

# STUDY GUIDE FOR THE ARTICLES OF FAITH

Knowing them and proclaiming them



## **1. Preparing for the annual interview with the Ministerial Credentials Board:**

- a. Please submit the Articles of Faith written assignment on the template that will be included in the District License Application Packet by **January 15**, featuring a summary of the four Articles of Faith that have been assigned to your respective year. *(This is in addition to submitting an official district license application and transcripts.)*
- b. In the written assignment please respond to the following questions for each Article:
  - 1) What do you consider to be the key words and the most significant phrases in each of the assigned Articles? Please identify the phrases and briefly explain why they are significant to the life of a believer in Jesus Christ from each Article of Faith.
  - 2) Select at least two scriptures referenced under each Article in this Study Guide that you believe are most helpful in communicating the significance of the Article. Briefly explain why your scripture references support a clear understanding of each Article of Faith.

### **Example:**

Article **12 - Baptism**

- Significant words/phrases: **sacrament, proclaiming faith, means of grace**, etc.  
These words help articulate what this Article of Faith means because...
- The following scripture references help articulate what this Article of Faith means because...

## **2. Presenting the Articles of Faith in the Credentials Board interview:**

- a. Please be prepared to give a 12-15 minute presentation to include all four of the assigned Articles of Faith for your respective year. In this presentation you will be evaluated on the following abilities:
  - 1) to articulate what we believe in reference to each Article of Faith;
  - 2) to identify AND present at least two scriptural references for each Article of Faith, using a printed Bible, without notes or images; and
  - 3) to effectively communicate, as if you were in a teaching/preaching setting at a local church.



## **I. The Triune God**

We believe in one eternally existent, infinite God, Sovereign Creator and Sustainer of the universe; that He only is God, holy in nature, attributes, and purpose. The God who is holy love and light is Triune in essential being, revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (*Matthew 3:16-17; John 14:1-31; Galatians 4:4-6*)

## **II. Jesus Christ**

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Triune Godhead; that He was eternally one with the Father; that He became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say the Godhead and manhood, are thus united in one Person very God and very man, the God-man.

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins, and that He truly arose from the dead and took again His body, together with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven and is there engaged in intercession for us. (*Luke 1:26-35; John 1:1-18; Acts 2:22-36; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:12-22*)

## **III. The Holy Spirit**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Triune Godhead, that He is ever present and efficiently active in and with the Church of Christ, convincing the world of sin, regenerating those who repent and believe, sanctifying believers, and guiding into all truth as it is in Jesus. (*John 16:7-15; Romans 8:1-27; Ephesians 3:14-21*)

## **IV. The Holy Scriptures**

We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by which we understand the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation, so that whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined as an article of faith. (*2 Timothy 3:14-17; 1 Peter 1:8-12; 2 Peter 1:16-21*)

## **V. Sin, Original and Personal**

**5.** We believe that sin came into the world through the disobedience of our first parents, and death by sin. We believe that sin is of two kinds: original sin or depravity, and actual or personal sin.

**5.1.** We believe that original sin, or depravity, is that corruption of the nature of all the offspring of Adam by reason of which everyone is very far gone from original righteousness or the pure state of our first parents at the time of their creation, is averse to God, is without

spiritual life, and inclined to evil, and that continually. We further believe that original sin continues to exist with the new life of the regenerate, until the heart is fully cleansed by the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

**5.2.** We believe that original sin differs from actual sin in that it constitutes an inherited propensity to actual sin for which no one is accountable until its divinely provided remedy is neglected or rejected.

**5.3.** We believe that actual or personal sin is a voluntary violation of a known law of God by a morally responsible person. It is therefore not to be confused with involuntary and inescapable shortcomings, infirmities, faults, mistakes, failures, or other deviations from a standard of perfect conduct that are the residual effects of the Fall. However, such innocent effects do not include attitudes or responses contrary to the spirit of Christ, which may properly be called sins of the spirit. We believe that personal sin is primarily and essentially a violation of the law of love; and that in relation to Christ sin may be defined as unbelief.

