

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
FOR
APOSTOLIC FAITH FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL – LARGO, MD
1700 Ritchie Marlboro Road
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774
301-350-1772

What is a Policies and Procedures Manual?

An Organizational Policies and Procedures Manual is a reference guide to the functions and operations of the church. It lists routine duties and answers questions that arise as duties are performed. The procedure section gives step by step instructions for performing each task.

What Is A Policy?

A Policy is a statement that defines the authority required, boundaries set, responsibilities delegated, and guidelines, established to carry out a function of the AFFI. In other words, policies tell who does the task, why it is done, and, under what conditions it is done. Policies answer questions that arise during unique circumstances. Policies provide uniform treatment of a situation, thus achieving continuity of operation. Policies take personalities out of the picture. Decisions are based on the Organization policy not on the individual, and each situation is treated the same.

What Is A Procedure?

Procedures tell how a task is done. A detailed listing is made of each step taken to complete the process. A step by step description of the process is used to complete the job.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

The following comprise the scriptural beliefs of the AFFI and its members.

CREED, DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE

Our Creed, discipline, rules of order and doctrine in the word of God as taught and revealed by the Holy Ghost (John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:9-13). “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

As members of the Body of Christ, which is the true church (Ephesians 1:22-23), the “Word of God” declares but one way of entrance therein and that is “by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body” and that is a baptism of “Water and Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Galatians 3:26-28; Romans 6:3-4; John 3:3-5 and Acts 2:4, 38).

DOCTRINE

In doctrine discussions only, members of the Executive Board shall have a voice.

GOD’S RECORD OF MEMBERSHIP

The names of the members are kept on record in Heaven (Luke 10:20). For it is written, “The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there (Psalms 87:5-6). All must be “born of the water and Spirit” in this dispensation if they desire their names to be written in Heaven (See Hebrews 12:22-23). However, for the matter of legal record, we recommend that the name of everyone who is recognized as being subject to the rule of a local organization should be kept in the record of such congregation.

We have nothing to do with that, whatsoever, for thus saith the Lord, “whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I BLOT out of my book (Exodus 32:33). And again, “He that overcometh I will not BLOT out his name out of the book of life” (Revelation 3:5).

GOD’S STANDARD OF SALVATION

We earnestly contend for God’s standard of Salvation. In the Word of God, we can find nothing short of a Holy Spirit filled life with SIGNS following as on the day of Pentecost (Mark 16:16-17; Acts 2:4; 8:14-17; 9:17-18; 10:44, 48; 19:1-6. See Romans 12:1-2; Hebrews 12:14; Matthew 5:48; 1 Peter 15-16).

The only grounds upon which God will accept a sinner is repentance from the heart for the sins that he has committed. “A broken and a contrite heart, He will not despise” (Psalms 51:17). Jesus said that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in His name in all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24) and Peter fulfilled this command on the day of Pentecost (See Acts).

NEW BIRTH

Repentance and remission of sins. We believe that everyone must be born again to enter into the Kingdom of God (John 3:3-5). We further believe that to experience the new birth one must be baptized in water in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by immersion and be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Ghost) with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues as the Spirit of the Lord gives utterance. Jesus Himself sums all that he accomplished for us at Calvary in a statement after His resurrection; “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS should be preached in HIS NAME among ALL NATIONS (not just Jews), beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:46-47). Calvary made a universal plan of salvation for the nations (Gentiles); repentance and remission of sins was to be preached in His name, (Jesus) name: that it was to have its beginning at Jerusalem. Let us go to its starting point (Jerusalem) and see how salvation was obtained. Peter’s stinging indictment at Pentecost accused the nation of Israel of crucifying Christ (Acts 2:22-24). Those who were guilty asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said unto them “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38).

