

**Pastor Paul R. Bawden**  
**Grace Evangelical Church**  
**Sunday, March 9, 2008**  
**Joshua 24**  
**"Who You Can't Live Without!"**

Oprah Winfrey has helped people in different ways. Recently, Oprah took a different direction. She announced that, beginning March 3rd, she will be offering a free 10-week interactive webinar based on the book, *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose* by best-selling author Eckhart Tolle.

Tolle, who is described as "a contemporary spiritual teacher who is not aligned with any particular religion or tradition ... conveys a simple yet profound message with the timeless and uncomplicated clarity of the ancient spiritual masters: There is a way out of suffering and into peace."

In describing the thesis of his latest book, Tolle writes: "An essential aspect of this awakening consists in transcending our ego-based state of consciousness. This is a prerequisite not only for personal happiness but also for the ending of violent conflict endemic on our planet."

**In other words, as Michael Craven, founding Director of the Center for Christ & Culture writes, it is the alteration of our "consciousness" that is key to the salvation of men, not Jesus Christ and our shared problem is incorrect perceptions, not sin.**

Then, one of the presidential candidates boldly declared in a campaign speech recently that states should legalize "same-sex unions" for homosexuals. "If people find that controversial then I would just refer them to the Sermon on the Mount," said the candidate, "Which I think is, in my mind, for my faith, more central than an obscure passage in Romans."

When I hear things like what Oprah is doing and what this presidential candidate is saying, I am most grateful for our text in Joshua 24 today.

**For in our text today, Joshua continues his farewell message that he began in chapter 23.**

But now Joshua changes to whom he is speaking. Joshua spoke to the leadership in the nation of Israel first for he knows that their privilege of leadership brings great responsibility. They must keep following the Lord God and obeying His Word if the nation is to keep following God in the paths of righteousness. They must never compromise their commitment to the LORD.

Having completed his challenge to the leadership, Joshua now turns to speaking directly to the people, for He knows that they must also keep a constant commitment to their God. They must support the leadership and keep them accountable as well.

We must keep in mind that Joshua is speaking out of his experience of his life with the true and living God as he lead the nation of Israel into the promised land serving the nation for some 25 years. Plus Joshua served under Moses for another 40 or so years before that. The leader Joshua has been serving the Lord some 65 years. Now at the end of his life, 110 years of age, as he has finished speaking to the leaders of Israel, Joshua now speaks to the congregation, the people of Israel.

**What will this seasoned godly veteran leader say to the nation of Israel?**

**Joshua's address is in the form of suzerainty treaty, that is like a king making an agreement with his vassals, his subjects, for you will notice at the end of the chapter Joshua makes a covenant with the people (24:25-27).**

As with addressing the leaders, Joshua starts his address to the people talking about God. But as Joshua talks about God to the people, he has a different emphasis. As Joshua directed the leaders to think about the faithfulness of God, the truth, power, and love of God, as they entered the land, defeated the enemy and took the land God had given to them, **now Joshua emphasizes to the people the victorious God who has acted in their history and brought them to this point in their lives as they dwell in the land.**

Note what Joshua, then, tells the nation of Israel.

### **I. The victorious biblical God is unique above all other gods (Joshua 24:1-13).**

Notice the 19 different verbs used in the 13 verses. "I took, I led, I multiplied, I gave, I possess it, I sent, I plagued, I did, I brought, I covered, I did, I brought, I gave, I destroyed, I delivered, I sent, I gave, I sent, I gave."

There is no doubt that Joshua is telling the nation of Israel that the God of Israel is the victorious God. He is unique above all other gods that man has invented. They just need to look at their history. The victorious God has acted in time and brought the nation to this place in their lives.

But notice more closely how Joshua describes the victorious God of Israel to the people.

#### **1. The victorious God is their Creator God (24:2).**

Note the text. Thus Says the LORD, the God of Israel.

The word for God here is Elohim, the One who is the Creator God. In the beginning God, Elohim, created the heavens and earth. He has life in Himself. He is the unending source of physical and spiritual life. He created physical entities out of the non-physical resources of His own omnipotence. He created man and woman, male and female, in spite of what we are being told today even by our politicians. The Psalmist tells us that God created by His word. God spoke and it was done.

#### **2. The victorious God is their Redeemer God (24:2, 6).**

Note as well the word, LORD, capitalized. It is the word for the self-existent eternal God who is Jehovah, and lays down His life for His people to provide them forgiveness and eternal life. He is the covenant God of Israel who made an eternal covenant with them.

