

## Benjamin Cooley and Family Doctrinal Statement

**\*The Scriptures**—We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the holy, inerrant, infallible, inspired, and preserved Word of God. God’s Word is verbally and plenary inspired and is true from beginning to end. The Scriptures are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and for instruction in righteousness. The Scriptures are the final authority for faith and practice and should be interpreted according to their normal, grammatical, and historical meaning. The full revelation of God to man is contained in the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments and we believe that God has faithfully preserved his Word in the Masoretic Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek Received Text of the New Testament. The accuracy and legitimacy of all Bible translations shall be judged by this standard. We also believe it has been preserved unto the present day for English-speaking people in the 1611 Authorized or King James Version of the Bible. We are aware that the King James which most of us use was updated for spelling in 1769, although some may carry the original 1611. (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:20-21; Isa. 40:8; Psalm 12:6-7; Psalm 119:89)

**\*Dispensationalism**—We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man’s responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations – law, grace, and the kingdom – are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; Jn. 1:17; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10, 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6)

**\*The Godhead**—We believe in one triune God Who exists eternally in three persons. The three persons of the Godhead are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Each person of the Godhead is co-equal, co-eternal, and co-existent in all attributes, perfections, and power. (Psalm 90:2; Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14; I John 5:7)

**\*The Person and Work of the Father**—We believe in God the Father, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, and measureless in power. We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all that come to Him through the Lord Jesus Christ. We emphasize the Father’s will and desire for all men to be saved, and to bring to revelation and consummation the eternal purposes of God in His dear son, even Jesus Christ our Lord. (Genesis 1:1; 17:1; Exodus 6:3; Deuteronomy 4:35; Psalm 90:2; 139:7-10; Isaiah 40:28; John 4:24; 6:44; Gal. 1:3-5; Eph. 3:8-12; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; 1 John 1:5)

**\*The Person and Work of Christ**—We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, the Messiah of Israel, and the Savior of the world who became man without ceasing to be God. (John 1:1-2, 14; John 1:41; John 3:17; I John 4:14; Phil. 2:5-8)

Christ was sent by the Father into the world to do the will of God. He was born of the virgin Mary being conceived in her womb by the Holy Ghost. He is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Jesus took upon Himself humanity without ceasing to be God. Christ took not upon Himself sinful flesh, but the likeness of sinful flesh. Jesus Christ knew no sin, did no sin, is without sin, and in Him is no sin. He lived a pure and sinless life on this earth doing only and always those things that pleased the Father. He fully accomplished the work that the Father sent Him to do. Christ came into the world to reveal God and redeem sinners and He accomplished our redemption by His death on the cross and through His shed blood. He died as a substitutionary sacrifice for every sinner and as an offering for sin to God: He is therefore the propitiation for our sins. Upon being taken off the cross, Christ was buried, but on the third day He rose from the dead and proceeded to show Himself alive to His followers.

## Benjamin Cooley and Family Doctrinal Statement

Forty days after His resurrection the Lord Jesus ascended back to the Father in Heaven and sat down on the right hand of God being exalted, where He now carries out His ministry as our Great High Priest, yea, as our Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate. (I John 4:14; John 6:38; Matt. 1:18-25; Gal. 4:4-5; I Tim. 3:16; Col. 1:19; Col. 2:9; Rom. 8:3; II Cor. 5:21; I Pet. 2:22; Heb. 4:16; I John 3:5; John 8:29; John 4:34; John 17:4; I Tim. 1:15; Rom. 5:8; I Cor. 15:3; Isa. 53:5-10; Eph. 1:7; I John 2:2; Rom. 3:25-26; Heb. 2:9; Luke 23:50-53; I Cor. 15:4; Acts 13:30; Rom. 1:4; Acts 1:3-9; Phil. 2:9-11; I Tim. 2:5; Rom. 8:34; I John 2:1-2)