WATER BAPTISM

Water Baptism was administered “In the name of Jesus Christ; for this was the name given to our Savior before His birth for the purpose of saving His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21); for there is salvation in “none other name” (Acts 4:12) whereby we must be saved. The Apostles always administered baptism in His name from the day of Pentecost forward. There is no biblical record of one person ever being baptized as some believers are today, using the formula “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19). The reason why believers were baptized is because the Apostles knew the NAME of the FATHER, the NAME of the Son and the NAME of the HOLY Ghost. It can be seen that there is a single NAME for the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. If the NAME is one, then the person must be one (Zechariah 14:9). This is the one God to His creatures. As this has been said, He is “Father” in His relationship, His creation; He is “Son” in His redemptive role in saving the human element of His Creation; He is “Holy Ghost” in His sanctifying and preserving the indwelt believer; but His name is One – Jesus.

St. Paul believed that baptism should be administered in the Name of the one who was crucified for us (1 Corinthians 1:13). He held that “washing”, sanctifying, justifying was affected by the Name of the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Not only Jews at Pentecost (Acts 2:38), but Samaritans (Acts 8:16), Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:15-16). Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:43-48); the Ephesians (Acts 19: 1-7); the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 1:13) were all baptized in the NAME of the Lord Jesus. Without the NAME of Jesus, baptism does not carry the substantiation of Calvary. It can also be added that NO present-day Christian has been baptized unto “JOHN’S BAPTISM” (Matthew 3:11-12, Acts 19:4).

Baptism in the days of the Apostles was ALWAYS by immersion. The word “BAPTIZE” (baptizo) means “to make a thing dipped or dyed”. To “Immerse” for religious purposes; its various forms

(baptismos-the washing-the act as a fact) shows that only immersion was considered baptism. Mark records that Jesus “came up OUT OF THE WATER” (1:10). Luke writes that Philip and the eunuch “went DOWN INTO the water” and “came up OUT of the water” (Acts 8:38-39). Baptism is said by Paul to be a “burial with Christ”. We are buried with Him by baptism into death (Romans 6:4). The scriptures teach that Jesus was buried in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12:40). The earth was not sprinkled upon our Lord in His burial; but as Jonah was hid away in the belly of the whale; so our Lord was hid away by His burial. ONLY IMMERSION will justify the symbol used here. All of these “modes” of baptism (sprinkling, pouring of infant baptism) are the inventions of men, without biblical substantiation. While these modes have been used for generations by portions of Christendom, they are without Apostolic sanction or approval.

BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

We believe that “all full believers” receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, as promised by our Lord, as a witness to their scripturally-based faith in Jesus (John 7:37 – 39); and that the new birth of the Spirit (John 3:5) is necessary to place the believer in the Kingdom of God or the body of Christ, “the church” (1 Corinthians 12:12 – 13). We further believe that outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost marked a “new era” in the Spirit’s dealing with mankind as prophesied by Joel 2:28 – 29 and Isaiah 28:11, the Holy Ghost being the “gift” to every believer in this age of grace, handmaidens, servants, sons, and daughters. The Holy Ghost bears witness - “we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16); it is a witness of the faith of our hearts (Acts 15:7 – 9). The Holy Ghost does not indwell the believer simply because he says, “I believe” as many evangelicals teach. Paul shows that the Holy Ghost comes after believing (Ephesians 1:13), NOT synonymous with it. As said before, the Holy Spirit is “the seal of the righteousness of the faith” which the believer has (Romans 4:11), as circumcision was the seal of righteousness of the faith of Abraham.

SPEAKING WITH TONGUES

We believe that “speaking with tongues” as the Spirit gives utterances (Acts 2:4) is the initial evidence of the indwelling of the Spirit; not only on the day of Pentecost for the one hundred and twenty, but for all believers for all time. Jesus told Nicodemus “the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the “sound” thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth, so is EVERYONE that is born of the Spirit (John 3:8). Speaking with tongues is the “sound” of the Spirit, heard by EVERY BELIEVER. It is synonymous with the cry of the “newborn babe” in the first birth (birth of the flesh); for God has sent forth His Spirit into our hearts in the second birth (birth of the Spirit) CRYING, Abba, Father (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6).