**The victorious redemptive God is emphasized particularly in Joshua's address to the people when he refers to God bringing out His people from Egypt (24:6) which would cause the people to remember that it was the shedding of blood of the lamb without blemish, that was put on the lintel and the door posts that permitted the angel of death to pass over the people of Israel.**

It was on the basis of the shed blood, that God provided redemption for His people out of the land of Egypt where they were in bondage. Of course, this all looked forward to Jesus Christ who would come as the Lamb of God, who would be the final sacrifice for sin on the cross where His blood was shed and He died as your sin bearer and mine, was buried, and rose again the third day to provide us God's forgiveness and eternal life through faith in Him.

But Joshua continues. The victorious God is Israel's Creator and Redeemer.

#### **3. The victorious God is their Revealer God (24:2-13).**

God made Himself known to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. He revealed Himself to them directly and personally. That revelation is recorded in the first five books of the Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It was recorded so that the nation would know, and us as well, what God had done in relationship to His people. That trustworthy record told the people about the person and work of the true and living God.

Certainly, God makes Himself known to us in general revelation through creation, providence, and various workings, but specifically, God makes Himself known to us through the completed Word of God, the Bible which we have today. It is totally dependable and without error. We know what God says to us because it is recorded for us in the Holy Writ, which lives and abides forever, meaning it is contemporary for all time.

Then Joshua adds one more aspect of the Victorious biblical God.

#### **4. The Victorious God is the God with the eternal plan in time (24:2-23).**

Joshua, in his address to the people of Israel, takes them back some 600 years to the time of Abraham, even before God called Abraham when his name was Abram (24:2), when he was a worshipper of many false gods in

the land of Ur of the Chaldees, yes, the country of Iraq. Why? Abraham, believed God when God appeared to Him in the midst of idolatry, and Abraham left his country and followed God. He became the physical father of the nation of Israel. God made that covenant with Abraham that was an eternal covenant, which stated that Abraham would have a land, a seed, and be a blessing to the nation of Israel and the entire world.

That seed that would come was the Lord Jesus Christ, who would provide salvation for the entire world, and specifically for those who would trust Him as Savior. I will develop this much more on the last Sunday in March when we consider, "Does Israel Still Have A Future?"

**But the Abrahamic Covenant is the basis of the rest of God's eternal plan in time for mankind and the world.**

**Joshua is telling the nation of Israel to not forget God's eternal plan in the past, for it affects the present and the future.**

These words of Joshua take on an even greater significance when we notice that Joshua is giving his address to the people of Israel at Shechem (24:1). Shechem was located some 35-40 miles north of Jerusalem. It was about 10 miles north of Shiloh where the tabernacle was located at this time in Israel's history (1400 B.C.).

**Why is Shechem so significant in our text? Why is this town mentioned?**

It is significant because here is the place God appeared first to Abraham when he arrived in the land of Canaan some 600 years before (cf. Genesis 12:6-7). There at Shechem Abraham built an altar to the LORD. There at Shechem, Abraham worshipped the true and living God who had appeared to Him in Iraq. He believed the LORD and Abraham followed Him to the land of Canaan, to where the Lord led him.

**Joshua, as the veteran godly leader of Israel for some 25 years, wants God's people to be reminded before He passes from this life, that this is a historical moment in their lives.**

They are at the very place that God began to tell Abraham that He would give Abraham the land of Canaan.

**Had God kept His promise to Abraham and his descendants of which they are apart? Definitely. AMEN.**

**Joshua is using this history lesson of God's eternal plan and as Creator, Redeemer, and Revealer, to let Israel know that their God is the true, eternal, personal, and victorious God. There is no other god like Him. The biblical victorious God is unique above all gods.**

**Joshua is really pointing the people to the first commandment, "You shall have no other gods before me."**

Joshua knew when he was gone, and Israel began to settle more into the land, the people would be tempted to follow the false gods in the land. They were tempted, as the Bible tells us, and they yielded to temptation and eventually the nation went into captivity.

**That's why Joshua is saying that there is one thing you can't live without, and that is the true and living God revealed to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses. He is the ONE who has brought you to where you are today. He is the ONE who will sustain you in the present and guide you in the future.**

**Joshua is also telling the people that to keep focused on who God is and what He has done for them, they must not forget what God has done for them in the past.**

**In other words, Joshua is saying that their history is important. Understanding one's past is essential for providing direction for the present and the future.**

That's why an understanding of biblical history is necessary to understand what God is about in our day and for the future.