**\*The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**—We believe in the deity of the Holy Spirit and that He is a person and not an inanimate force. The Holy Spirit along with the Word of God is the Agent in regeneration. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment and draws a sinner to Christ. He brings light and understanding into the darkened mind of the sinner through the Word of God, and particularly through the glorious gospel of Christ. The moment that God saves a sinner the Holy Spirit indwells that individual, baptizes them into the body of Christ, and seals the believer unto the day of redemption. He is the divine Teacher and Comforter of the saints and empowers us to live a victorious Christian life and serve the Lord. Every believer should be filled with the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, be led of the Spirit, bear the fruit of the Spirit, and thus be living in Him. (I John 5:7; John 3:3-8; Jn. 16:7-11; Jn. 6:44; Ps. 119:130; II Cor. 4:3-6; Eph. 1:13; I Cor. 12:13; I Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 4:32; Jn. 14:16-18; Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16-26; Acts 1:8)

**\*Man**—We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and that man is now totally depraved, and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. We do not mean *total inability* when we say that we believe in the *total depravity* of man. This is one of the fallacies of Calvinism. God certainly made man with a free will, and the ability to choose or reject the free offer of full salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image and is mindful of him, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every individual possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:1-23; Matt. 23:37; Jn. 5:39-40; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; Eph. 2:1-3, 12; Psalm 8:4-9; Col. 3:9-11)

**\*Salvation and the Eternal Security of the Believer**—We believe that salvation is the gift of God and is wholly by the grace of God. God's gift of salvation is received by repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Once the Savior is received the believer is kept eternally secure in Christ Jesus by the power of God. (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Acts 20:21; I Pet. 1:5; Rom. 8:1; John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:28-30)

**\*Repentance and Faith**—True repentance is a change of mind about God, and sin, and self that *results in* a change of life and it is vividly illustrated in the Prodigal Son. As we believe in the convicting work of the Holy Ghost in the lives of sinners, we also believe that through this divine reproof He will cause the sinner to recognize his sinful condition and sense the shame thereof, thereby confronting a man's free will in order to bring sorrow over his sin. At this point, the sinner now sees that he is guilty before God and justly condemned under the wrath of God. As one admits his sin, he soon comes to abhor his sin, for there is a godly sorrow not to be repented of that worketh repentance to salvation. This godly sorrow is quite different from the sorrow of this world that only works death. The sinner can now choose to turn to God from his sin and believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, or he can remain in the darkness of sin and unbelief by rejecting Christ Jesus our Lord. Repentance then involves more than man's intellect and emotion; it must also involve man's will. While repentance is not salvation, no man is truly saved apart from repentance. It is a biblical doctrine that must be preached if souls are to be warned and won to Christ and must be included in the foundation of the life of any Christian. It is so imperative because no man can

## Benjamin Cooley and Family Doctrinal Statement

come to faith in Christ who has not first come to repentance. While repentance and faith are not the same, they are like two sides of the same coin and saving faith will follow sincere repentance. No one will truly believe upon Christ who has not first repented. Paul testified to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus taught that men must repent that they might believe. Saving Faith, like repentance is a matter of the whole man. Any repentant sinner, who in mind and heart comes to Christ can call out of his own free will and believe in his own heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead, in order to be saved. Such faith is believing and trusting the Lord to save you knowing that you cannot save yourself. We believe also in the evidence of salvation: biblical repentance and faith always lead to a change of life which manifests itself in one's desires, deeds, direction, etc. being made new. (Luke 15:18-19; Jn. 16:7-11; Jn. 1:11-13; Jn. 5:39-40; Acts 20:21; I Thess. 1:9-10; II Cor. 7:9-11; Heb. 6:1-2; Acts 20:21; Mt. 21:32; Jn. 6:37; Rom. 10:8-13; Eph. 2:8-9; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Jam. 2:17-18; Eph. 4:17-24).

**\*The Church**—First, we believe the Church is the building of God, the body of Christ, and the bride of Christ. We believe that every born-again person is a member of the church which is His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. The Body of Christ is a singular Church which is both **spiritual and literal**. We do not embrace a universal church of all faiths. However, there is a real and literal Body of Christ made up of true believers extending from the time after Christ's Resurrection and will be completed just prior to the Rapture. No local church can fully embody this, and placement into Christ's body has nothing to do with water baptism. It is rather a spiritual unity with the Head, even Christ, through a spiritual baptism performed by the Holy Spirit placing us in Him (Romans 6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Col. 2:10-12).