We hold that there is a vast difference between (1) “speaking in OTHER tongues as the Spirit gives utterance” and (2) “the GIFT of the tongues” as mentioned by Paul’s letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 12:14). “Speaking in tongues” as the Spirit gives utterance is the supernatural, Spirit-enforced sign or witness of the Spirit’s indwelling. Isaiah predicted this would happen at the time of the “rest and the refreshing” (Isaiah 28:11- 12). Jesus said that “new tongues” would be one of the “signs” following believers (Mark 16:16-17); it was also manifested at Caesarea Phillipi at Cornelius’ hours (Acts 10:45-46) where it was the evidence of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the lives of Gentiles; it happened again at Ephesus after twelve men were baptized in Jesus’s Name by Paul (Acts 19:1-7).

Hence, we conclude that no person is to be given the right hand of fellowship as a member in our church unless he or she is baptized in water in Jesus' Name and filled with the Holy Spirit (Ghost) with Biblical evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance.

1. The one baptism, as recorded in Acts 2:4; 10:44-48; 19:1-6, is evidenced by the speaking of other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance as the initial evidence thereof.
2. The New Birth ("being born again"), includes a genuine repentance, water baptism in Jesus' Name, and the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, evidenced by the speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.
3. The Lord's Supper (blessing the bread and wine and partaking thereof) continued by the Church after the Day of Pentecost.
4. Since communion and feet washing are some of the fundamentals of the Apostolic Doctrine, we recommend that all assemblies affiliated with Apostolic Faith Fellowship International serve communion at least twice a year.
5. It is the opinion of the Bishop's Board that unleavened bread and wine are the correct elements in the communion as used by Jesus Christ.
6. In administering baptism in Jesus' Name our formula should include, "IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS." We believe BAPTISM once in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins for persons who have reached the age of understanding and NO BAPTISM of infants under any condition.

THE GODHEAD

We fully believe the mystery of the Godhead. We believe that Jesus was both human and divine, and further, that the Godhead be understood to mean all of the fullness of God. (Colossians 1:19; 2:9) We believe that Jesus was Mary's son and Mary's God, Creator and creature, God manifest in the flesh; that the flesh of Jesus was the same as ours, with the exception that it had no sin; that Jesus was the Eternal Father made visible, apart from whom there is no God. We believe that at the final consummation of all things there will be only God, and that will be our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SECOND BIRTH

We believe it to be limited to the human family only and believe the resurrection to be limited to the human family only.

We believe that Job was a historical character and not a myth. To teach otherwise is to question DIVINE veracity (Ezekiel 14:20; James 5:11).

MAKING OF MAN

We do not believe the Scripture "Let us make man", refers to God cooperating with Satan in the making of man, as there can be no fellowship between light and darkness.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

The Executive Board of Apostolic Faith Fellowship International believe the following concerning marriage and divorce of members of our churches:

A. Marriage

1. Marriage is defined as a lawful union between a man (male) and woman (female). According to Genesis 1:27 God created male and female. The male and female are different. God did not make man (male) with female tendencies. Likewise, God did not make woman (female) with male tendencies. Genesis 19:5-26 describes the abominable activities and the judgment God brought upon the people. God also instructed the people of Israel under the Levitical Law and said: “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination” (Lev 18:22). Romans 1:26-28 is clear by explaining that God turned both men and women over to a reprobate mind because they did not retain God in their knowledge. These men and women left the natural use of their body to the opposite sex and gave in to vile affections (women with women and men with men). I Corinthians 6:9-11 lists a multitude of unrighteousness, which cannot inherit the kingdom of God.
2. No one having come into the Holy Ghost life shall be permitted to sever relations with the wife with whom he lived when saved and commit an abomination by returning to any former marriage alliance.
3. We agree that those who have been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit should not contract marriages with persons who have not been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit.
4. We agree that ministers of our organization should not perform marriage ceremonies for couples having one party baptized in the name of Jesus and filled with the Holy Ghost and the other party lacking that experience. (Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit.)
5. We agree that discipline should be exercised upon any of our members who contract marriages contrary to our teaching. However, we feel that the extent of discipline should be left to the discretion of the pastor of any offender.

