

Fundamentals of Faith



*A Summary of Essential
Bible Doctrines*



Copyright © 2018 by the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists®

All rights reserved

Published by Review and Herald® Publishing Association

Fundamentals of Faith is part of the GROW Your Church series of personal ministries resources. GROW Your Church is an initiative of the General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department.

Additional copies of this book, including quantity pricing, are available by calling toll-free 1-800-765-6955 or by visiting <http://www.adventistbookcenter.com>.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture texts are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-0-8280-2835-6

Printed by Pacific Press® Publishing Association

Printed in the U.S.A.

Table of Contents

About <i>Fundamentals of Faith</i>	4
Summary of Essential Bible Doctrines	5
The Holy Scriptures	5
The Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit	6
Creation and the Nature of Humanity	7
The Great Controversy	8
The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ	9
The Experience of Salvation and Growing in Christ	10
The Law of God	11
The Sabbath	12
Christ’s Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary	14
The Second Coming of Christ	16
Death and Resurrection	17
The Millennium and the End of Sin	18
The New Earth	19
Christian Behavior	20
Marriage and the Family	22
The Church and Unity in the Body of Christ	24
Baptism	25
The Lord’s Supper	26
Stewardship	27
Spiritual Gifts and the Gift of Prophecy.	29
The Remnant and Its Mission	31
Steps of Faith	33
Baptism	33
Profession of Faith	33
Affirmation of Faith	34
The Journey Continues	36
Appendix	37
Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists	37

About *Fundamentals of Faith*

Fundamentals of Faith is a helpful study resource providing a summary of essential Bible doctrines. It has two primary uses:

General Study

Fundamentals of Faith may be used for personal, one-on-one, or small group study. Each doctrinal point contains a list of supporting scriptural references, which may be explored with great benefit. In addition, “My Commitment” points have been inserted to guide the reader in making a personal application of the Bible truths being studied.

Preparation for Baptism or Profession of Faith

Fundamentals of Faith may also be used to lead those preparing for baptism or profession of faith through a point-by-point study. Those who have already been through Bible studies on the topics covered in *Fundamentals of Faith* may not need to re-study each point. Instead, they could be asked to read this booklet on their own, placing a check mark next to every point of agreement and a question mark next to any point that needs further study or clarification. The study leader can then meet with those interested in baptism or profession of faith until all questions and concerns have been addressed and they agree with the doctrines and practical commitments outlined.

Summary of Essential Bible Doctrines

The Holy Scriptures

- The entire Bible, Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God and the infallible revelation of His will. It is the standard of character, the test of experience, the definitive revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history. **2 Timothy 3:15-17; Matthew 4:4; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; Isaiah 8:20.**
- The Bible should be taken literally, as it reads, unless symbolic or metaphoric language is used. For example, the worldwide flood described by the Bible in plain language should be understood as a literal event. **Genesis 7; Luke 17:26, 27.**
- Daily reading of God's Word, accompanied by personal prayer, is essential for spiritual life. **Hebrews 4:12; John 6:63; 1 Peter 1:23; Mark 1:35; Matthew 6:6; Romans 1:9.**
- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I will strive to remain in close communion with Christ through daily prayer and Bible study.*

The Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

- There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons. This union of three Persons is referred to as the Trinity, or Godhead. **Deuteronomy 6:4; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16, 17; 28:19; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9.**
- God the Father, along with the Son and Holy Spirit, is our eternal Creator. He is perfect in character, being the fullness of love, ever-present, all-knowing, all-powerful, and worthy of our worship. **Psalm 90:2; 1 John 4:8-10, 16; Psalm 139:7-10; Matthew 19:26; Revelation 4:11.**
- God the Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Jesus is a perfect expression of the Father. He is fully God and has always existed—“His goings forth are from everlasting.” He is also fully man and was “in all points tempted as we are.” **John 1:1-3, 14; 14:9; Colossians 1:15-19; Micah 5:2; Hebrews 4:15.**
- The Holy Spirit is also a person and fully God. Jesus called the Spirit “He” and “Him” continually. Scripture records the Holy Spirit referring to Himself as “Me,” and making decisions “as He wills.” The Spirit can be “insulted” and grieved. These examples reveal the Holy Spirit to be a distinct person with intelligence and feelings. In both Old and New Testaments He is described as ever-present, bringing conviction, comfort, and strength to God’s people. The Great Commission directs us to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, indicating that the Holy Spirit is an equal member of the Godhead. **Acts 5:3, 4; John 14:16, 17, 26; 16:5-15; Acts 13:2; 1 Corinthians 12:11; Hebrews 10:29; Ephesians 4:30; Genesis 1:2; Psalm 51:11, 12; Isaiah 48:16; Matthew 28:18-20.**
- My Commitment:** *I believe in one God, a unity of three coeternal Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each of whom is fully divine and has existed from all eternity.*

Creation and the Nature of Humanity

- God created all things through the Son and by the power of His Word. **Hebrews 1:1, 2; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17; Psalm 33:6, 9; Hebrews 11:3.**
- All life on earth was created perfect in six literal, consecutive, 24-hour days, followed by the seventh-day Sabbath—a memorial of God’s creative work. **Genesis 1:1-2:3; Exodus 20:8-11.**
- Humanity was created—male and female—in the image of God, given dominion over the world, and charged with responsibility to care for it. Though created with reasoning powers and the freedom of choice, we remain dependent upon God for life and all else. **Genesis 1:26, 27; Psalm 8:4-8; Acts 17:24-28.**
- God places the breath of life, or spirit, within us, making us living souls—a unity of body and breath. **Genesis 2:7.**
- Since Adam and Eve sinned, all of their descendants are subject to death and have natural inborn tendencies toward evil. **Genesis 3; Romans 5:12; 6:23; 8:7, 8.**
- The Holy Spirit can give us new spiritual birth, empower us to obey, and restore in us the image of God. **Psalm 51:10, 11; John 3:3-5; Colossians 3:9, 10.**
- My Commitment:** *I believe in an all-powerful Creator who made “the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them” in six literal days and rested on the seventh day. Though humanity is now fallen, and as a result every person is born with a sinful nature, I still believe in God’s power to re-create His image in me through faith in Jesus Christ.*

