection: Fact or Fiction? by Rusty Wright

Resurrection evidences made clear and simple.

• Archaeology and the New Testament by Pat Zukeran

Numerous people, places and events described in the New Testament have been verified by archeology. Helpful section on Understanding Archaeology.

• Archaeology and the Old Testament by Pat Zukeran

Apologist Zukeran surveys the importance of archaeology with

regard to its confirmation of biblical history. Includes sections entitled Historical Confirmation of Jesus, Accuracy of the Gospels, Confirmation Regarding the Crucifixion and more.

• Authority of the Bible by Pat Zukeran

Why take biblical accounts seriously in light of discoveries like the supposed tomb of Jesus' family? This article explores why the Bible is the Word of God by examining Internal evidence (self-proclamation, the Holy Spirit, transforming ability, and unity) and External evidence (indestructibility, archeology, prophecy).

• "How Do We Know Christ Rose from the Dead? And Who Wrote the Bible?" by Jimmy Williams

Almost half of Probe's nearly 1300 Web resources are responses to actual questions from visitors like you. This one answers the question, "How Do We Know Christ Rose from the Dead?" and "Who Wrote the Bible?"

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Responses to "The Secret"

Recommended Responses to *The Secret* and Its "Law of Attraction"

The False Teaching of *The Secret*
Kerby Anderson
probe.org/the-false-teaching-of-the-secret/
The message of The Secret and The Law of Attraction is wildly popular. But it's also seductive, wrong, and spiritually

dangerous.

***The Secret*: Creating One's Reality**
Russ Wise
probe.org/the-secret-creating-ones-reality/
Former Probe Research Associate and Speaker Russ Wise provides an in-depth analysis of *The Secret*s "Law of Attraction": recycled Eastern/New Age philosophy in materialistic garb that appeals to our self-indulgent desires. Russ examines the teachings of Rhonda Byrne and her stable of Master Teachers to show how they contradict God's word—and reality.

First Person: *The Secret*
Don Whitney
www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?id=25077
Dr. Whitney, professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, provides a fresh and biblical response to the heretical teachings of the runaway best-seller.

The Secret* Exposed: *Why Oprah and millions of readers* can *be wrong.
Mel Lawrenz
www.ctlibrary.com/46138
This commentary from *Christianity Today* offers piercing perspective on the self-indulgent, anti-biblical teachings of *The Secret.*



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“Are You Relativistic Toward Moderate Muslims?”

This article is no longer available. We regret any disappointment or inconvenience this may cause.

Probe Ministries Administrator

“What Is Your Position on Universalism?”

Do you have any information or research on “Christian-Universalism”? Please see the website www.christian-universalism.com.

Universalism, in its simplest sense, teaches that at some point all will be saved. The website that you referenced in your email contains many of universalism’s most popular beliefs. However, routinely these views stray from orthodox Christian belief and away from the Bible. In numerous places the Bible refers to a time of judgment where the righteous are granted eternal life and the wicked are given over to eternal punishment (cf. Matthew 25:31-46, Luke 16:19-31, Revelation 20:11-15). Furthermore, Jesus, as well as the New Testament writers, referred to a place of eternal punishment (cf. Matthew 5:22, 18:8-9, Mark 9:43, 48, Revelation 19:20, 20:10, etc.).

The Bible is very emphatic regarding the doctrine of eternal punishment. Universalism rejects this teaching and replaces it

with its own. Below is a website that contains information regarding Universalism. It takes a look at Universalism's beliefs and teachings and subjects it to the Bible through various word studies and Scripture comparisons. It is a helpful place to start:

www.carm.org/universalism.htm

Hope you find this helpful.

Ryan Holmes
Probe Ministries Intern

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Probe Articles Answering The Da Vinci Code

Premier article:

Redeeming *The Da Vinci Code*
Michael Gleghorn

Secret Gospels?

Gospel of Judas
Dr. Patrick Zukeran

The Gnostic Matrix
Don Closson

The Dead Sea Scrolls
Dr. Patrick Zukeran

Was Jesus Truly, or Merely *Declared*, God?

The Case for Christ
Dr. Ray Bohlin

Jesus' Claims to be God
Sue Bohlin

The Deity of Christ
Don Closson

The Council of Nicea
Don Closson

Ancient Evidence for Jesus from Non-Christian Sources
Michael Gleghorn

The Self-Understanding of Jesus
Michael Gleghorn

Jesus' Resurrection: Fact or Fiction?
Rusty Wright

The Resurrection: Fact or Fiction?
Dr. Patrick Zukeran

The Uniqueness of Jesus
Dr. Patrick Zukeran

The Da Vinci Code: Who Is Jesus, Really?
Rusty Wright

Can We Trust the Bible?