That's why an understanding of the history of our nation is necessary to understand what must be kept as foundational principles today for our nation to remain a nation of freedom with a blessed future. Today, this is not happening in different settings. History is not important. Of if history is considered, it is distorted and twisted.

**That's why its necessary for a family to talk about their history so that the children understand why they are what they are today and what that means for their future. I had some great talks with my Dad growing up about family and his call to the ministry. I remember having some great talks with Ferra's Dad about his life and family and ministry. Our children need to know why the family is what it is and the godly biblical principles on which it is founded.**

**The Psalmist put it this way, "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3).**

**We do live in a crazy mixed up (or mixed out) world in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. In that setting we have the completed Word of God which points us to the true Savior Jesus Christ and that He is coming for all who have accepted Him as personal Savior.**

**But that completed Word of God is being challenged and distorted. Let me refer again to what is actually being taught to those who become involved in the Oprah Deception, as I call it.**

What Oprah is promoting is really (as Michael Craven pens) a "New Age" spirituality which is nothing more than ancient Eastern mysticism wrapped in modern Western attire. Tolle, who experienced "a profound inner transformation" which "radically changed the course of his life" at the age of twenty-nine" became an active participant in A Course in Miracles in the years following. Published in 1975, A Course in Miracles is a spiritual self-study course representing primarily the thought system of monism, which is the idea that all is one (i.e. the Star Wars concept of "The Force"). Ironically, Oprah has been offering this course for free on her website since January 1, 2008.

Here are some sample excerpts from A Course in Miracles, which reveal teachings derived from Buddhism and other monistic or pantheistic philosophies:

Extend your perception beyond what your senses register. (Lesson 1)

That body does not mean anything....One thing is like another. (Lesson 1)

Everything you see is the result of your thoughts. There is no exception to this fact....salvation requires that you also recognize that every thought you have brings either peace or war; either love or fear. To trust in the force that moves the universe is faith. Faith isn't blind, it's visionary. Faith is believing that the universe is on our side and that the universe knows what it's doing. (Lesson 16)

Now compare these statements to the words of Buddha:

This whole world of delusion is nothing but a shadow caused by the mind.... There is no world ... outside the mind ... To Buddha every definitive thing is illusion.... Things have no reality in themselves but are like heat haze. (The Teaching of the Buddha, pp. 86, 100, 104, 108)

Buddhism, in particular teaches that no supreme and personal God exists but that the universe is animated by an impersonal life force, which connects all things and that one can, through spiritual enlightenment, rise above the "illusion of reality" and enter nirvana—a condition in which one is absorbed into the greater essence or whole.

In New Age, like the ancient Eastern religions, the goal is that you, through instruction, either from spiritual masters or even spiritual entities must achieve "enlightenment" (i.e. understanding that all is one) and thus rise above the human condition by means of an altered consciousness (mediation, mantras, trances, etc.) to actually see that distinction itself is an illusion and if all is one and God is part of the all then you are in effect God. By understanding this principle you will become part of the divine and thus gain unlimited power.

These are the very same principles put forth in both A Course in Miracles and Tolle's book, A New Earth. The

most troubling aspect is that A Course in Miracles employs many references to "God," the "Holy Spirit," and even the "Son of God." In addition, there are statements such as "surrender all outcomes to God" and "allow the Holy Spirit to do what He does best...." Of course the instruction goes on to emphasize "the power of your own thinking" which enables you to create the outcome that "serve[s] your own best interests" in your hands, which according to the course is "your only goal in any situation." The "god" presented here is a monistic, impersonal god who "is everywhere and is in everything" including inanimate objects. According to the course, "God is not outside of you but rather in your mind." The blending of Christian terminology with New Age paganism endorsed by Oprah will likely deceive many less mature Christians.

Then, Michael Craven ends his words this way. I can appreciate the success of Oprah Winfrey; she seems like a kind and sincere woman. Her achievements are indeed impressive given what she has overcome and I believe she truly wants to help people and make the world a better place. However, these materials are nothing but spiritualized self-help and repackaged paganism that serve to deceive and divert people from the One True God and the salvation that comes only through Jesus Christ.