The Great Controversy

- Lucifer was an angel who was created perfect, but pride led him to want equality with God and to desire the worship due only to Him. Lucifer, now called the devil or Satan, was eventually cast out of heaven along with a portion of the angels, whom he led to join him in his rebellion against God. **Ezekiel 28:14-17; Isaiah 14:12-14; John 8:44; Revelation 12:4, 7-9.**
- Through deception and temptation, Satan led Adam and Eve into sin. Their fall corrupted humanity and the entire earth, ultimately changing it from a paradise to a battlefield. All the inhabitants of the universe are witnesses to the destructive results of Satan's work as well as the power of God's redemption in the lives of His people. **Genesis 3:1-7; Romans 1:19-32; 8:19-23; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 4:9; Ephesians 1:7-10.**
- All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God and His law. God sends His Son, His Spirit, and His angels to help us in our struggles against evil. The Bible repeatedly promises victory over Satan through Christ's power in our lives. **Romans 8:26, 27, 31-39; Hebrews 1:14; 2:14-18; Ephesians 6:10-13; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Jude 24; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:10, 11.**
- In the end, both those who are saved and those who are lost will acknowledge God as the only just ruler of the universe and the only one worthy of our worship. Satan, his angels, and all the unrighteous will then be destroyed, thus putting an end to all sin and evil. Perfect harmony will be restored throughout the universe, and all of God's creatures will know that He is love. **Isaiah 45:22-24; Philippians 2:5-11; Ezekiel 28:18, 19; Revelation 15:3, 4; 21:1-8.**
- My Commitment:** *In this great controversy between Christ and Satan, I choose to follow Christ and honor Him. I am thankful for the love of the Father, the sacrifice of Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the ministration of holy angels to help me be victorious.*

The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ

- In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for sin. This atonement vindicates God's law and His gracious character, as it both condemns our sin and provides for our forgiveness. Those who accept Christ as Lord and Savior receive eternal life. **John 3:16; Acts 4:12; Hebrews 7:26, 27; Romans 3:23-26.**
- Jesus died in our place and bore the penalty for our sins. His death reconciles us to God and motivates our hearts with love to obey Him. His life of obedience shows that we too can obey God as the Holy Spirit empowers us. **1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Isaiah 53:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Romans 5:8-10; 8:3, 4; 1 John 2:2; John 14:15; 15:10; 1 Peter 2:21.**
- Jesus triumphed over Satan at His resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus assures us of our own victory over death and the grave. **Colossians 2:15; 1 Peter 3:21, 22; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23.**
- My Commitment:** *I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and personal Savior and believe that God, in Christ, has forgiven my sins and given me a new heart.*

The Experience of Salvation and Growing in Christ

- All of humanity has sinned and needs salvation. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our lost condition and leads us to acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our sins, and exercise faith in Christ as our Savior and Lord, our Substitute and Example. **Romans 3:23; 10:9; John 16:7, 8; Acts 2:38; Titus 3:3-7.**
- When we confess our sins, God promises to forgive and cleanse us. Genuine confession is accompanied by repentance, or turning away from sin. To repent, we must first come to Christ just as we are. His love and goodness lead us to repentance, and His mercy toward us leads us to forgive others. **1 John 1:9; Acts 5:31; Romans 2:4; Matthew 6:12, 14, 15.**
- We receive faith by hearing and reading the Word of God. By faith we are forgiven and justified, adopted as God's children, delivered from evil, and given assurance of eternal life. By faith we are also born again to a new life in the Spirit. The Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and gives us power to live a holy life. **Romans 10:17; 3:21-26; Galatians 1:4; 4:4-7; 1 John 5:13; John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23; Acts 26:18; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:2-5; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Hebrews 8:10.**
- As new creatures in Christ, we continue to grow more like Him by spending time with Him—in prayer, Bible study, and active service. By abiding in Christ, we may live victoriously over sin, fear, and the powers of darkness. **2 Corinthians 3:18; 5:17; Matthew 4:4; Ephesians 6:12-18; Matthew 20:25-28; John 15:5; Jude 24.**
- My Commitment:** *Having accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior, I will aim to become like Him in character, choosing love, humility, courtesy, and kindness in my words and actions. With God's help I will forgive others as Christ has forgiven me.*

The Law of God

- The Ten Commandments are exemplified in the life and character of Christ. They express God's love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships. They serve as the basis of God's covenant with His people and the standard in the judgment. **Exodus 20:1-17; Matthew 22:36-40; Deuteronomy 28:9, 13, 14; John 15:10; Matthew 5:17-20; Psalm 40:7, 8; Hebrews 8:8-10; James 2:10-12.**
- The Ten Commandments were never abolished, but are still God's will for people today. **Psalm 111:7, 8; Romans 2:21-23, 7:12, 14; Ephesians 6:1-3; 1 John 2:3, 4; 3:4; Revelation 12:17; 14:12.**
- Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the law of God points out sin and awakens a sense of need for a Savior. We are saved by grace through faith, and not works. At the same time, genuine faith always results in Spirit-filled obedience to the commandments. **Romans 3:19, 20; 7:7; Psalm 19:7-14; Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 3:31; 8:3, 4; 1 John 5:3; John 14:15-17; Acts 5:32.**
- My Commitment:** *It is my purpose, out of love for God and in humble reliance upon His power, to faithfully keep the Ten Commandments.*

The Sabbath

- After the six days of Creation, God rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God’s law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. **Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 2:27, 28; Luke 4:16.**
- The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God’s kingdom. The Sabbath is the perpetual sign of God’s eternal covenant between Him and His people. **Isaiah 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; 66:22, 23; Matthew 12:1-12; Exodus 31:13-17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Deuteronomy 5:12-15.**
- The Sabbath is to be observed on the biblical seventh day, which extends from sundown Friday evening until sundown Saturday evening. **Genesis 1:5; Leviticus 23:32; Nehemiah 13:19; Mark 1:32.**
- Bible prophecy reveals that a sinister power, commonly referred to as the antichrist, would “intend to change times and law.” This prophecy was fulfilled when the medieval church claimed to change the sacredness of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week—a change for which there is no scriptural support. Sunday would eventually become the commonly accepted day of worship among Christians, and many people will no doubt be in heaven who unwittingly erred in regarding Sunday as the Sabbath through the centuries. Yet as truth is restored at the end of time, God’s people who were previously unaware of the false teachings of spiritual “Babylon”—a prophetic symbol of the antichrist and those teaching like errors—will “come out of her” to follow the truth, including the Bible Sabbath. **Daniel 7:8, 25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10; Revelation 13:1-7; 17:1-6; 18:1-4.**