B. Divorce

1. The most complete record of Jesus’ teaching on the much-discussed question is found in the 19th chapter of Matthew. In this passage, verse 3 through verse 9, there are three distinct laws dealt with. The first, contained in verses 4 and 5, is the law given in Eden and was the only existent law until Moses’ time. The second law, verses 7 and 8, is the question of the Pharisee concerning the Mosaic Law answered by Jesus. The second law of Israel superseded the former law and held forth until Christ. The third law for the Kingdom of God, Luke 16:15-18, was set forth by Jesus and superseded the former laws. Jesus granted what had been said concerning the former laws but laid emphasis upon the fact that His message was, as He expressed it “unto You”, or in other words, the Kingdom of God’s message. Therefore, we cannot escape the conclusion that the only scriptural ground of divorce today is fornication. The sixth verse of Matthew 19 is not an all-embracing prohibition of divorce. It simply means that the male and female

- ordained of God to be one flesh. A strange person, whether man or woman, entering in confuses and disrupts the oneness which God intended should be. Therefore, the intruder is guilty of the “sundering” and the divorce decree is a mere legal recognition of the havoc already wrought.
2. So much depends upon the proper interpretation of the key term, “fornication”. Present day dictionaries teach us that fornication is the sexual act indulged in by unmarried persons. But the force of the term, as used in the Scriptures, was not so restricted. The Greek verb forming the root of the disrupted term is “Porneu” meaning: The indulgence of all unlawful sex desires. Thus, we see fornication is a general term applying to many unlawful indulgences. The Scriptures confirm this assertion; I Corinthians 5:1. “It is commonly reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles”. This expression shows clearly that there are branches or kinds. In Romans 1:26-27, homosexuality is dealt with as “Vile Affections” summed up in verse 29 as fornication. In addition, Jude, verse 7 refers to sins of Sodom and Gomorrah as fornication, whereas, we have a specific term for this act which is called “Sodomy”; proving sodomy or homosexuality is a branch of fornication.
 3. The innocent party should not exercise his right to divorce from a sinning companion except as a last resort. (I Corinthians 7:28) Loosing is possible but should not be sought. We have the example of godliness in this respect in God’s dealing with Israel (Jeremiah 3:6-8). He did not divorce her until all his overtures had been refused, even though the fornication was proven and an openly known fact.
 4. The guilty party whose fornication has resulted in his being divorces by his companion shall not be permitted to marry which His companion still lives and should the guilty marry one who does not know the status of the guilty, the ignorant party of any such marriage shall be allowed to be received into any church and any future disposition of his case be left to the discretion of the pastor of the church who shall have some jurisdiction in that case.
 5. All AFFI ministers shall discourage divorce, even though fornication is a proven fact if the guilty party still wishes to remain with his or her companion and is willing to discontinue improper conduct and that divorce should be only the last resort.

BIRTH CONTROL

The Executive Board of AFFI believe the following:

1. An uncompromising condemnation of the inducement of all forms of abortion for limiting the number of children (in a family).
2. An uncompromising condemnation of marriages contracted with an agreement that there shall be no children.
3. An agreement that where extreme cases of distress arise from too frequent pregnancies, endangering a mother’s health, pastors may recommend that parents follow the advice of a physician.

SEXUAL IMMORALITY

The Holy Scriptures give four reasons for the sexual act between husband and wife:

1. To replenish the earth (Gen 1:28).
2. As a means of satisfying the sexual need in man therefore avoiding fornication (II Corinthians 7:2).
3. As a demonstration of the love of Christ for the church (Ephesians 5:21-22).
4. It is not by accident the scriptures described the sexual union of Adam and Eve; and Adam knew his wife and she conceived, (Genesis 4:25) It is through the sexual union that husband and wife know each other in a dimension that is not to be shared by any other human being. When husband and wife engage in the sexual act within the guidelines of the word of God; as noted above it will be the highest degree of expression and purpose of earthly love and will not be degrading or repugnant.

