

The basics . . .

The Bible is the inspired Word of God. We accept this by faith.

God's Word helps us recognize what sin is and how it separates us from God. It reminds us that everyone has sinned, and shows us the consequences.

God loves each person and wants everyone to be restored to the right relationship with Him. Since He is holy, sin must be dealt with, and it requires a perfect sacrifice. God provided a way for us, but we have the freedom to accept or deny the offer of a restored relationship. God loves us and wants everyone to be saved, but does not impose His will upon us. The offer came at a price—a once for all sacrifice of God's only Son. He arose from the grave on the third day and lives forever. He will return when we are not expecting Him to judge both the living and the dead.

God's gift of eternal salvation is given without any merit on our part, truly given by the grace of God, but without faith it is impossible to please God, and faith requires action on our part to accept God's gift.

This action on our part includes a change of heart that brings about a change

in direction—we call it repentance. The change is visible.

This change of heart and direction brings about a desire to be and do what God wants, but we can't do it on our own, or without being changed. Jesus taught that no one can see the kingdom of God without being born again. The first gospel message began to explain to the people what this involves—baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. Through baptism we are buried with Him in His death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Born again.

God expects us to grow as we live—to be faithful.

God adds to the Church—it is not by the vote of men. Those who are being saved continue to meet together with glad and sincere hearts.

The apostles' teaching, fellowship of believers, remembrance of the Lord through the Lord's Supper, and prayer were all a part of the church as it was first established. The first century epistles were preserved as a guide to help today's church

worship in the proper manner.

Christian churches and churches of Christ offer every believer the opportunity to be "Christians only," not bound by human authority. In order to achieve unity of the church, these congregations seek to restore first century principles to our worship. They call themselves Christians.