- One of the identifying characteristics of God’s end-time people is their allegiance to His commandments, which include the command to keep the seventh-day Sabbath holy. **Revelation 12:17; 14:9-12.**
- The Sabbath commandment tells us to refrain from common labor, and from hiring others to do the same. Even so, Jesus said it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath, citing the example of pulling an ox out of a ditch. Throughout His ministry, Jesus provided both physical and spiritual healing on the Sabbath. Labor that deals with emergency situations, care for the suffering, or spiritual ministry is therefore in harmony with the sacredness of the Sabbath. Common labor, even when done out of kindness—such as building a house for someone in need—does not fit the example Jesus gave of the kind of good deeds that are lawful on the Sabbath. **Exodus 20:8-11; 23:12; 34:21; Matthew 12:11, 12; Luke 6:9; 4:31-39; John 5:1-15.**
- Buying and selling on the Sabbath is referred to in Scripture as profaning the Sabbath day. Engaging in commerce should be avoided on the Sabbath except in emergency situations. **Nehemiah 13:15-19.**
- Throughout the week we should keep the Sabbath in view so we will be prepared to enter its sacred hours. The Bible calls Friday the Preparation Day, a final opportunity to get ready for the Sabbath (fueling cars, buying groceries, cleaning house, etc.). **Mark 15:42; Exodus 16:22, 23.**
- The Sabbath is for delighting in the Lord—spiritual worship, fellowship, and service. We should refrain from personal hobbies that are not spiritual in nature (sporting events, home projects, etc.) on the one day the Lord has asked us to keep holy for building our relationship with Him. **Isaiah 58:13, 14; Leviticus 23:3.**
- **My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I desire to keep the Sabbath holy from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown, enjoying the spiritual blessings of worship, fellowship, and service. In harmony with this observance, I choose to refrain from secular work or activities, buying or selling, or hiring others to perform common labor on the Sabbath.*

Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary

- There is a sanctuary in heaven, the “true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.” The ancient Hebrew sanctuary was merely a “copy and shadow” built after the heavenly “pattern.” **Hebrews 8:1-5; Exodus 25:8, 9; Revelation 11:19.**

- Christ's priestly work in heaven takes place in two distinct phases. In the first phase He ministers on our behalf by making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. At His ascension He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began this intercessory ministry in the *holy place* of heaven's sanctuary. **Hebrews 2:16-18; 4:14-16; 8:1-5.**

- In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, Christ entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry in the *most holy place* of the heavenly sanctuary. In addition to His work of intercession, Christ is now engaged in a work of judgment, investigating the lives and characters of those who claim His name, and preparing them for His soon return. This work is symbolized by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In the earthly service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but “the heavenly things themselves” are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. **Daniel 7:9-14, 21, 22; 8:13-27; 9:20-27; Ezekiel 4:6; Leviticus 16; Hebrews 9:11-28; 10:19-22.**

- Today God's people are to proclaim that “the hour of His judgment” has begun. In this judgment, where Jesus is serving as our advocate in the heavenly courts, it is revealed to heavenly intelligences who *among the dead* are asleep in Christ and worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also shows who *among the living* are truly abiding in Christ—keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus—and are prepared for translation into His everlasting kingdom. That the judgment precedes the coming of Jesus is evident, since His reward is with Him when He comes. Ultimately this judgment

vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. When this work of judgment is completed, human probation will close and Christ will return. **1 Peter 4:17; 1 John 2:1-5; Revelation 14:6, 7, 12; 22:11, 12.**

- My Commitment:** *I believe “the hour of His judgment has come.” I trust in Jesus, my sympathetic High Priest ministering in the heavenly sanctuary, to forgive and cleanse me of my sins through the power of His own blood and righteousness.*

The Second Coming of Christ

- The second coming of Christ is “the blessed hope” of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Savior’s coming will be literal, personal, visible, audible, and global. He will not return in two phases, as is often taught, first secretly rapturing the church, and later returning visibly. He will return in one glorious appearing, and “every eye will see Him.” There will be no second opportunity for repentance after Jesus comes. **John 14:1-3; Titus 2:13; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; 5:1-4; Matthew 24:26-31; Revelation 1:7.**
- When Jesus returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected, and together with the righteous living will be glorified and taken to heaven. The unrighteous will die, and the earth will be left desolate. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54; Philippians 3:20, 21; Jeremiah 25:30-33; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2:8; Revelation 19:11-21; 2 Peter 3:10-12.**
- The fulfillment of end-time prophecy, particularly as seen in the present condition of our world, indicates that Christ’s coming is near. Because the “day and hour” of that event has not been revealed, we are exhorted to be ready at all times, being careful not to be lulled to spiritual sleep by the “cares of this life.” **Matthew 24:1-14, 36, 42-44; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:5, 6; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 21:34.**
- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I choose to place my affections upon Christ rather than the things of this world, so that I may be ready for His soon appearing.*

Death and Resurrection

- God created human beings as a combination of body and the breath of life (body + breath = living being). Death is the opposite of the creation process, with the body returning to the dust and the breath, or “spirit,” returning to God. This breath, or spirit, is not a conscious person but is simply the life-giving power of God. **Genesis 2:7; Psalm 104:29, 30; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Job 27:3.**
- The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will clothe the righteous with immortality when Christ returns. Until that day, death is an unconscious “sleep” for all people. Those who die do not go straight to heaven or hell, but rest in the grave, awaiting one of two resurrections. **Romans 6:23; 1 Timothy 6:15, 16; Psalm 13:3; 115:17; 146:3, 4; Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10; John 5:28, 29; 11:11-14; Acts 2:29-34; Daniel 12:2, 13.**
- When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. **Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 25:8; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Colossians 3:4; Revelation 20:1-10.**
- Because the dead are “asleep,” they cannot communicate with us. If we falsely believe we can make contact with those who have died, evil spirits can impersonate the dead or in other ways deceive us. Therefore, all forms of witchcraft, magic, astrology, and other spiritualistic or occult practices are expressly forbidden in the Bible. **Job 7:9, 10; 14:21; Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Isaiah 8:19, 20; Isaiah 47:12-15; Acts 19:18-20; 1 Timothy 4:1.**
- My Commitment:** *Because the Bible teaches that those who have died are in a state of unconscious “sleep,” I choose to avoid entertainment or practices that promote false views of death or other spiritualistic activity.*

The Millennium and the End of Sin

- The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the righteous are described as sitting on thrones, and “judgment” is committed to them. This judgment does not determine who will be saved or lost, for this has already been decided before Christ’s return. Rather, this is the final judgment of the wicked, when “the saints will judge the world” and “judge angels.” God’s people will then fully recognize the justice of heaven’s verdict upon evil angels and men, and in union with Christ will agree on a fair punishment for “each one according to his works.” During this time the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels, who will be bound to the earth with no one to deceive. **Revelation 20:1-6, 12, 13; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 6:2, 3; Psalm 149:5-9; Isaiah 24:1, 19-22; Jeremiah 4:23-27.**
- At the close of the thousand years, Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and together with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The wicked will not burn for all eternity, as is commonly taught, but will be totally destroyed. While the degree of suffering will vary “according to their works,” all of the unrighteous will ultimately be brought to ashes. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever. **Revelation 20:7-15; 21:1, 2; Luke 12:47, 48; Ezekiel 28:18, 19; Malachi 4:1-3; 2 Peter 2:4-6; Nahum 1:9.**
- My Commitment:** *I believe in a thousand-year period after the second coming of Christ in which judgment is committed to the saints. I trust in a loving God who does not torture the wicked for all eternity, but brings them to ashes in the final destruction at the end of the thousand years.*