HOMOSEXUALITY AND ALTERNATE LIFESTYLE

Since the creed, discipline, rules of order and doctrine of AFFI, Inc. is the Word of God as taught and revealed by the Holy Ghost. And since the Holy Scriptures have clearly directed all believers to abstain from all forms of fornication (I Thessalonians 4:3). And since the Executive Board of AFFI firmly believes and concluded from the Scripture that homosexuality is a form of fornication. We therefore unreservedly affirm that the practice of any form of homosexuality offends the Word of God and hence violates AFFI, Inc. doctrine and further go on record as declaring that the power of the Holy Spirit can change the lifestyle and habits of every sinful creature. Therefore, we recommend persons who are inclined to homosexuality and/or alternate lifestyles to seek help and deliverance through the Holy Spirit and counseling.

RECREATION

We believe that the social instinct is God-given and guided by the pastor (of each assembly) it will strengthen rather than injure the spiritual life. However, we admonish all our people to make their recreation such that often the question for a Christian must be, not whether a course of action be positively immoral, but whether it will dull the spiritual life and be an unwise example, and thus having the cause of Christ to be evil spoken of.

CONFESSION AND RESTORATION

In dealing with the vast subject of confession and restoration, we will confine our summary to the following area.

1. What is confession?
2. Why is confession necessary?
3. What is the procedure for confession?
4. What is the Pastor's role and relationship?

Confession of Sins: Confession is the recognition and the acknowledgment of sins before God, which is brought about by Godly sorrow AND REPENTANCE GRANTED BY GOD to the honest and sincere soul (II Corinthians. 7:10).

The Necessity of Confession: It is generally conceded that “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper but whosoever confesseth and forsakes his sins shall obtain mercy.”

The Procedure of Confession: God in His eternal purpose of salvation has been pleased to use human agency in the revealing and communication of His will. AFFI goes on record as endorsing the universalism of confession. We believe in the use of confession on every level in our church life and its institutional structure. This includes every member of the body of Christ.

The Pastor’s Role and Relationship: The pastor’s role in confession is to reveal the will of God to the Church in this matter; and assist in the guidance of anyone desiring restoration and fellowship with God and His church. Because the scripture indicates that the Pastor’s role in the sight of God is a responsible one: he is the overseer, the man that must give account to God; but most importantly of all, he is the under shepherd of God, over the precious flock watching for the souls. Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17. It should not be thought unreasonable that he should be looked to in all matters concerning the spiritual wellbeing as well as the moral and mental health of the dear children of God (John 2:16).

SAINTLY DRESS AND ADORNMENT

1. God has chosen the church as his distinct people, his heavenly bride, by the glorious and precious sacrifice of himself. His desire for his church is that it be holy; a temperate, moderate people, bearing the image of the heavenly (I Peter 2:5; I Timothy 2:9; I Corinthians 15:49). Therefore, we believe that the dress and adornments of saints should be temperate, in all modesty and not extreme.
2. We believe there are special garments for special occasions, garments for work, and garments for play. In the Old Testament the garments of the priest were for beauty in the house of God. Our garments and adornments today should always reflect Christ and magnify Him as a peculiar people (I Peter 3:3, 4; 2:9).
3. We believe Deuteronomy 22:5 to mean that no man should adorn himself to appear as a woman and a woman should not adorn herself to appear as a man.
4. In view of the present day working situations there may be times when job requirements or job conditions specify or warrant suitable modes or dress for women. We believe this is in keeping with the scriptures that tell us to let not the shame of our nakedness appear (Numbers 15:38-39; Isaiah 22:4; 47:1-3; Revelation 3:18).
5. We believe that we are a royal priesthood (I Peter 2:9-10) and that garments are for glory and honor. Saints should wear modest and holy apparel always.

