

WHAT I BELIEVE AND WONDER ABOUT

Guides for Describing and Defining

Note: Persons who have been Christians all of their lives continue to grow in their understanding of the ideas and beliefs listed here. What is important is to begin to understand and be willing to grow in further God-given knowledge.

1. BAPTISM: An act to show we are sorry for past sins. In baptism God blesses the one who is baptized. It may be done by immersion, pouring or sprinkling. It does not need to be repeated. Acts 2:37-42.

2. THE BIBLE: God's Holy word to all people. A book of smaller books; written by many people over many years. The writing was inspired by God. 2 Timothy 3: 16-17.

3. CHURCH: All those who believe in Christ and are held together by their love for God and one another. Christ is the head of the church. Also "church" means the building where people worship. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.

4. COMMUNION: Sometimes called the Lord's Supper or Eucharist (that means giving thanks). It reminds us of Jesus' giving his life for ours. It is a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ and a token of love and union which Christians have with Christ and with one another. It can be solemn or joyful. Luke 22:17-20.

5. CONVERSION: Change, especially turning away from our sinful ways and turning to God. When we are willing to change, God makes that change possible through the Holy Spirit. It does not mean we will never sin again. Mark 1: 14-15.

6. DISCIPLESHIP: Following Christ the Lord and living for him. This comes after conversion and means our being Christ-like and sharing what God has done in our lives, with others. Matthew 16:24-25 and 28:18-20.

7. FAITH: Believing in something or someone so much that you are willing to trust yourself to that thing or person. Faith in Christ means following and trusting even when we don't see any evidence of Christ. Hebrews 11:1-3.

8. FORGIVENESS: Choosing not to hold anything against someone for what the person has done. It does not mean we have to forget what the person did. Matthew 6: 14-15, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 and Luke 23: 33-34.

9. GOD: Creator of the world who has no beginning and no end. God is all-knowing and all-good. There is only One true and living God. God is love and loves all people. Genesis 1, John 1.

10. GRACE: Getting something good when you don't deserve it. When God forgives us, it is through God's grace that is done. Ephesians 2: 8-9.

11. HOLY SPIRIT (GHOST): Although we can not see the Spirit of God (Holy Spirit), we can feel the effects of the Holy Spirit's work. The Spirit is to guide us, comfort us and help us remember what we have been taught to do. The Spirit can not be separated from God: they are one. John 18:25-26 and John 4:24

12. JESUS CHRIST: God made visible to human beings, by taking on human nature--yet without sin. He was sent to earth so we could understand God better and we would know that God understands us better. Jesus died for our sins so that we might have eternal life. Hebrews 2:16-18 and 4:15 and John 14:10-14.

13. PRAYER: Talking with, and listening to God. There are different ways we can pray: praise, thanks, confession, intercession, as well as listening quietly for God to guide us. Matthew 6:5-15 and Luke 11: 1-4

14. SALVATION: Belief that repenting of our sins and accepting Jesus Christ as Savior saves us from the penalty which our sin deserves. Romans 6:22-23 and Ephesians 2: 8-9.

15. ETERNAL LIFE: Belief that in another form (spirit or soul) we will live forever, because of believing in Christ. John 10:28 and 11:25-26, and Romans 6:23

16. CHRISTIAN: One who believes in Christ, accepts Christ as Savior, and follows Christ's teachings. Acts 11:26.

17. REPENTANCE: Changing through the Holy Spirit of the direction of life for the better. A conscious turning from evil, disobedience, or sin to the living God in Christ. Matthew 4:17, Acts 17:30-31