The New Earth

- After cleansing the earth with fire, God promises to create a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Here He will provide an eternal home for the redeemed and a perfect environment for everlasting life, love, joy, and learning in His presence. God Himself will dwell with His people, and suffering and death will have passed away. The great controversy will be ended, and sin will be no more. All creation will declare that God is love; and He shall reign forever and ever. Amen. **Isaiah 35; 65:17-25; Matthew 5:5; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 11:15; 21:1-7; 22:1-5; Nahum 1:9.**

- My Commitment:** *I desire to live with God in the new earth, where righteousness dwells, after He has forever cleansed the earth of sin and suffering.*

Christian Behavior

- We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with the principles of heaven, renouncing the sinful ways of the world. We can cooperate with the Holy Spirit, as He works to re-create in us the character of Jesus, by involving ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. **Romans 12:1, 2; 1 John 2:6; Ephesians 5:1-21; Philippians 4:8; 2 Corinthians 10:5; 6:14-7:1; 3 John 2.**
- Because our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently. Along with adequate exercise and rest, we are to adopt the most healthful diet possible and abstain from the unclean meats identified in the Scriptures. The distinction between clean and unclean meats has existed since the time of the flood—long before the birth of the Jewish nation. **1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 10:31; Genesis 1:29; 7:1, 2; Leviticus 11; 20:25, 26; Deuteronomy 14:3-21.**
- Alcohol, tobacco, caffeinated beverages, and other recreational drugs and narcotics are both addictive and harmful to our bodies. Christians should abstain from anything mind-altering or addictive, which has not been prescribed by a doctor. God wants our minds to be clear so that we are more attentive to the voice of conscience and stronger to resist temptation. **1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 9:25-27; Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4, 5;** for a note on wine in the Bible, see the third point under the doctrinal topic “The Lord’s Supper.”
- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I will care for my physical health. This includes abstaining from unclean meats and from the recreational use of addictive, mind-altering substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and other habit-forming drugs.*
- Our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty. We become like that which we behold. Most entertainment today (television, movies, music, video games, Internet, etc.) does not strengthen the spiritual nature, but the carnal. An entertainment-saturated life can steal our affections

from God and blunt our interest in spiritual things. **Philippians 4:8; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 8:5-8; 13:14; Colossians 3:1, 2.**

- Inasmuch as maintaining moral purity requires us to guard every avenue to our hearts and minds, Christians should refrain from viewing sexual or pornographic material. **Job 31:1; Proverbs 4:23; 5:3-21; Matthew 5:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Peter 2:11.**
- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I will avoid reading, watching, participating in, or listening to sinful things that the Bible condemns. I will strive to live a life of moral purity in my thoughts and actions.*
- As Jesus was humble in appearance, so our dress is to be simple, modest, and neat. We should avoid dressing in ways that could prove to be a stumbling block to others. **Isaiah 53:2; Matthew 5:28; Romans 14:13.**
- Peter and Paul both teach that to dress modestly includes not wearing jewelry or extravagant clothing. In harmony with this instruction, Revelation depicts the pure woman (the faithful church) as wearing no jewelry or extravagant clothing, while the harlot woman (the unfaithful church) is wearing both. Old Testament examples show God's people taking off their jewelry when consecrating their lives to God. **1 Timothy 2:9, 10; 1 Peter 3:3, 4; Revelation 12:1; 17:4; Genesis 35:4; Exodus 33:6.**
- Many people, based on the Bible's teachings concerning jewelry, choose not to wear wedding rings. If one chooses to wear a wedding ring, viewing it as merely functional and not as an ornament, it follows that such a ring would be a simple band.
- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I choose to dress modestly, not with provocative or extravagant clothing, or with jewelry (if wearing functional items, they will be simple and modest).*

Marriage and the Family

- Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered into only between a man and a woman who share a common faith. Mutual love and respect are the fabric of this sacred relationship, which is to reflect the loving relationship between Christ and His church. **Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:21-33.**
- Jesus taught that the person who divorces a spouse for any reason other than fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. Fornication is any sexual relationship outside of marriage and is condemned by the Bible as sinful behavior. We should avoid not only this behavior, but even the appearance of immorality. **Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:31, 32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:11, 12; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.**
- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I will not commit fornication, adultery, or other forms of sexual immorality. I will not live with a romantic partner while unmarried, and will avoid any other living arrangement that may give the appearance of immorality.*
- Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words they are to teach them that Christ is a loving, tender, and caring guide who wants them to become members of His body, the family of God, which embraces both single and married persons. **Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:5-9; 1 Corinthians 7:1-9; Matthew 19:10-12.**
- Christ commands His people to honor their fathers and mothers, providing a stark contrast with the disobedience and disrespect toward parental authority that are shameful characteristics of the last days. **Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1, 2.**

- Although some family relationships fall short of the ideal, God promises to bless those families that turn their hearts to Him. Morning and evening family worship is a practical way to bind families together, and to assure that Christ is at the center of the home. **Genesis 18:19; Luke 1:16, 17; Malachi 4:5, 6.**

- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I choose to be a positive spiritual influence in my family. I will strive to honor my father and mother, and to be a loving and faithful spouse, parent, and sibling (as applicable).*

The Church and Unity in the Body of Christ

- The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is built on the foundation of Christ and His Word. The church is referred to as a body with Christ as the head, and as Christ's bride preparing for His soon return. **Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:19-22; 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13, 20-22; 2 Corinthians 11:2.**
- As a community of believers, we join together for worship, fellowship, instruction in the Word, celebration of the Lord's Supper, service to all mankind, and the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. **Acts 2:42, 46, 47; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 28:18-20.**
- The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. We are all equal in Christ, and we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures, we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. **John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:1-6; Galatians 3:27-29; Acts 17:26, 27.**
- Regular weekly church attendance is an essential spiritual habit for which Jesus has given us an example. **Luke 4:16; Hebrews 10:24, 25.**
- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I will follow Jesus' example of regular attendance and participation in the life and mission of the church.*

