

Tenets of Faith

Unity Fellowship Church of Berkshire County (UFCBC), Pittsfield, Ma.

1. The **Scriptures Inspired**-The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

2. The **One True God**-The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10, 11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

The Godhead:

(a) Terms Defined-The terms *trinity* and *persons*, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

(b) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead-Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

(c) Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit-Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Father which constitutes Him the Father and not the Son; there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11,21; Zechariah 14:9).

(d) Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead-The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation, and authority. Hence no person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30, 32, 37; 8:17,18).

(e) The Title, Lord Jesus Christ-The appellation Lord Jesus Christ is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Romans 1:1-3, 7; 2 John 3).

(f) The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us-The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2,10,14; Revelation 1:13,17).

(g) The Title, Son of God-Since the name *Immanuel* embraces both God and man, in the one person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title *Son of God* describes His proper deity, and the title *Son of Man*, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title *Son of God* belongs to the order of eternity, and the title *Son of Man* to the order of time (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).

(h) Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ-Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title *Son of God* solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14,18,29,49; 1 John 2:22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

(i) Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord-The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

(j) Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son-Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2:8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ-The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

(a) His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).

(b) His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).

- (c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- (d) His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- (e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39, 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- (f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The **Fall of Man**-Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

5. The **Salvation of Mankind**-Mankind only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

(a) Conditions to Salvation-Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

(b) The Evidences of Salvation-The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The **Ordinances of the Church**:

(a) **Baptism in Water**-The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).

(b) **Holy Communion**-The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements--bread and the fruit of the vine--is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"

7. There are several **Ministries of the Holy Spirit**.

- A. The **indwelling** of the Spirit refers to his residence in every believer (Romans 8:9; 1 John 2:27). The indwelling is a blessing we receive automatically when we come to Christ. The Holy Spirit indwelling is permanent. Since Holy Spirit has taken up residence in our hearts at salvation, what is he doing? What's his ministry to us? He is your Internal Helper!!!! He is your Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengthener and Standby (Romans 8:9) There is no area or situation too small to ask for Holy Spirit's help. Being indwelt by Holy Spirit is a gift from God. You can't earn it or lose it.
- B. The **baptizing** ministry of the Spirit places believers into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:13). The indwelling of the Spirit refers to His residence in the life of every believer. The

indwelling is a blessing we receive automatically when we come to Christ. The Holy Spirit indwelling is permanent. Since Holy Spirit has taken up residence in our hearts at salvation, what is he doing? What's his ministry to us? He is your Internal Helper!!!! He is your Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengthener and Standby (Romans 8:9) There is no area or situation too small to ask for Holy Spirit's help. Being indwelt by Holy Spirit is a gift from God. You can't earn it or lose it.

- C. The **sealing** ministry of the Spirit is to identify believers as God's won and give them the security that they belong to Him (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:22). The very fact that the Spirit indwells believers is a seal of God's ownership of them. God has stamped his seal of approval upon you and you belong to Him. God will protect you and keep you until death, or His second return to earth. The Spirit is the seal that locks you into the family of God. Being sealed by Holy Spirit is a gift from God. You can't earn it or lose it.
- D. The **infilling** of the Spirit is the control of the Spirit over believers lives (Ephesians 5:18 - "*And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.*"). In the Greek language (Language the New Testament was written in) *filled* means "to control." Whatever fills you...controls you. The infilling of Holy Spirit is ongoing. We constantly need to be filled because people, and the sinful world we live in depletes the infilling. When we are filled with Holy Spirit a transformation (changed from the inside out) takes place. Holy Spirit releases His powers and influence in our lives. Meaning he gives us the ability to change. As believers we determine the level of infilling of Holy Spirit by our submission, surrender of control. The more surrendered we are the more filled we will be. The end result is we will walk in much faith and much power!

8. **Gift of Tongues** - *Tongues* in Greek mean language. What type of language? "human" languages or dialects. The tongues spoken on the day of Pentecost were human languages (Acts 2:9-11). So the gift of tongues is the supernatural ability to speak in a human language that was previously unknown to the speaker. The spiritual gift of Tongues (in Greek means language, dialect) is one of the facets of the Spirit's ministry.

- A. Tongues relates to your **private devotional life** because when you in tongues you are speaking to God and build yourself up spiritually (1 Corinthians 14:2, 4).
- B. Tongues also relates to our **public worship** to give a word from God to the unbelievers. The gift of tongues was given to edify "build up" the Body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 14:21-22 where Apostle Paul quotes Isaiah 28:11 "So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers" (v. 22). In Public worship 2-3 tongues should be spoken, then wait for the interpretation (1 Corinthians 14). If there is no interpretation, then the speakers must be silent.
- C. Not every believer has the same gifts. Thus not everyone will speak in the Spirit's language of tongues. One is not a *more* mature Christian if they speak in tongues and one is not an immature Christian if they don't. Non tongue speakers are still saved. They are baptized in the Spirit, sealed by the Spirit, and indwelt by the Spirit at salvation into the body of Christ. Spiritual gifts have nothing to do with how spiritual you are. But it's the Fruit Of the Spirit that determines your Christian character and maturity. Paul highlight the fruit of Love. Every gift of the Holy Spirit needs to be operated in LOVE.

9. **Sanctification**- The Holy Spirit's primary work in the life of believers is to progressively conform us to the image of Christ (the Fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5:22-23), the process we call sanctification (1 Peter 3:15; 2 Corinthians 3:18). Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15,16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

10. **The Church and Its Mission**-The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason-for-being of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16).
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- c. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).

UFCBC exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).
- b. Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).
- c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

11. **The Ministry**-A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23, 24), and (3) equipping/building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11, 16).

12. **Divine Healing**-Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:16, 17; James 5:14-16). The ministry of divine healing is not for leaders only. If you have placed your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, and have submitted your life to His lordship, then you are filled with the same power that resided in Jesus that healed the sick, raised the dead, and delivered the oppressed.

12a. The **Gifts of the Holy Spirit** - include but not limited to...The **gift of wisdom**- the ability to make decisions and give guidance that is according to God's will. The **gift of knowledge** is the ability to have an in-depth understanding of a spiritual issue or situation. The **gift of faith** is being able to trust God and encourage others to trust God, no matter the circumstances. The **gift of healing** is the miraculous ability to use God's healing power to restore a person who is sick, injured, or suffering. The **gift of miracles** is being able to perform signs and wonders that give authenticity to God's Word and the Gospel message. The **gift of prophecy** is being able to proclaim a message from God. The gift of **discerning spirits** is the ability to determine whether or not a message, person, or event is truly from God. The **gift of tongues** is the ability to speak in a foreign language that you do not have knowledge of, in order to communicate with someone who speaks that language. The **gift of interpreting tongues** is the ability to translate the tongues speaking and communicate it back to others in your own language. The **gift of administration** is being able to keep things organized and in accordance with God's principles. The **gift of helps** is always having the desire and ability to help others, to do whatever it takes to get a task accomplished. (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 1 Peter 4:11)

12b. **The Fruit of the Holy Spirit** - (Galatians 5:22-23) This is the image/character of Jesus Christ. The characteristics of a Christian includes love, joy, peace, patience/forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness/humility and self-control.

13. **The Blessed Hope**-The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52).

14. The **Millennial Reign of Christ**-The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21, 22; Zephaniah 3:19, 20; Romans 11:26, 27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

15. The **Final Judgment**-There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The **New Heavens and the New Earth**-"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21 and 22).