DIVINE HEALING

The Lord is our Healer (Exodus 15:26; Psalm 132:2-3). The Lord made our bodies. Should it be thought a thing incredible that He can heal us? With His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:4; Matthew 8:14-17). See John 14:12; Mark 16:17; James 4:14).

MIRACLES

Jesus sent His disciples to preach His word, and to confirm the word, He worked with them with signs following them (Mark 16:20). When there is the need today of breaking through barriers of unbelief to establish the truth of God's Word, miracles and healing are for our day.

HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper: Melchizedek, the Priest of the Most High God, gave the first Communion to our Father Abraham, consisting of bread and wine (Genesis 14:18). Christ becoming a High Priest "after the order of Melchizedek," evidently administered the same (Hebrews 6:24). Water and grape juice are modern substitutes that have been invented by the formal church today, in which are many who have never been regenerated and born of the Spirit (Matthew 26:29; I Corinthians 11:23-32).

Feet Washing: This ordinance is as much a divine command as any other New Testament ordinance. Jesus gave us an example that we should do even as He had done. He said that we ought to wash one another's feet. Again, "if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them (John 13:4-17). There is scriptural evidence the church practiced this in the days of the Apostle Paul (I Timothy 5:10).

OFFERING AND COLLECTIONS ON THE STREET

The old method of begging, rallying, giving socials, shows and concerts to carry on God's work is not God's plan. We believe that if the people of God would obey His word there would be plenty on hand to carry on His work without scheming and grafting. "Tithing and free-will offering" is God's Plan (Genesis 15:20; 28:22; Malachi 3:8-12; Exodus 25:2, 35:5, 21-29).

Collecting money or begging on the streets during street services is a thing not pleasing to the Lord. It leaves an impression that the people of God are more engaged in getting money than for the salvation of the lost and causes to pass by those who otherwise would stop and hear the gospel. We should preach the gospel free without charge (I Corinthians 9:18), but if any feel disposed to give an offering at such time, let it be graciously received as from the Lord (See Isaiah 55:1; I Corinthians 10:33).

THE END TIME

The Coming of Christ: That Jesus is coming to earth again in person is a doctrine clearly set forth in apostolic times. Jesus taught it. The Apostles preached it and the saints accepted (See Matthew 24:1; Act 1:11; 3:19-21; I Corinthians 1:7-8; 11:26; Philippians 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 4:14-17; Titus 2:13-14).

Translation of Saints: We believe that the time draweth near for the coming of the Lord to make a change in the present order of things, and at that time all the righteous dead shall rise from the graves, and “we that are alive” and living righteous before God shall be translated or “caught up to meet the Lord in the air” (Matthew 26:36-42; Luke 17:20-37; I Corinthians 15:51-54; Philippians 3:20-21; and I Thessalonians 4:13-17).

Tribulation: We believe that there “shall be a time of trouble such as there never was since there was a nation even to that time,” known as the period of tribulation (Matthew 24:15-29).

The Millennium: Moreover, we believe that the distress upon the world is the “beginning of sorrows” and will become more intense until there “shall be a time of trouble such as there never was since there was a nation, even to that time: (Matthew 24:3-8; Daniel 12:1), and that period of tribulation will be followed by the dawn of a better day on earth, and that for one thousand years there shall be “peace on earth, good will toward men” (Revelation 20:1-5; Isaiah 65:17-25; Matthew 5:5; Daniel 7:27; Micah 4:1-2; Habakkuk 2:14; Romans 2:25-27).

Final Judgment: When the thousand years are finished there shall be a resurrection of the dead, who shall be summoned before the Great White Throne for their final judgment, all those whose names are not found written in the Book of Life shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, burning with brimstone, which God hath prepared for the devil and his angels. Satan is cast in first (Revelation 20:7-15; Matthew 24:41-46; Revelation 21:8).

Wholly Sanctified Life: We believe that in order to escape the judgment of God and to have the hope of enjoying the glory of the eternal, one must be thoroughly saved from his sins, wholly sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost. A wholly sanctified life is the only true standard of Christian life (Hebrews 12:14; I Peter 1:15-17).