Baptism

- The importance of baptism is seen in both the example and teachings of Jesus. He taught that those who believe and are baptized will be saved. **Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 16:16; John 3:5.**
- By baptism we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our sinful past and old way of life are buried, and we commit to a new life of following Christ. **Romans 6:1-6.**
- Baptism is a symbol of our union with Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, and our reception of the Holy Spirit. It is by full immersion in water and is contingent on an affirmation of faith in Jesus and evidence of repentance of sin. It follows instruction in the Holy Scriptures and acceptance of their teachings. **Colossians 2:12, 13; Acts 16:30-33; 22:16; 2:38; Matthew 28:19, 20.**
- We are baptized into the body of Christ—His church. Just as the hand is connected to the arm, being baptized into Christ’s “body” means that we become connected, by worship, fellowship, and service, to other members of the same body. Baptism in the Seventh-day Adventist Church makes us members of a local congregation of this worldwide church. **1 Corinthians 12:13, 20-22; Acts 2:41, 47.**
- One may choose to be rebaptized after learning significant and life-changing biblical truths, or when recommitting to Christ after abandoning the faith. **Acts 19:1-5; Mark 1:4.**
- My Commitment:** *Because it is my purpose to follow the example and teachings of Jesus, I desire to be baptized (or rebaptized) by immersion.*

The Lord's Supper

- The Lord's Supper is a participation in the emblems of the body and blood of Jesus as an expression of faith in Him, our Lord and Savior. Preparation for the Supper includes self-examination, repentance, and confession. The communion service is open to all believing Christians. **Matthew 26:17-30; John 6:48-63; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17; 11:23-30.**
- Jesus ordained the service of foot-washing to signify renewed cleansing, to express a willingness to serve one another in humility, and to unite our hearts in love. We wash one another's feet because Jesus taught us to do so. **John 13:1-17.**
- Seventh-day Adventists use grape juice rather than fermented wine for the Lord's Supper. When the word "wine" is used in the Bible, it can refer to either alcoholic wine or pure grape juice. Therefore, context must be considered to determine which was meant. Christ instituted the Lord's Supper during Passover, a time when all leaven was to be removed from the premises. No process of decay such as leaven or fermentation, symbolizing sin and corruption, could rightly represent the perfect sacrifice of Christ—the "Lamb without blemish and without spot." **Isaiah 65:8; Exodus 12:8-20; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 1:19.**
- The Lord's Supper is for those of sufficient age to make an intelligent commitment to Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Therefore, parents are encouraged to educate their children through observation rather than participation until after they are baptized. **1 Corinthians 11:27-29.**
- My Commitment:** *I choose to participate in the foot-washing service modeled by Jesus and in the Lord's Supper as a symbol of the forgiveness and salvation purchased for me on Calvary's cross.*

Stewardship

- We are God’s stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We are responsible to Him for their proper use. We acknowledge God’s ownership by faithful service to Him and our fellow human beings, and by returning tithes and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church. **Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15; 1 Chronicles 29:14; Haggai 1:3-11; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 23:23; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; Romans 15:26, 27.**
- Withholding tithes and offerings is referred to in the Bible as robbing God. The tithe is holy to the Lord—it belongs to Him. Therefore, returning tithe is not a matter of generosity, but honesty. The tithe, which means “tenth,” is to be calculated on our increase. In other words, 10 percent of our gross income belongs to God and should be returned to Him. The tithe was sacredly guarded in biblical times to support the Levites, and should be used exclusively today to support the work of the gospel ministry. **Malachi 3:8-10; Leviticus 27:30; Deuteronomy 14:22; Numbers 18:21; 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14.**
- In Old Testament times the tithe was placed in a storehouse and then distributed to the Levites. Similarly, Seventh-day Adventist churches send their tithe to a local conference, which in turn uses it for the support of ministers, Bible workers, and other gospel ministry functions. Ministers essentially receive the same base salary, unaffected by the amount of tithe returned by the churches they pastor. **Malachi 3:8-10; Nehemiah 10:38.**
- Offerings represent amounts above and beyond the 10 percent tithe, to be given cheerfully as a person is able. Systematic giving of some percentage of gross income is recommended. Local church operating expenses require support from offerings, since the tithe is used to support those employed in gospel ministry. **Deuteronomy 16:17; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7.**

- As good stewards we should refrain from gambling, which is not only a poor investment of God's resources, but can also be highly addictive. **Ecclesiastes 5:10; Luke 12:15; 16:13; 1 Timothy 6:10; Proverbs 13:11; 20:21; 28:20.**

- My Commitment:** *By the grace of God I will support the mission of the church by returning a faithful tithe and giving freewill offerings. I choose also to refrain from the addictive and wasteful practice of gambling.*

Spiritual Gifts and the Gift of Prophecy

- God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts, which each member is to employ in loving ministry to others. Given by the Holy Spirit to each member as He wills, the gifts equip the church with all abilities and ministries needed to fulfill its mission. Spiritual gifts also protect the church from false doctrine and build it up in faith and love. **Ephesians 4:7, 8, 11-16; Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 27, 28; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.**
- Not every apparent manifestation of a spiritual gift is from God. Counterfeit versions of gifts such as prophecy, teaching, healing, miracles, and tongues have led many astray. The true gift of tongues, for instance, does not refer to the emotional utterance of unintelligible sounds, but is described in Acts 2 as the divinely given ability to speak foreign languages when communicating the gospel. Genuine spiritual gifts are characterized by order rather than chaos, understanding rather than confusion, self-control rather than loss of control, and clear reasoning rather than merely emotional experiences. They are given to those who adhere to God's Word, obey His law, and manifest the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. **Matthew 7:20-23; 24:24; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:14; 16:13, 14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-11; 10:44-47; 1 Corinthians 12:28-13:1; 14:33, 40; Isaiah 8:20; Galatians 5:22, 23.**
- One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. As with the other spiritual gifts, the prophetic gift is available to the church through the end of time. **Numbers 12:6; 2 Chronicles 20:20; Amos 3:7; Ephesians 4:11-13; Joel 2:28-31; Acts 2:14-21.**
- One of the identifying marks of God's last-day church is the "testimony of Jesus Christ"—a phrase that refers to the "spirit of prophecy," or the prophetic gift. Seventh-day Adventists see a fulfillment of this end-time gift of prophecy in the ministry of Ellen G. White, believing that her writings speak with prophetic authority and provide comfort,

guidance, instruction, and correction to the church. Her writings also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. **Revelation 12:17; 19:10; 22:8, 9; 1 Corinthians 1:6, 7.**

- My Commitment:** *It is my purpose to use any spiritual gifts or abilities the Lord gives me to help fulfill the mission of the church. I acknowledge the gift of prophecy to be a special characteristic of God's last-day church given to lead His people to more closely follow the teachings of the Bible.*