The second aspect we believe is that of the church being both **visible and local**. The New Testament usage of the word church most often refers to **a local assembly** of believers gathered together to worship the Lord Jesus Christ and function as a body in His will and for His glory. Therefore, to be in our proper place in the Body of Christ, and to serve God in this day and age as we live among the peoples of the world, every believer in Christ should be a faithful and active member of **a local New Testament Church**. Paul wrote to the believers at the church in Corinth and said, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many" (1 Cor. 12:12-14). Paul wrote again to the church in Corinth, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Cor. 12:27). In this one chapter we can see both the spiritual Church which is Christ's body and the visible assembly of saints or the local Church. Therefore, we are "local-church only" in practice. It is impossible to say, "I am part of the Body of Christ," yet there is no visible body to which you belong and with whom you can worship the Head, even our Lord Jesus Christ. We reject this modern and contemporary idea that bypasses the local Church. We also reject Baptist successionism, Baptist Briderism, Local Church only movement (a movement that denies the reality of Christ's Body, which stands yet to be completed at the Rapture, and which is presently being formed as the Church is being called out in this dispensation), Para-church movement, Mega-church movement, House-church movement, and any other movement which tears down the family and the local church.

We believe then that a **New Testament Independent Baptist Church** is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of Scriptural faith and fellowship in the Gospel; said church being understood to be the citadel and custodian of Divine and Eternal things: and existing to glorify God, observe the ordinances of Christ, and carry out the Great commission; being governed by the laws of Christ and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; its officers of ordination are pastors or elders, and deacons whose qualifications, claims, and duties are laid out clearly in the Holy Scriptures.

## Benjamin Cooley and Family Doctrinal Statement

(Eph. 1:17-23; 2:19-22; I Cor. 12:12-14; Rev. 19:7-9; Rev. 21:2; 9; Rev. 22:17; Eph. 5:30; Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; II Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:32; Acts 8:1; Acts 13:1; I Th. 1:1; Acts 9:31; Acts 15:41; Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 16:1; Rev. 1:4; Rev. 1:11; Heb. 10:24-26; Acts 2:41-47; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1:5-7).

**\*The Ordinances of the Local Church**—We believe there are only two ordinances of the local church—baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These two ordinances were commanded by the Lord Jesus and observed by the early church as recorded in the New Testament. Both ordinances are for believers only and in no way add to one’s salvation. They are commanded of the Lord and should be observed in loving obedience to Him. Baptism is by immersion and is a symbol of the believer’s union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and needs to only occur once in a believer’s life. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial of the Lord’s broken body and shed blood and is to be kept throughout a believer’s lifetime. In the Lord’s Supper we look back and remember our Savior’s death and we also look forward expecting His return. (Matt. 28:19; 26:26-30; Acts 2:41-42; 20:7; I Cor. 11:23-26)

**\*The Officers of the Local Church**—The Bible mentions but two officers for the local church: the pastor and deacon (Php. 1:1). These two are the only necessary and biblically required officers for the local church. These positions are to be held by men only. They are to be prayerfully considered, then chosen, and finally called by the congregation themselves according to the will of God.

**I. The Office of a Pastor:** He is to shepherd and lead the flock of God.

**A. His Description: (Acts 20:17-28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)**- There are three English words in the New Testament to describe the office of a Pastor: pastor, bishop, and elder. They are interwoven and form one pattern that makes up the portrait of the pastor and his office in the church. As a pastor, the man of God is to feed and care for the people as a *shepherd* does his flock. As a bishop, the man of God is to oversee and superintend like an *administrator*. As an elder, the man of God is to exhibit wisdom and maturity like a *ruler*. The Bible describes how he is to rule in several passages. He is to rule with doctrine and morality in mind (Heb. 13:7). He is to rule with his own accountability in mind (Heb. 13:17). Finally, he is to rule with the people in mind (Heb. 13:24). A man that rules like this is to be saluted and well respected by the congregation. The character of true ministry is capsulized in the second chapter of 1 Thessalonians.