Original sin: (Mark 7:14-23; Romans 1:18-32; 7:1-8:8; Galatians 5:16-21)

Personal sin: (Romans 6:15-23; John 3:18-20; 1 John 1:6-2:4; 3:4-10)

## **VI. Atonement**

We believe that Jesus Christ, by His sufferings, by the shedding of His own blood, and by His death on the Cross, made a full atonement for all human sin, and that this Atonement is the only ground of salvation, and that it is sufficient for every individual of Adam's race. The Atonement is graciously efficacious for the salvation of those incapable of moral responsibility and for the children in innocency but is efficacious for the salvation of those who reach the age of responsibility only when they repent and believe.

(Isaiah 53:1-6; John 3:14-17; Romans 3:21-26; 5:6-21; Colossians 1:19-23; 1 Peter 1:18-22)

## **VII. Prevenient Grace**

**7.** We believe that the grace of God through Jesus Christ is freely bestowed upon all people, enabling all who will to turn from sin to righteousness, believe on Jesus Christ for pardon and cleansing from sin, and follow good works pleasing and acceptable in His sight. We also believe that the human race's creation in Godlikeness included the ability to choose between right and wrong, and that thus human beings were made morally responsible; that through the fall of Adam they became depraved so that they cannot now turn and prepare themselves by their own natural strength and works to faith and calling upon God.

Godlikeness and moral responsibility: (Genesis 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 28:1-3; Micah 6:8)

Natural inability: (Psalms 14:1-4; Romans 3:10-12; 7:14-25)

Free grace and works of faith: (Romans 5:6-8; Ephesians 2:4-10; Colossians 1:21-23)

## **VIII. Repentance**

**8.** We believe the Spirit of God gives to all who will repent the gracious help of penitence of heart and hope of mercy, that they may believe unto pardon and spiritual life. Repentance, which is a sincere and thorough change of the mind in regard to sin, involving a sense of personal guilt and a voluntary turning away from sin, is demanded of all who have by act or purpose become sinners against God.

We believe that all persons may fall from grace and apostatize and, unless they repent of their sins, be hopelessly and eternally lost. We believe that regenerate persons need not return to sin but may live in unbroken fellowship with God through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit who bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God. (*2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 55:6-7; Ezekiel 33:14-16*)

## **IX. Justification, Regeneration, and Adoption**

**9.** We believe that justification is the gracious and judicial act of God by which He grants full pardon of all guilt and complete release from the penalty of sins committed, and acceptance as righteous, to all who believe on Jesus Christ and receive Him as Lord and Savior.

**9.1.** We believe that regeneration, or the new birth, is that gracious work of God whereby the moral nature of the repentant believer is spiritually quickened and given a distinctively spiritual life, capable of faith, love, and obedience.

**9.2.** We believe that adoption is that gracious act of God by which the justified and regenerated believer is constituted a child of God.

**9.3.** We believe that justification, regeneration, and adoption are simultaneous in the experience of seekers after God and are received by faith, preceded by repentance; and that to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness. (*John 1:12-13; Romans 3:21-26; 8:15-17; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:16-21; Titus 3:4-7*)

## **X. Christian Holiness and Entire Sanctification**

**10.** We believe that sanctification is the work of God which transforms believers into the likeness of Christ. It is wrought by God's grace through the Holy Spirit in initial sanctification, or regeneration (simultaneous with justification), entire sanctification, and the continued perfecting work of the Holy Spirit culminating in glorification. In glorification we are fully conformed to the image of the Son.

We believe that entire sanctification is that act of God, subsequent to regeneration, by which believers are made free from original sin, or depravity, and brought into a state of entire devotement to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect.

It is wrought by the baptism with or infilling of the Holy Spirit, and comprehends in one experience the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, empowering the believer for life and service. Entire sanctification is provided by the

blood of Jesus, is wrought instantaneously by grace through faith, preceded by entire consecration; and to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness.

This experience is also known by various terms representing its different phases, such as “Christian perfection,” “perfect love,” “heart unity,” “the baptism with or infilling of the Holy Spirit,” “the fullness of the blessing,” and “Christian holiness.”

**10.1.** We believe that there is a marked distinction between a pure heart and a mature character. The former is obtained in an instant, the result of entire sanctification; the latter is the result of growth in grace.

We believe that the grace of entire sanctification includes the divine impulse to grow in grace as a Christlike disciple. However, this impulse must be consciously nurtured, and careful attention given to the requisites and processes of spiritual development and improvement in Christlikeness of character and personality. Without such purposeful endeavor, one’s witness may be impaired and the grace itself frustrated and ultimately lost.