MALTREATMENT

In times of persecution, or ill-treatment at the hands of an enemy, we should not “avenge ourselves”, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written “Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord,” (Romans 12:18; Deuteronomy 32:35). Neither shall we take up any weapon of destruction to slay another, whether in our own defense or in the defense of others for it is written “Do violence to no man” (See Luke 3:14; Matthew 26:52; John 18:36, 15:18-9). We should rather suffer wrong than do wrong.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT, LAW AND RIGHTS

Civil Government: All civil magistrates are ordained of God for peace, safety and the welfare of all people (Romans 13:1-10), therefore it is our duty to be in obedience to all requirements of the laws that are not contrary to the word of God, and that do not force one to the violation of the sixth amendment by bearing arms. It is our duty to honor them, pay tribute, or such taxation as may be required without murmuring (Matthew 17:24-27; 22:17-21) and show respect to them in all lawful requirements of the civil government.

Civil Rights and Human Dignity: Today our nation finds itself during the period of social translation of staggering proportions. The struggle for civil rights and human dignity is fast approaching a crest. It is clear to men of good will everywhere that the church must speak out in this crisis in effort to give guidance and clarity to the situation.

Since our Lord has said, "Ye are the light of the world," it would be a dereliction of duty if we stood silent and permitted the forces of radicalism reaction to assume leadership.

We recognize that there are two kinds of rights, civil rights and divine rights.

Civil rights are those rights given to man by civil law. Divine rights are those rights bestowed upon man by God. Since no civil law can abrogate divine law, all laws made by man must be in harmony with, and designed to uphold, the law of God.

It has been pointed out by others that the founding fathers recognized this principle when they inserted in the Declaration of Independence the statement that "all men are created equal, and they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The founding fathers further recognized that it was the duty of government to sustain and protect these divine rights, for they said, "to secure these rights governments are instituted among men."

It is easily seen that life is given to us of God. We cling to it and seek to preserve it. We hold it so clearly that the saying "self-preservation is the first law of nature" is accepted as being universally true. Even when a man deviates from this and succeeds in taking his own life, he is described by most people as being, at the time he took his life, mentally deranged.

Liberty is also a divine right. No people, regardless of race, creed, or national origin, ever voluntarily submit to slavery. It must always be imposed upon the weak by the strong. Even those who would impose slavery upon others would die fighting to maintain their own liberty and those who are under the yoke constantly yearn for the freedom that is theirs by divine right.

The pursuit of happiness, although elusive, and hard to define, is also a divine right. All political and economic systems are designed ostensibly to bring happiness. All men are constantly seeking security from financial and physical and mental disaster. He seeks a good mate, a good home and lovely children. His friends, his vocation, his profession, his hobbies, everything is intended to bring to him the maximum in happiness. Even his relationship with God is in some respects designed to achieve this end, for the book of Revelation tells us of a place where there shall be "neither sorrow nor crying."

Since life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are gifts of God, we who are Christians and members of Christ's church firmly believe that racial segregation and discrimination in any of its varied forms and manifestations is un-Christian and un-Godly in every sense of the word. No man, government or state has the right to erect artificial barriers that tend to take away those divine rights that God has bestowed upon men.

It is doubly evil when men attempt to use God's word to destroy that which God has ordained. There are men, some evil, some misguided and some uniformed who preach racial division. They seek to separate rather than to unify; they seek to destroy rather than build. To those who are evil we leave them to the righteous judgment of the Almighty; those who are misguided or uniformed we pray for and ask our Lord to be merciful unto them.

The scriptures throughout teach us that we should love one another. When Christ was asked which was the greatest commandment: He answered by saying "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself..." (Matthew 22:34-36).

The Holy Scriptures also teach us that God so loved the world, not just a particular race, but the world, that he sent his only begotten Son. When the stroke fell upon Christ upon Calvary, it fell upon Him for all men.