**B. His Qualification: (1 Timothy 3:1-7)**- The office includes certain necessities or qualifications with it. These are listed in detail in the third chapter of Timothy and briefly mentioned in Titus 1:5-9.

**C. His Responsibility:** The responsibilities of the pastor revolve around the Word of God and prayer (Acts 6:2-4). He is to preach (2 Tim. 4:1-5; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Acts 20:28), to teach (Eph. 4:11), to rule (1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17), to labor in the Lord’s work (1 Thess. 5:12-13), to pray (Acts 6:4; James 5:14-16), to edify the saints (Eph. 4:12), and to evangelize the lost (2 Tim. 4:5). As he is called to shepherd, he must care for the flock and therefore will go in and out before the people so as to visit them, pray with them, instruct them, admonish them, and care for them (Jam. 1:27).

**II. The Office of a Deacon:** He is to serve and assist the flock of God.

**A. His Description: (1 Tim. 3:7; Acts 6:2)**- The Greek word which is translated as deacon in 1 Timothy means “an attendant or waiter.” It is translated as deacon, minister, and servant. The word *serve* in Acts 6:2 comes from the Greek word translated deacon. To serve means to “be an attendant, i.e. wait upon (mentally or as a host, friend, or (figuratively) teacher); technically, to act as a Christian deacon.” So then, a deacon is a servant of the Lord and a servant to the local church.

**B. His Qualification: (1 Tim. 3:8-13; Acts 6:1-8)**- There are also certain qualifications for deacons.

**C. His Responsibility: (1 Tim. 3:8; Acts 6:1-8)**- The responsibilities of the deacon involve being a *support to the pastor* and a *servant to the people*.

## Benjamin Cooley and Family Doctrinal Statement

**\*The Autonomy of the Local Church**—By this we mean that each local church is a sovereign assembly in and of itself and cannot be controlled by any hierarchy, or any other church. The word autonomy signifies the power or right of self-government, whether in a city which elects its own magistrates and makes its own laws, or in an individual who lives according to his own will; but in our case, we are talking about a local church which is autonomous and answering to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

**I. The Local Church is Sovereign in its Operation** (Acts 15:1-31).

**II. The Local Church is Sovereign in its Election of Officers** (Acts 6:1-7).

**III. The Local Church is Sovereign in its Selection of Missionaries** (Acts 13:1-4).

**IV. The Local Church is Sovereign in its Correction of Members** (Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Thess. 3:14-16).

**V. The Local Church is under the Sovereignty of the Holy Spirit** (Acts 15:8, 28; Acts 6:3, 5; Acts 13:2, 4; 1 Cor. 5:4; 2 Thess. 3:16).

**\*The Discipline of the Local Church**—We believe it is a biblical mandate for every local assembly to be careful to maintain the purity of the congregation and uphold reverence for God and His holiness. Biblical church discipline is the local church acting in obedience to God's Word, and in love and unity, seeking to convert a sinning saint, from the error of his way, to the end that he might see his sin as sin, and thus repent, and be reconciled to his brother, recovered from his sin, and restored to the fellowship of the saints which is most holy and beloved of the Lord. Discipline is a matter of love—love for God, love for holiness, love for the truth, love for Christ's testimony in the church, love for the brethren, and love for the unsaved who are observing the church's testimony. (Matt. 18:15-17; 2Cor. 12:20-13:3; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Thess. 3:14-16; 1Tim. 1:18-20; 6:1-5; 2Tim. 2:16-18; Tit.1:10-14; Tit.3:10-11)

**\*The Membership of the Local Church**—We believe that only those who show evidence of the new birth, and God's work of faith with power and grace to be real in their lives should be admitted into the membership of the local church. They will be manifestly penitent, believing, regenerate persons. The church must carefully guard the doors of church membership and take care that the assembly only admits truly born again believers. Only those who have a genuine profession of faith, and a genuine desire for baptism, and a genuine agreement with the doctrines and teachings of the church are to be taken into its membership. (Acts 2:41-47; Rom. 15:1; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 2:8-10; 1Thess. 1:1-10; 1 Pet. 2:9-12; Titus 2:11-14)