The Remnant and Its Mission

- In the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant of faithful believers is called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The Seventh-day Adventist Church fulfills the prophetic description of this remnant church. **Revelation 12:13-17; 14:12-14; 18:1-4.**
- In addition to keeping all of God's commandments, including the Sabbath commandment, the last-day church will also have the testimony of Jesus. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, or the prophetic gift. **Revelation 12:17; 19:10; 22:8, 9.**
- The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to call all people to become disciples of Jesus Christ, to proclaim the everlasting gospel embraced by the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, and to prepare the world for Christ's soon return. Every member is called to be actively involved in fulfilling this mission. **Matthew 28:18-20; Revelation 14:6-12; Titus 2:11-14.**
- The three angels' messages of Revelation 14 represent the final messages to be given to the world by God's last-day people before the second coming of Christ. With the everlasting gospel of salvation through faith in Christ as their foundation, these messages also include details with end-time significance: an announcement that judgment has begun (the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary began in 1844), an earnest appeal to worship God as Creator (and thus to honor the memorial of Creation—the seventh-day Sabbath), an announcement that Babylon is fallen (because her errors have been exposed by the truth about salvation, God's law, death, hell, second coming, etc.), and a warning against worshipping the beast and receiving his mark (a warning not to yield to the coming enforcement of a human-made worship that conflicts with the worship prescribed by God in His law). **Revelation 14:6-12; Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14; 8:14; Exodus 20:8-11.**

- Every member of the church is called to be actively involved in the end-time mission of the remnant through both personal witnessing and corporate church ministries. On an individual level, members engage in acts of kindness and loving service, share truth-filled testimonies, literature, and media, give Bible studies, and mentor those new to the faith. On a corporate level, members get involved in important church programs and ministries that offer compassionate service to the community, publicly proclaim the end-time message of the remnant church, and provide ongoing education, nurture, and discipleship training to fellow church members of all ages. **Mark 1:17; Mark 16:15; Luke 10:2.**

- My Commitment:** *It is my desire to become a member of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church through baptism or profession of faith. By the grace of God I will put forth personal effort to win souls to Christ, sharing the everlasting gospel as expressed by the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. As a disciple of Christ, it is my purpose to fulfill God's calling on my life to go and make others into disciples of Christ also.*

Steps of Faith

Fundamentals of Faith is a summary of core Bible teachings as taught and practiced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church (see appendix for official statement of beliefs). If you have read and agree with this summary of essential Bible doctrines, and have decided to follow Christ as described by its corresponding practical commitments, you are encouraged to take the important step of becoming a member of a local congregation of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church family. This happens in one of two ways:

Baptism

Those individuals who have never been baptized by immersion become Seventh-day Adventists when they take this joyous step. Even many Christians who have previously been baptized choose to be rebaptized after discovering many new, life-changing Bible truths. The baptismal service is one of the greatest highlights in the life of the church.

Profession of Faith

Individuals who have already been baptized by immersion may choose to become members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church through either rebaptism or “profession of faith.” The only difference between a baptismal service and one in which someone is received into membership by profession of faith is that the former includes the actual immersion of the individual under water.

Affirmation of Faith

In baptism and profession of faith services, those involved affirm the following statements, which summarize the fundamental truths of Scripture as taught and practiced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

1. I believe there is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons.
2. I accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as the atoning sacrifice for my sins and believe that by God's grace through faith in His shed blood I am saved from sin and its penalty.
3. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and personal Savior and believe that God, in Christ, has forgiven my sins and given me a new heart, and I renounce the sinful ways of the world.
4. I accept by faith the righteousness of Christ, my Intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and accept His promise of transforming grace and power to live a loving, Christ-centered life in my home and before the world.
5. I believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word, the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian. I covenant to spend time regularly in prayer and Bible study.
6. I accept the Ten Commandments as a transcript of the character of God and a revelation of His will. It is my purpose by the power of the indwelling Christ to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord and the memorial of Creation.
7. I look forward to the soon coming of Jesus and the blessed hope, when "this mortal shall . . . put on immortality" [1 Cor. 15:54, KJV]. As I prepare to meet the Lord, I will witness to His loving salvation by using my talents in personal soul-winning endeavor to help others to be ready for His glorious appearing.

8. I accept the biblical teaching of spiritual gifts and believe that the gift of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church.
9. I believe in church organization. It is my purpose to worship God and to support the church through my tithes and offerings and by my personal effort and influence.
10. I believe that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; and I will honor God by caring for it, avoiding the use of that which is harmful, and abstaining from all unclean foods; from the use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages; from the use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms for human consumption; and from the misuse of or trafficking in narcotics or other drugs.
11. I know and understand the fundamental Bible principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I purpose, by the grace of God, to fulfill His will by ordering my life in harmony with these principles.
12. I accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion and desire to be so baptized as a public expression of faith in Christ and His forgiveness of my sins.

Alternate Reading for Profession of Faith: I accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion and have been so baptized as a public expression of faith in Christ and His forgiveness of my sins.

13. I accept and believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy and that people of every nation, race, and language are invited and accepted into its fellowship. I desire to be a member of this local congregation of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Journey Continues

If you choose to take the exciting step of baptism or profession of faith, a local Seventh-day Adventist congregation will officially vote you into membership. All of heaven will rejoice along with your new church family!

As a new church member, you will continue in a process of discipleship that strengthens your relationship with Christ, further grounds you in the truths of Scripture, and trains you to lead others to Christ and His Word. As an active disciple of Christ, you will have a mission—to make other disciples! May the Lord continue to bless you abundantly as you travel life's journey with Him. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Appendix

Fundamentals of Faith aims to present the biblical understandings of Seventh-day Adventists in a way that helps those studying these truths for the first time to best assimilate and understand them. It varies from the official Seventh-day Adventist statement of fundamental beliefs in that it uses a different sequence of topics, summarizes and combines certain beliefs for the sake of simplicity, and adds further explanations and practical applications that are especially helpful to those preparing for church membership.

The official Seventh-day Adventist fundamental beliefs are reproduced below, in their entirety, for additional study or reference. The order of topics follows theological categories—the doctrines of God, humanity, salvation, the church, the Christian life, and last-day events. It is important to note that Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed. The beliefs that follow constitute the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. Revision of these statements may be expected when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God's holy Word.

Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists

1. The Holy Scriptures

The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration. The inspired authors spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to humanity the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the definitive revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history. (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 8:20; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20, 21.)

2. The Trinity

There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. God, who is love, is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation. (Gen. 1:26; Deut. 6:4; Isa. 6:8; Matt. 28:19; John 3:16; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22; 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2.)

3. The Father

God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also those of the Father. (Gen. 1:1; Deut. 4:35; Ps. 110:1-4; John 3:16; 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:28; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 John 4:8; Rev. 4:11.)

4. The Son

God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly human, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. By His miracles He manifested God's power and was attested as God's promised Messiah. He suffered and died voluntarily on the cross for our sins and in our place, was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven to minister in the heavenly sanctuary in our behalf. He will come again in glory for the final deliverance of His people and the restoration of all things. (Isa. 53:4-6; Dan. 9:25-27; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-3, 14; 5:22; 10:30; 14:1-3, 9, 13; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17-19; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2.)