**I take the time to present that so we might realize what is happening in our world, and that we not be led astray from the Victorious God revealed to us in Jesus Christ, who is our Creator, Redeemer, Revealer, and the God who is carrying out His plan for all believers now and for the future.**

**That's why Joshua knows in his day, which is the same in our day, there must be made that eternal choice for the victorious biblical God Who is unique above all other gods.**

## **II. The Eternal Choice We All Must Make (Joshua 24:14-24).**

Since there is the victorious biblical God who is unique above all gods, Joshua

### **1. Joshua's first challenge to the people (24:14-15)**

#### **(1) Fear the LORD (24:14a).**

Joshua assumes here that there has been a faith trust in the biblical God in the Old Testament for salvation, for forgiveness and eternal life. We would say today, an acceptance of Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior.

Fear is that reverential trust, yes awe, overwhelming amazement at the holiness and love of God that He is the Creator, the Redeemer, the Revealer, and the Planner. It is recognizing that God is God. He is the Potter and I am the clay. It is recognizing not just that God is my Savior through faith in Jesus Christ, but that He is Lord. He is sovereign. He is the loving and holy Boss of my life every minute of every day.

Joshua is seeking to challenge the people to ask themselves are they letting the LORD be the manager of their lives. Is He controlling their thoughts, their attitudes and actions? Does He really have first place in their lives?

Joshua knows what the human heart in forgetting God is capable of.

What changed the life of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Peter, and Paul? God appeared to them. They opened their lives to Him, and they began letting Him be the Lord of their lives. The apostle Paul never got over after walking with the Lord some 30 years, that God had showed Him mercy when he deserved judgment.

**It's interesting how the book of Romans describes those who don't want to accept Christ, who have no time for God. Romans 3:18 – "There is no fear of God before their eyes." What a description of our world today in the public arena.**

Adults, young people, children, if you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, never begin to start thinking that you are not accountable to Him. If we lose our respect, our worship, our awe of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is the beginning of losing one's passion for Jesus Christ. It's like when a couple in a marriage relationship lose their respect, their giving honor to each one, it can begin the downward spiral of a relationship going sour. Keep short accounts with your Lord. Yes in the marriage relationship.

Fear the LORD, the self-existent God, the eternal God. If you have the continuing awe of Who He IS, if you love the LORD, then there will be service for your LORD.

## **(2) Serve The LORD (24:14b)**

**Service** is touching others with the LORD's love and compassion motivated by one's love for the LORD, one's reverence for Him. The believer's service

**Service must be done with sincerity** –that is without reservation, completely, wholeheartedly. Through one's self into serving the Lord where He puts one regardless of the task.

**Service must be done in truth** – that is with dependability and reliability. Not saying I will do this, but then one doesn't follow through.

Exodus 34:6 tells us that one of God's characteristics is truth. The believer today has God's nature, His life within him or her, so the believer can be dependable, can be truthful in every area of one's service for the LORD.

If our awe and reverence for God wains, our service for the LORD will wain. If our service for the LORD has lost its enthusiasm, or wains, then we need to check up on our awe and reverence for the LORD.

Paul told the Colossians and us as well to not serve to please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the LORD, whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve (Colossians 3:22-23).

## **(3) Don't become involved in idolatry (24:14c-15a).**

Joshua in these verses cause the people to reflect on the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment, "You shall not make for yourself an idol" (Exodus 20:4).

Joshua again knows how fickle the human heart is. The people must keep a daily reverence and awe of God as they serve Him. If they don't, they may let idols, such as other man made gods, or power, position, wealth, friends, etc. become their gods.

John exhorts us in the last verse of his last chapter of his first letter, "Little children guard yourself from idols." (5:21).

## **(4) I Reaffirm my commitment to the LORD (24:15b).**

**As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD (24:15b).**

Joshua states here that he and his house will serve the LORD. Perhaps Joshua is saying that his family will seek to be the first to reaffirm his commitment to have that continual awe and service for the LORD. They will seek to keep that passion for the LORD so that they will not end up in idolatry. Joshua is seeking here to be an example to the others in the nation of Israel.

Certainly, all of us have feet of clay, but we should so follow and serve the Lord that we can be an example of Him to others. When we fall, God forgives, and encourages us on to serve Him, but our desire should be to emulate the Lord in our personal lives, and in our family lives, as well as our church life, at work, and at school.

## **2. The people's first response to Joshua's challenge (Joshua 24:16-18)**

### **(1) We promise not to break the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> commandments (24:16).**

"Be it far from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods."

They are promising that they will continue to fear the LORD, keep letting Him be the Master of their lives.