**\*The Mission of the Local Church**—We believe that the local church exists to glorify God. Obedience to the Great Commission, which is the command of Christ to the Church to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every person, will bring glory to God. Christ laid out the plan that we are to go, evangelize, baptize the converts, and then teach the Word of God to the new believers. Also, it is clear from the New Testament that the work of the missionary is to establish local churches, and then it is the work of those local churches to continue in obedience to the Great Commission. (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Lk. 24:46-48; Jn. 20:1-23; Acts 1:8; Acts 13-20; Rom. 1:5; 2 Cor. 5:18-21)

**\*Spiritual Gifts**—We believe that the Holy Spirit has given gifts to individual believers and also to the church for the training of believers, for the ministry of the Gospel and for Christian Service. We believe that special gifts were given to the early church to meet a need in the church at that time, since the whole of God's written Revelation had not yet been completed. These special gifts were the gifts of tongues, healing, and prophecy. We also call them sign gifts. The gift of speaking in tongues (languages) was a gift to be used as a sign to the unbeliever, especially the Jew. The gift of prophecy was for believers before the

## Benjamin Cooley and Family Doctrinal Statement

completion of the New Testament. The gift of healing was given to some before the New Testament was completed and individuals could be healed by faith, believing in God's revealed promises. We do not believe that the gifts of tongues, prophecy, and healing are in effect in our day, and we strongly oppose the charismatic movement and believe that all things are to be done decently and in order among the churches of God. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-11; 13:8; 14:22; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 14:40)

**\*Creation**—We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11)

**\*Israel**—We believe that Israel is God's covenant people, and though they have been set aside, God will take up dealings again with the Jews in the Tribulation in preparation for the Kingdom rule of Christ upon the Earth. Israel has not been replaced by the church. We reject Replacement Theology and believe that the Jews, Gentiles, and the church of God are to be considered distinct in order to rightly divide the Word of Truth. (Rom. 9-11; Rev. 12-18; 1 Cor. 10:32)

**\*The Personality of Satan**—We believe that Satan is a person as the Bible attributes the capacities of a person to him. He is a created being and was once Lucifer, the anointed cherub, but he rose up in pride against God and was judged and separated from God. He does, however, still have access to heaven. Satan is the enemy of God and all men. He is the father of both lies and sinners and is the god of this world. Satan is very powerful, but he is a defeated foe and will ultimately be cast into the lake of fire to endure the righteous judgment of God for eternity. (Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:11-15; Job 1:6; Gen. 3:1-7; Rev. 20:8; John 8:44; Eph. 2:2-3; II Cor. 4:3-4; Rev. 20:10)

**\*The Eternal State**—We believe in the eternal state of both believers and unbelievers. All believers will forever be with the Lord in Heaven in conscious bliss. All unbelievers will forever be separated from God in Hell and the Lake of Fire under the righteous judgment of God in conscious torment. (John 14:1-3; I Thess. 4:17; Rev. 21:1-7; 22:1-5; Psalm 9:17; Luke 16:19-31; Rev. 20:14-15)

**\*The Second Coming of Christ**—We believe the Second Coming of Christ consists of two phases. First, there is the rapture of the Church which is the personal and imminent return of Christ for His Church prior to the Tribulation. Second, and after the Tribulation period Christ will visibly and powerfully return to the earth with His saints to establish His earthly Kingdom and rule for 1,000 years. We are therefore Pre-Millennial in our eschatological doctrine and teaching. We believe that biblical prophecy should be interpreted in its normal and literal sense unless noted otherwise by the context. (I Thess. 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Acts 1:11; Rev. 19:11-16; Zech. 14:4-11)

**\*The Millennium**—We believe the Millennium is the literal kingdom and rule of Jesus Christ upon the earth. Christ will establish His earthly kingdom, which will last for one thousand years, upon returning to the earth with His saints after the Tribulation period. (Ps. 2; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 14:1-9; Rev. 19:11-16; Rev. 20:1-6)

**\*Ecclesiastical Separation**—We believe that we are not to fellowship with "churches" or organizations that hold to doctrine contrary to the teaching of God's Holy Scriptures. In writing to the Romans in chapter 16 Paul mentioned several believers and then he mentioned local churches collectively. It is clear from this passage and other passages (II Cor. 8) that there was fellowship and partnership between the local churches

## Benjamin Cooley and Family Doctrinal Statement

in the New Testament, but they were instructed to mark and avoid those whose doctrine was corrupt (Rom. 16:1-18; II Jn. 9-11). The believer must reject and separate from any and all forms of religious apostasy.