5. The Holy Spirit

God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He is as much a person as are the Father and the Son. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth. (Gen. 1:1, 2; 2 Sam. 23:2; Ps. 51:11; Isa. 61:1; Luke 1:35; 4:18; John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 5:3; 10:38; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 12:7-11; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Peter 1:21.)

6. Creation

God has revealed in Scripture the authentic and historical account of His creative activity. He created the universe, and in a recent six-day creation the Lord made “the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them” and rested on the seventh day. Thus He established the Sabbath as a perpetual memorial of the work He performed and completed during six literal days that together with the Sabbath constituted the same unit of time that we call a week today. The first man and woman were made in the image of God as the crowning work of Creation, given dominion over the world, and charged with responsibility to care for it. When the world was finished it was “very good,” declaring the glory of God. (Gen. 1-2; 5; 11; Ex. 20:8-11; Ps. 19:1-6; 33:6, 9; 104; Isa. 45:12, 18; Acts 17:24; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; 11:3; Rev. 10:6; 14:7.)

7. The Nature of Humanity

Man and woman were made in the image of God with individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. Though created free beings, each is an indivisible unity of body, mind, and spirit, dependent upon God for life and breath and all else. When our first parents disobeyed God, they denied their dependence upon Him and fell from their high position. The image of God in them was marred and they became subject to death. Their descendants share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker. Created for the glory of God, they are called to love Him and one another, and to care for their environment. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7, 15; 3; Ps. 8:4-8; 51:5, 10; 58:3; Jer. 17:9; Acts 17:24-28; Rom. 5:12-17; 2 Cor. 5:19, 20; Eph. 2:3; 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 John 3:4; 4:7, 8, 11, 20.)

8. The Great Controversy

All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God’s adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels. He introduced the spirit of rebellion into this world when he led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity, the disordering of the created world, and its eventual devastation at the time of the global flood, as presented in the historical account of Genesis 1-11. Observed by the whole creation, this world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation. (Gen. 3; 6-8; Job 1:6-12; Isa. 14:12-14; Eze. 28:12-18; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:4; 5:12-21; 8:19-22; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 1:14; 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Peter 3:6; Rev. 12:4-9.)

9. The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ

In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This perfect atonement vindicates the righteousness of God's law and the graciousness of His character; for it both condemns our sin and provides for our forgiveness. The death of Christ is substitutionary and expiatory, reconciling and transforming. The bodily resurrection of Christ proclaims God's triumph over the forces of evil, and for those who accept the atonement assures their final victory over sin and death. It declares the Lordship of Jesus Christ, before whom every knee in heaven and on earth will bow. (Gen. 3:15; Ps. 22:1; Isa. 53; John 3:16; 14:30; Rom. 1:4; 3:25; 4:25; 8:3, 4; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 20-22; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 19-21; Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 2:15; 1 Peter 2:21, 22; 1 John 2:2; 4:10.)

10. The Experience of Salvation

In infinite love and mercy God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be made the righteousness of God. Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord, Substitute and Example. This saving faith comes through the divine power of the Word and is the gift of God's grace. Through Christ we are justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered from the lordship of sin. Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life. Abiding in Him we become partakers of the divine nature and have the assurance of salvation now and in the judgment. (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 45:22; 53; Jer. 31:31-34; Eze. 33:11; 36:25-27; Hab. 2:4; Mark 9:23, 24; John 3:3-8, 16; 16:8; Rom. 3:21-26; 5:6-10; 8:1-4, 14-17; 10:17; 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Gal. 1:4; 3:13, 14, 26; 4:4-7; Eph. 2:4-10; Col. 1:13, 14; Titus 3:3-7; Heb. 8:7-12; 1 Peter 1:23; 2:21, 22; 2 Peter 1:3, 4; Rev. 13:8.)

11. Growing in Christ

By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us. Continually committed to Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily

in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the church. We are also called to follow Christ's example by compassionately ministering to the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of humanity. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience. (1 Chron. 29:11; Ps. 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12; Matt. 20:25-28; 25:31-46; Luke 10:17-20; John 20:21; Rom. 8:38, 39; 2 Cor. 3:17, 18; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph. 5:19, 20; 6:12-18; Phil. 3:7-14; Col. 1:13, 14; 2:6, 14, 15; 1 Thess. 5:16-18, 23; Heb. 10:25; James 1:27; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 1 John 4:4.)

12. The Church

The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the Word, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for service to humanity, and for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. The church derives its authority from Christ, who is the incarnate Word revealed in the Scriptures. The church is God's family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head. The church is the bride for whom Christ died that He might sanctify and cleanse her. At His return in triumph, He will present her to Himself a glorious church, the faithful of all the ages, the purchase of His blood, not having spot or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish. (Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 19:3-7; Matt. 16:13-20; 18:18; 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38-42; 7:38; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11; 5:23-27; Col. 1:17, 18; 1 Peter 2:9.)

13. The Remnant and Its Mission

The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds the approach of His second advent. This proclamation is symbolized by the three angels of Revelation 14; it coincides with the work of judgment in heaven and results in a work of repentance and reform on earth. Every believer is called to have a personal part in this worldwide witness. (Dan. 7:9-14; Isa. 1:9; 11:11; Jer. 23:3; Micah 2:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Peter 1:16-19; 4:17; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Jude 3, 14; Rev. 12:17; 14:6-12; 18:1-4.)

14. Unity in the Body of Christ

The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture,

learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God, who has adopted us as His children. (Ps. 133:1; Matt. 28:19, 20; John 17:20-23; Acts 17:26, 27; Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 5:16, 17; Gal. 3:27-29; Eph. 2:13-16; 4:3-6, 11-16; Col. 3:10-15.)

15. Baptism

By baptism we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in newness of life. Thus we acknowledge Christ as Lord and Savior, become His people, and are received as members by His church. Baptism is a symbol of our union with Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, and our reception of the Holy Spirit. It is by immersion in water and is contingent on an affirmation of faith in Jesus and evidence of repentance of sin. It follows instruction in the Holy Scriptures and acceptance of their teachings. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38; 16:30-33; 22:16; Rom. 6:1-6; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12, 13.)

16. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a participation in the emblems of the body and blood of Jesus as an expression of faith in Him, our Lord and Savior. In this experience of communion Christ is present to meet and strengthen His people. As we partake, we joyfully proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again. Preparation for the Supper includes self-examination, repentance, and confession. The Master ordained the service of foot washing to signify renewed cleansing, to express a willingness to serve one another in Christlike humility, and to unite our hearts in love. The communion service is open to all believing Christians. (Matt. 26:17-30; John 6:48-63; 13:1-17; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:23-30; Rev. 3:20.)