Participating in the means of grace, especially the fellowship, disciplines, and sacraments of the Church, believers grow in grace and in wholehearted love to God and neighbor. (Ezekiel 36:25-28; Romans 6:11-14; 12:1-2; 12:9-21; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 3:14-21; Philippians 2:1-16; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8)

## **XI. The Church**

We believe in the Church, the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, the covenant people of God made new in Christ, the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

God calls the Church to express its life in the unity and fellowship of the Spirit; in worship through the preaching of the Word, observance of the sacraments, and ministry in His name; by obedience to Christ, holy living, and mutual accountability.

The mission of the Church in the world is to share in the redemptive and reconciling ministry of Christ in the power of the Spirit. The Church fulfills its mission by making disciples through evangelism, education, showing compassion, working for justice, and bearing witness to the kingdom of God.

The Church is a historical reality, which organizes itself in culturally conditioned forms; exists both as local congregations and as a universal body; sets apart persons called of God for specific ministries. God calls the Church to live under His rule in anticipation of the consummation at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (*Matthew 16:13-19; 28:19-20; Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:1-16; Hebrews 10:19-25; 1 Peter 2:9-12*)

## **XII. Baptism**

**12.** We believe that Christian baptism, commanded by our Lord, is a sacrament signifying acceptance of the benefits of the atonement and incorporation into the Body of Christ. Baptism is a means of grace proclaiming faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. It is to be administered to believers indicating their full purpose of obedience in holiness and righteousness. As participants in the new covenant, young children and the morally innocent may be baptized upon request of parents or guardians. The church shall give assurance of Christian training. Baptism may be administered by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. (*Matthew 28:16-20; Romans 6:3-10; Galatians 3:26-28; 1 Peter 3:18-22*)

## **XIII. The Lord's Supper**

**13.** We believe that the Communion Supper instituted by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is a sacrament, proclaiming His life, sufferings, sacrificial death, resurrection, and the hope of His coming again. The Lord's Supper is a means of grace in which Christ is present by the Spirit. All are invited to participate by faith in Christ and be renewed in life, salvation, and in unity as the Church. All are to come in reverent appreciation of its significance, and by it show forth the Lord's death until He comes. Those who have faith in Christ and love for the saints are invited by Christ to participate as often as possible. (*Exodus 12:1-14; Matthew 26:26-29; John 6:28-58; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32*)

## **XIV. Divine Healing**

**14.** We believe in the biblical doctrine of divine healing and urge our people to offer the prayer of faith for the healing of the sick. We also believe God heals through the means of medical science. (*Psalms 103:1-5; Matthew 4:23-25; James 5:13-16*)

## **XV. Second Coming of Christ**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again; that we who are alive at His coming shall not precede them that are asleep in Christ Jesus; but that, if we are abiding in Him, we shall be caught up with the risen saints to meet the Lord in the air, so that we shall ever be with the Lord.

(*John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Peter 3:3-14; Revelation 22:7-17*)

## **XVI. Resurrection, Judgment, and Destiny**

**16.** We believe in the resurrection of the dead, that the bodies both of the just and of the unjust shall be raised to life and united with their spirits— "they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

**16.1.** We believe in future judgment in which every person shall appear before God to be judged according to his or her deeds in this life.

**16.2.** We believe that glorious and everlasting life is assured to all who savingly believe in, and obediently follow, Jesus Christ our Lord; and that the finally impenitent shall suffer eternally in hell. (*Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 2:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Revelation 20:11-15*)

## **AGREED STATEMENT OF BELIEF/CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**

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**We believe** in one God-the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**We believe** that the Old and New Testament Scriptures, given by plenary inspiration, contain all truth necessary to faith and Christian living.



**We believe** that man is born with a fallen nature, and is, therefore, inclined to evil, and that continually.

**We believe** that the finally impenitent are hopelessly and eternally lost.

**We believe** that the atonement through Jesus Christ is for the whole human race;

and that whosoever repents and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is justified and regenerated and saved from the dominion of sin.

**We believe** that believers are to be sanctified wholly, subsequent to regeneration,

through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**We believe** that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the new birth, and also to the entire

sanctification of believers.

**We believe** that our Lord will return, the dead will be raised, and the final judgment will take place.