**I. The Ecumenical Movement**—We believe the Ecumenical Movement to be a religious movement which seeks to bring all “faiths” and “religions” into unity with one another. It is unscriptural and is not of God. As with ecclesiastical separation we are to mark and avoid such persons or organizations that are involved in this movement. The Bible teaches there is “one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:4-6). The unity of the Ecumenical Movement is false and is not the unity the Word of God teaches. We are to continue in and contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints (II Tim. 3; Jude 3). We hold to the Word of God and reject the Ecumenical Movement.

**II. The Charismatic Movement**—We believe the Charismatic Movement is an interdenominational movement emphasizing the gifts of the Spirit, the baptism of the Spirit, divine healings, and prophecies. There are certainly other teachings that they hold to, but the afore mentioned seem to be areas they greatly emphasize. Their teachings are erroneous and contrary to the Word of God. We hold to the truth of God’s Word and reject the Charismatic Movement and its teachings.

**III. Neo-Evangelicalism**—We believe that Neo-Evangelicalism is a movement that takes a low view of Scripture, is very tolerant of and open towards liberalism, and is ecumenical in its evangelistic efforts. There are certainly other aspects to this movement. A few examples we know of are their lack of ecclesiastical separation and personal separation, their emphasis upon a “social gospel,” an open attitude toward science, and an emphasis upon intellectualism. We reject the teachings of this movement and hold to the truth of God’s Word.

**IV. Neo-Orthodoxy**—We believe that Neo-Orthodoxy is a movement that started among liberal Protestant denominations. They sought to re-establish what the Protestant reformers taught. Neo-Orthodoxy uses terms that are orthodox, but they have re-defined these terms. This movement denies the inspiration and inerrancy of the Word of God and views the Bible as only a means of revelation. They make truth to be a matter of relevancy to one’s own experience and wrongly interpret the Bible by one’s experience. Truth within this movement is not objective, but subjective. Another element of this movement is mysticism. We reject Neo-Orthodoxy and its teachings and hold to our Lord’s precious Word that endureth forever. We must try our experiences by the doctrines of God and of Christ within the Written Word and not try our doctrine by our experiences.

**V. Anti-Biblical and Extra-Biblical Doctrine**—We believe in testing all things by the standard of “Thus saith the Lord” or “As it is written.” There are so many other “isms” that we reject that it would be almost impossible to mention them all. However, we believe in rightly dividing the word of truth and therefore also reject such teaching as “Calvinism, easy-believism or only-believism, ultra-dispensationalism, Unitarianism, Universalism, the doctrine of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and many more.”

**\*Personal Separation**—We believe that the individual believer is called out of this world, that he might be conformed to the image of Christ day by day as the Spirit of God sanctifies him through the Truth. We have received a calling that makes us a holy people, a heavenly people, and His people and should therefore walk worthy of our vocation and calling. We who were sometimes darkness are now light in the Lord and should walk as children of light and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. It is a scriptural requirement to abstain from participation in worldly activities, attitudes, attire, amusements, and associations. We must abstain from all appearance of evil! God’s people have been called unto lives of personal and practical holiness. Holiness is worked into our lives by the sanctifying work of God’s Spirit, God’s grace, and God’s Word. We believe in leading a Christian life through a vital and living relationship with God’s dear Son, through the indwelling person of the Holy Ghost; this will result in a visibly different

## Benjamin Cooley and Family Doctrinal Statement

life from the unsaved world around us. (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Rom. 6:1-8:39; Rom. 12:1-3; John 17:1-19; Eph 1:4-6; 2:4-7; 3:1-7, 13-21; 4:1-5:21; 1 Thess. 5:22; 1 Thess. 4:7-8; 1 Pet. 1:13-16; Rom. 14:17-18)