17. Spiritual Gifts and Ministries

God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained functions. According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people. Some members are called of God and endowed by the Spirit for functions recognized by the church in pastoral,

evangelistic, and teaching ministries particularly needed to equip the members for service, to build up the church to spiritual maturity, and to foster unity of the faith and knowledge of God. When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God's varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love. (Acts 6:1-7; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:7-11, 27, 28; Eph. 4:8, 11-16; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.)

18. The Gift of Prophecy

The Scriptures testify that one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and we believe it was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. Her writings speak with prophetic authority and provide comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction to the church. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Num. 12:6; 2 Chron. 20:20; Amos 3:7; Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:14-21; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10; 22:8, 9.)

19. The Law of God

The great principles of God's law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God's love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God's covenant with His people and the standard in God's judgment. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit they point out sin and awaken a sense of need for a Savior. Salvation is all of grace and not of works, and its fruit is obedience to the Commandments. This obedience develops Christian character and results in a sense of well-being. It is an evidence of our love for the Lord and our concern for our fellow human beings. The obedience of faith demonstrates the power of Christ to transform lives, and therefore strengthens Christian witness. (Ex. 20:1-17; Deut. 28:1-14; Ps. 19:7-14; 40:7, 8; Matt. 5:17-20; 22:36-40; John 14:15; 15:7-10; Rom. 8:3, 4; Eph. 2:8-10; Heb. 8:8-10; 1 John 2:3; 5:3; Rev. 12:17; 14:12.)

20. The Sabbath

The gracious Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to

evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive acts. (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Lev. 23:32; Deut. 5:12-15; Isa. 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Eze. 20:12, 20; Matt. 12:1-12; Mark 1:32; Luke 4:16; Heb. 4:1-11.)

21. Stewardship

We are God's stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We are responsible to Him for their proper use. We acknowledge God's ownership by faithful service to Him and our fellow human beings, and by returning tithe and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church. Stewardship is a privilege given to us by God for nurture in love and the victory over selfishness and covetousness. Stewards rejoice in the blessings that come to others as a result of their faithfulness. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15; 1 Chron. 29:14; Haggai 1:3-11; Mal. 3:8-12; Matt. 23:23; Rom. 15:26, 27; 1 Cor. 9:9-14; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; 9:7.)

22. Christian Behavior

We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty. While recognizing cultural differences, our dress is to be simple, modest, and neat, befitting those whose true beauty does not consist of outward adornment but in the imperishable ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit. It also means that because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently. Along with adequate exercise and rest, we are to adopt the most healthful diet possible and abstain from the unclean foods identified in the Scriptures. Since alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of drugs and narcotics are harmful to our bodies, we are to abstain from them as well. Instead, we are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy, and goodness. (Gen. 7:2; Ex. 20:15; Lev. 11:1-47; Ps. 106:3; Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 10:31; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 10:5; Eph. 5:1-21; Phil. 2:4; 4:8; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; Titus 2:11, 12; 1 Peter 3:1-4; 1 John 2:6; 3 John 2.)

23. Marriage and the Family

Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered into only between a man and a woman who share a common faith. Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence of the relationship between Christ and His church. Regarding divorce, Jesus taught that the person who divorces a

spouse, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. Although some family relationships may fall short of the ideal, a man and a woman who fully commit themselves to each other in Christ through marriage may achieve loving unity through the guidance of the Spirit and the nurture of the church. God blesses the family and intends that its members shall assist each other toward complete maturity. Increasing family closeness is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message. Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words they are to teach them that Christ is a loving, tender, and caring guide who wants them to become members of His body, the family of God which embraces both single and married persons. (Gen. 2:18-25; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:5-9; Prov. 22:6; Mal. 4:5, 6; Matt. 5:31, 32; 19:3-9, 12; Mark 10:11, 12; John 2:1-11; 1 Cor. 7:7, 10, 11; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4.)

24. Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary

There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle that the Lord set up and not humans. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. At His ascension, He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry, which was typified by the work of the high priest in the holy place of the earthly sanctuary. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry, which was typified by the work of the high priest in the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Lev. 16; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; Dan. 7:9-27; 8:13, 14; 9:24-27; Heb. 1:3; 2:16, 17; 4:14-16; 8:1-5; 9:11-28; 10:19-22; Rev. 8:3-5; 11:19; 14:6, 7, 12; 20:12; 22:11, 12.)

25. The Second Coming of Christ

The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Savior's coming will be literal, personal, visible, and worldwide. When He returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected, and together with the righteous living will be glorified and taken to heaven, but the unrighteous will die.

The almost complete fulfillment of most lines of prophecy, together with the present condition of the world, indicates that Christ's coming is near. The time of that event has not been revealed, and we are therefore exhorted to be ready at all times. (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-6; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2:8; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:7; 14:14-20; 19:11-21.)

26. Death and Resurrection

The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. (Job 19:25-27; Ps. 146:3, 4; Eccl. 9:5, 6, 10; Dan. 12:2, 13; Isa. 25:8; John 5:28, 29; 11:11-14; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Rev. 20:1-10.)

27. The Millennium and the End of Sin

The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the wicked dead will be judged; the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels. At its close Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever. (Jer. 4:23-26; Eze. 28:18, 19; Mal. 4:1; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Rev. 20; 21:1-5.)

28. The New Earth

On the new earth, in which righteousness dwells, God will provide an eternal home for the redeemed and a perfect environment for everlasting life, love, joy, and learning in His presence. For here God Himself will dwell with His people, and suffering and death will have passed away. The great controversy will be ended, and sin will be no more. All things, animate and inanimate, will declare that God is love; and He shall reign forever. Amen. (Isa. 35; 65:17-25; Matt. 5:5; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 11:15; 21:1-7; 22:1-5.)



GROW Your Church is an initiative of the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. It highlights five essential phases of making disciples:

- 1) **PREPARE** the soil of the heart with friendship and service.
- 2) **PLANT** the Word with spiritual conversations or literature/media.
- 3) **CULTIVATE** spiritual interest with ongoing Bible studies.
- 4) **HARVEST** decisions with appeals to follow Christ and be baptized.
- 5) **PRESERVE** the harvest with ongoing discipleship training.



*Fundamentals of Faith** especially aids churches in the **HARVEST** phase of disciple-making—a phase in which joyful, life-changing decisions are made to follow Christ and be baptized.

To learn about the five GROW goals for every local church, and for training videos, customized logos, and additional resources, go to:

WWW grow.adventist.org

* Go to www.adventistbookcenter.com or call 1-800-765-6955 to order more copies of this valuable resource. Bulk pricing available.



General Conference Sabbath School
and Personal Ministries Department