### **(2) We will remember our roots (24:17).**

We will remember our history of how God intervened in His power and brought us to this land that He promised to Abraham many years ago. They have taken to heart Joshua's words concerning their God's plan for them displayed in history. They are saying that they will remember their spiritual heritage, and let that inspire them to fear and serve the LORD in the present and the future. I trust that you talk about your spiritual heritage to your children and grand children. They need to know that there is a spiritual biblical legacy that is being handed on to them. Of course, they must personally take up the torch of faith and accept Christ as their personal Savior and live for Him. But that heritage they have, should always be an inspiration for them to keep going on with Jesus Christ.

### **(3) We will serve the LORD for He is our God (24:18).**

**Don't miss here the words that the people use to say who they will serve, in response to Joshua's challenge.**

LORD – the Self-existent, eternal covenant God who has provided His people redemption.  
 God – Elohim – acknowledging that God is their Creator.

They are really referring back to Joshua 24:2 where Joshua began his address to the people of Israel, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel. They are saying that they recommitment themselves to the Redeemer God and Creator God. They give Him first place in their lives and in their service.

### **3. Joshua’s second challenge to the people of Israel (Joshua 24:19-20).**

Joshua challenges them to remember that God is very jealous God. He will not tolerate any kind of idolatry if they forsake the LORD and follow other Gods. God will bring His punishment if they turn to other gods.

### **4. The people’s second response to Joshua’s second challenge (Joshua 24:21).**

The people reiterate their first affirmation – “No, (we won’t become involved in idolatry), but we will serve the LORD.”

### **5. Joshua’s third challenge to the people of Israel (Joshua 24:22a).**

In his third challenge, Joshua makes it even more personal with them saying that they are “witnesses” to the fact that they have stated that they have chosen to serve the LORD. This means that they have given verbal testimony before the LORD, before Joshua, before the leaders of Israel and each other in the nation that will FEAR THE LORD AND SERVE HIM.

### **6. The people’s third response to Joshua’s third challenge (Joshua 24:22b).**

**The people replied to Joshua’s third challenge by saying, “We are witnesses.”** That is we give public testimony in the hearing of each other that we will fear the LORD and serve the LORD only. We will keep ourselves from idolatry.

### **7. Joshua’s fourth challenge to the people of Israel (Joshua 24:23).**

You must not become involved in idolatry. You must incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel. You must remain committed to your CREATOR REDEEMER.

### **8. The people’s fourth response to Joshua’s fourth challenge (Joshua 24:24).**

**The people respond to Joshua’s fourth challenge in the same way that they do the other three. “We will serve the LORD our God (our Redeemer & Creator), and we will obey His voice.”**

**Why did Joshua keep challenging the people of Israel some four times to fear their LORD and to serve their LORD God and not become involved in idolatry?**

**Joshua knew that one’s concept of God would determine their life style. But if their life-style changed like the foreign nations, that would start determining their view of God. The result would be that they would soon forget their LORD God and become involved in idolatry.**

**It’s interesting that when the true and living God is not given His rightful place in our lives through faith in Jesus Christ, our thinking, our morality determines our view of God.**

**When we let God be God as He should be, then the believer lets HIM determine how he should live through obedience to the Word of God.**

**Question to each of us:**

**Who is determining our life style? As a believer in Jesus Christ, is it He and His Word through the power of the Holy Spirit? Or is it you and me as we like to live as we please and still claim to be a follower of Jesus Christ? Of course, that is idolatry. Keep yourselves from idols as John tells us.**

**We must make the eternal choice each day to daily let the Lord be the Lord of our lives. If He is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all.**

**But there is one more thing that Joshua does after finishing His farewell recommitment address to the people of Israel.**

### **III. The eternal covenant we must keep (Joshua 24:25-28).**

To seal this suzerainty treaty with the people of Israel, Joshua at the end of his godly and illustrious career of leading the nation of Israel makes a covenant with the people of Israel at Shechem.

#### **1. In Joshua's day.**

**(1) Joshua inscribed the statutes of the covenant on a large stone slab.**

It was set up under a large oak at Shechem, (perhaps it could read here, "Beneath the oak tree which was sacred to the LORD (cf. Genesis 12:6). It could be read by all (24:27).

**(2) The stone was to be a witness that Joshua and the people had made this covenant together with God and with each other.**

**(3) It was a reminder every time they saw it that they had committed to fear and serve the LORD God of Israel and not become involved in idolatry.**

#### **2. For us today.**

God has made a covenant, an agreement with us through His shed blood on Calvary's cross. It is the new covenant. As we just commemorated the LORD's table, our Lord Jesus said these words before the cup was taken in Luke 22:20, as He established His table, "This cup which is poured out for you in the new covenant in my blood."