**\*Sanctification**—We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner: first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the believer as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return. We reject any teaching which is a form of "sinless perfectionism." (Jn. 17:17; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 5:25,26,27; 1 Thess. 4:3,4; 5:23,24; Heb. 10:10-14; 13:12; 1 Jn. 1:5-10; 1 Jn. 2:1-2)

**\*Human Sexuality**—We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe in only two genders, male and female, as taught in Holy Scripture. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman until death do them part. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

**\*Family Relationships**—We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12). We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, through consistent lifestyle example, and appropriate discipline including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

**\*Abortion**—We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the un-justified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder! We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

**\*Civil Government**—We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: the home, the church, and the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and should be governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph.5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

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**\*The Standard of Living by the Book**—We believe that man is to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4). It was the practice of the Early Church to judge everything by the Scripture: Acts 1:20 with Ps.69:25 (the Psalms); Acts 7:42 with Am.5:25-26 and Acts 15:15 with Am.9:11-12 (the Prophets); Acts 23:5 with Ex.22:28 (the Law). Should not we also be doing the same? Therefore, we must order our lives, homes, and churches by the Scriptures if we are to please God. This is how each believer should live his or her life. We should always ask this question in every situation and circumstance of life that comes our way—**What saith the Scripture?** We should find *where* is it written, learn what it means, and then obey what it says! Once this question can be answered, here is how we are to proceed with our lives:

**I. First—I am to live by a Personal Relationship to the Lord!** Rom. 14:17 – “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” We must walk with God! Then Ask:

**II. Second—Am I to live by Precept here? (Biblical Convictions)** There are certain commands which are clear and unmistakable! “Thou shalt (not)...This do...Be...Beware.” If not, then Ask:

**III. Third—Am I to live by Principle here? (Spiritual Convictions)** The principles are always governed by the precepts. We do not bend or break precepts in the name of principle. e.g. “Abstain from all appearance of evil?”; “Evil communications corrupt good manners”; “Do all to the glory of God”. If not, then Ask:

**IV. Fourth—Am I to live by Persuasion here? (Personal Convictions)** The persuasions are always governed by the principles. And there are particular principles that govern our personal liberties, convictions, and persuasions in Rom. 14, 1 Cor. 8 & 10. We do not bend or break principles in the name of persuasion or liberty and conscience. Even here we must be able to answer questions such as: Am I convinced within? Am I condemned within? Am I considerate of my brother? Am I conceited? Am I charitable? Am I Conscious of my Lord? Am I Careful as I am accountable unto him? We do believe in the liberty of the believer as he stands in Christ and has been set free; however, liberty must never be used for an occasion to the flesh, but as an opportunity of love to serve one another. Most of what is called Christian liberty today, is nothing but self-indulgence and an excuse to run straight to the world in the name of conscience and liberty. Such is a misuse and abuse of Christian liberty and disgraceful to the Holy name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**V. Always—I am to live by a Personal Accountability to the Lord!** Our personal accountability to Christ is to govern all that we do and say. It should have a direct influence upon our lives. We will all appear before Him and answer individually to Him (Rom.14:12; 1 Cor.3:8-15; 2Cor. 5:8-11).

**\*The Authority of the Scriptures**—I emphasize again, we believe The Holy Scriptures to be our Sole and Sufficient Authority for all matters of faith and practice. To put it in the words of a dear missionary, Bro. Bob Patenaude: “The Scriptures will be our final authority and our first consideration.” To that I say, Amen! Again, we hold to the KJV as God’s preserved Word for English speaking people and it is the only Bible that I will study, teach, and preach from, and allow within the church.

**I. Our Salvation:** “according to the Scriptures” (1Cor.15:3-4 & Ps. 22; Isa.53)

**II. Our Service:** “as it is written” (Rom.10:14-15 & Isa 52:7)

**III. Our Sanctification:** “because it is written” (1Pet.1:16 & Lev.11:44)

**IV. Our Separation:** “saith the Lord” (2Cor.6:17-18 & Isa 52:11)

**V. Our Submission:** “For it is written” (Rom.14:11 & Isa.45:23)