Are the Biblical Documents Reliable?
Jimmy Williams

The New Testament: Can I Trust It?
Rusty Wright and Linda Raney Wright

The Historical Reliability of the Gospels

Dr. Patrick Zukeran

Authority of the Bible
Dr. Patrick Zukeran

The Christian Canon
Don Closson

The Historical Christ
Rick Wade

Archaeology and the New Testament
Dr. Patrick Zukeran

Archeology and the Old Testament
Dr. Patrick Zukeran

Goddess Worship, Ancient Israel and the Church

Christianity: The Best Thing That Ever Happened to Women
Sue Bohlin

Feminism
Sue Bohlin

Wicca: A Biblical Critique
Michael Gleghorn

Israel's History Written in Advance
Rich Milne

Scripture and Tradition in the Early Church
Rick Wade

Goddess Worship
Russ Wise

The Goddess and the Church
Russ Wise

Doctrinal Statement

The final authority of our beliefs is the Bible, God's infallible written Word, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that the Bible was uniquely, verbally, and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, and that it was without error in the original manuscripts. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks (2 Tim 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Cor 2:13, 10:11; John 10:35).

We explicitly affirm our belief in these basic Bible teachings:

1. There is one true God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of Deity and the characteristics of personality (Matt 28:19; John 10:30; Acts 5:3,4; 2 Cor 13:14).

2. God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth, is the functional head of the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit). He sent the Son to obtain satisfaction for divine justice and to proclaim reconciliation. The Spirit He sent to teach truth. He is spoken of as the Father of all creation, of angels, of Israel, of believers, and of Christ (John 14-17, 20:17; Job 1:16; Psalm 103:13).

3. Jesus is God, the living Word, who became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. Hence, He is perfect Deity and true humanity united in one person forever. He lived a sinless life, and voluntarily atoned for the sins of men by dying on the cross as their

substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died. He ascended bodily into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God the Father, and there He, the only mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own (Matt 1:16,20,23; Luke 1:34; Heb 4:15; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Cor 15; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Peter 2:5-9; 1 John 2:1).

4. The Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to men. He convicts and draws sinners to Christ, imparts new life to them, continually indwells them from the moment of spiritual birth, baptizes them into the body of Christ, and seals them until the day of Redemption (John 16:8-11; Titus 3:5; 1 Cor 6:19; Rom 8:9b; 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 5:18; Gal 5:22-23).

5. Man was originally created in the image of God. He sinned by disobeying God; thus, he was alienated from his Creator. The historic fall brought all mankind under divine condemnation. Man’s nature is corrupted, and he is thus totally unable to please God. Every man is in need of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:26-27; Eph 2:1; Rom 1:18, 3:20, 7:21-25, 5:12).

6. The salvation of man is wholly a work of God’s free grace, and is not the result, in whole or in part, of human works or goodness or religious ceremony. God imputes His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, and thereby justifies them in His sight (Rom 6:23; Eph 2:8,9; John 3:16; Titus 3:5-8).

It is the privilege of all who are born again of the Spirit to be assured of their salvation from the very moment in which they trust Christ as their Savior. This assurance is not based upon any kind of human merit, but is produced by the witness of the Holy Spirit, who confirms in the believer the testimony

of God in His written Word. The Holy Spirit's fullness, power, and guidance are appropriated in the believer's life by faith (Rom 5:9-10, 8:1, 29- 30, 38-39; John 5:24, 10:27-30, 14:16; 1 Tim 1:12; Phil 1:6; Heb 7:25; Jude 24).

Every believer is called to live so in the power of the indwelling Spirit that he will not fulfill the lust of the flesh, but will bear fruit to the glory of God. The Scriptures set out the principles and rules of the Christian life (Rom 12:1,2; Gal 5:16- 26; 2 Cor 6:14).

7. Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, His Body, which is composed of all men, living and dead, who have been joined to Him through saving faith. God admonishes His people to assemble together regularly for worship, for participation in ordinances, for edification through the Scriptures, and for mutual encouragement (1 Cor 12:12-13; Col 1:18; Eph 2:15-16).

8. At physical death, the believer enters immediately into eternal, conscious fellowship with the Lord and awaits the resurrection of the body to everlasting glory and blessing (1 Cor 15:12ff; 2 Cor 5:1-10; Phil 1:23; John 12:26).

At physical death, the unbeliever enters immediately into eternal, conscious separation from the Lord and awaits the resurrection of the body to everlasting judgment and condemnation (Eph 2:12; Rom 3:23, 5:12; Matt 25:31-46; Rev 20:11-15).

Jesus Christ will come again to the earth—personally, visibly, and bodily—to consummate history and fulfill the plan of God (Rev 19:11-16; Zech 14:4-11; 1 Thess 1:9-10).

9. The Lord Jesus Christ commanded all believers to proclaim the gospel throughout the world and to disciple men of every nation. The fulfillment of that Great Commission requires that all worldly and personal ambitions be subordinated to a total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us" (Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48).

We accept those large areas of doctrinal teaching on which, historically, there has been general agreement among all true Christians. Because of the specialized calling of our ministry, we desire to allow for freedom of conviction on other doctrinal matters, provided that any interpretation is based upon the Bible alone, and that no such interpretation shall become an issue which hinders the ministry to which God has called us, or our fellowship together.