This new covenant that Christ has made with each believer in Jesus Christ is the blessing part of the Abrahamic Covenant which is the New Covenant found in Jeremiah 31, which is yet future for the nation of Israel, but is made available for us today through faith in Jesus Christ as given Hebrews 8.

God has made an eternal covenant with us who know the Lord as our personal Savior, that nothing will ever separate us from His love.

**The question to us is, "are we keeping our side of the covenant, of the agreement? Israel didn't do so well as her history past Joshua indicates. The nation though, because of God's grace, still has a future.**

**But how are we doing with our side of the agreement that God has made with us? He is always faithful, as you know. We can always depend on Him and His Word.**

**There is a way to check up on how we are doing.**

**God has left the believer a witness, not in stone, but in the fleshly tablets of the heart.**

**He is called the Holy Spirit who bears witness with our spirit that we are God's children.**

**Without the Holy Spirit within us we are set on death and hostile toward God. But with the Holy Spirit within us, we have Christ's eternal life, His nature, and His empowerment by obeying Him to fear the LORD and to serve Him with enthusiasm and joy.**

**Are we letting the Holy Spirit have freedom in our lives to empower us to fear God and serve Him?**

**Remember. You can't live a life of fullness and joy without being obedient to Him. You can't live a full life without obedience to the HOLY SPIRIT who lives within you.**

**May our response be, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD!"**

**As the nation of Israel made a recommitment of their faith to the LORD to fear and serve Him only, by making the covenant stated in Joshua 24: 25-27, I thought it would be most appropriate this morning, after this great challenge from Joshua to recommit ourselves anew today to what we believe as followers of Jesus Christ. This is basically the doctrinal statement of the Grace Evangelical Church, but I have edited it a bit to make it personal for each of us. Let's read this reaffirmation of our faith together in unison, without the Scriptures that are given.**

- **I believe that the Bible is absolutely true and our final authority for faith and practice (Psalm 119:89; II Tim. 3:16-17).**
- **I believe that the personal biblical God is my Creator, and He exists eternally as a Tri-unity, one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that the biblical God cares deeply about our daily lives (Gen. 1-2; Matt. 3:16-17; II Cor. 13:14; Psalm 121).**
- **I believe that Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary and is both God and Man. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for my sins, rose bodily from the grave, and is alive today in heaven as the true Savior and High Priest for all who believe in Him (Matt. 1:21-23; I Tim. 4:10; Heb. 4:15-16).**
- **I believe that the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ, convicts unbelievers of their need to accept Christ as personal Savior, lives in believers to guide, instruct, and empower them for godly living (John 16:8-15; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:16-25).**
- **I believe that I was created in the image of God but chose to disobey Him. In spite of my disobedience, God loves me and sent Jesus Christ to be my Savior (John 3:16-17)**
- **I believe that on the basis of Christ's death and bodily resurrection by God's grace through my faith in Christ I come into a personal and right relationship with God (Eph. 2:9-9; Rom. 10:9-11). As a believer in Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, I am placed into God's family and my true identity and significance comes from being in Jesus Christ (John 1:12-13; II Cor.5:17).**
- **I believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on planet earth today. It is composed of all believers in Jesus Christ. The ordinances of the church are water baptism and the Lord's supper. They are, however, not regarded as a means of salvation. The church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on planet earth today (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:19-21; Matt. 28:19-20; I Cor. 11:23-26). Every local church has the right under Christ to decide and govern its own affairs.**
- **I believe that angels were created to be messengers of God. They are not to be worshipped. When the angel, Lucifer (Satan), was ejected from heaven due to disobeying God, he took other angels (demons) with him. Jesus Christ provides the believer victory over Satan and his agents (Eph. 6:10-20), who are destined to eternal punishment (Rev. 20:10).**
- **I believe that Jesus Christ's return is personal, imminent, and pre-millennial. Christ's personal and imminent (any time) return, "the blessed hope" has a vital bearing on my personal life and my service for my Lord as a believer in Him (Titus 2:11-13).**
- **I believe that there will be the resurrection of the dead, the believer to God's eternal home where there is joy and pleasures forever more (John 14:1-3); the unbeliever to everlasting conscious torment (John 5:24, 28-29; Rev. 20:11-15).**

**As for me and my house we will serve the LORD!  
HE is the ONE we can live without!!**

**AMEN? AMEN!!**