We, therefore, reaffirm the principle taught in scripture that all men are of infinite worth in the sight of God and that segregation and discrimination on a basis of race, in all its varied forms and manifestations (economic, political, religious, and social), is un-Christian and contrary to divine law.

For clarification, we remind all of brethren and friends that AFFI that this statement is not a result of the present unrest in our country, but an affirmation of our principles held and practiced by us, since we have been from the very beginning, an interracial organization embracing all spirit-filled people regardless of race, color, or national origin.

Secret Societies: According to the word of God we firmly believe and hold that the people of God should have no connection whatever with secret societies or any other organization or body wherein is a fellowship of unbelievers bound by an oath (James 5:3-7; II Corinthians 6:14-18). We are exhorted by the word of God to "be content with such things as we have: and content without wages (I Timothy 6:8; Hebrews 13:5; Luke 3:14).

Members of AFFI may hold membership in labor unions if such membership does not require the taking of an oath. Members shall not work as pickets or by any other measure, bar the entrance of others from their work. If open declaration of their limitations does not qualify them in the estimation of the members of the union for membership they may accept an office or position in the union provided that their influence will be constantly exerted to discourage violence and to promote understanding between management and labor.

POSITIONAL STATEMENT REGARDING ETERNAL SECURITY

Since the days of the beginning of the church at Pentecost, there have been a wide variety of opinions concerning many of the basic truths found in the Word of God. The apostles had to face at least two opinions about how Gentiles could become followers of Christ (Acts 15th chapter). For the sake of the Gentiles, an apostolic decision had to be reached and made public (Acts 15:19-29). From that time even until this present time, doctrinal issues have arisen periodically that had to be decided by men appointed by their peers, to that the body of believers might know what the stand or position of their leaders was. From time to time, AFFI shall do this so that our constituency might know our organizational position.

Such is the case at present. The Executive Board of AFFI feels that it is necessary and of great importance that we make known our position as it relates to the doctrine of “Eternal Security” as it is being espoused by some of our brethren. In stating our position, we desire that it be known that it is NOT being stated with hate nor bitterness with the intention of hurting anyone; but by “speaking the truth in love,” (Ephesians 4:15) we might state the position of the organization. (For second paragraph in opening see or read II Peter 2:1-9; II Timothy 2:16-18; I Timothy 4:1-2 with James 5:19-20).

First, let it be known that we believe that the bible teaches a kind of “Eternal Security” and it is NOT what the Bible teaches that we oppose. It is the “Calvinistic approach” to this Biblical doctrine that we strongly oppose.

- (1) For reference see or read such scripture as John 20:26; Hebrews 13:5-6; Hebrews 2:14-18; II Timothy 1:12; I Peter 1:3-5; I Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 3:20; Jude 1:24-25; Hebrews 7:25, with Isaiah 46:16. You will find these and other scriptures the kind of “Eternal Security” of the believer.
- (2) We hold that since salvation begins “in faith” (He that believeth) and “continues in faith” (we walk by faith) and “ends in faith” (receiving the end of your faith), that the security of the believer is NOT unconditional, but is based upon the continuity of faith in the life of the believer. We find the hope of the believer who begins and continues in faith, in the following scriptures and also the disappointment of them, which do not. Hebrews 11:1-6, 14-16; I Peter 1:3-9; Hebrews 6:11-20; II Corinthians 5:7; II Timothy 2:16-21; Romans 8:24-30; Colossians 1:21-23; Proverbs 11:7-10 with Matthew 14:30.
- (3) We hold that there are too many warnings in the New Testament to the believer that would be totally unnecessary if there was no danger of falling. There would be no need of danger signs posted along the nation’s highways were there no dangers. It is our firm conviction that the New Testament warnings are there because believers CAN fail of the grace of God. The warning signs can be read in Hebrews 12:15-17, 6:6-10, 4:11; I Corinthians 10:12, 9:24-27; Revelation 2:4-5, 3:5, 14-22, 22:18-20 with II Peter 2:4-6. May we embrace all the scriptures and let us not seek to tie God’s hands. He will do all His pleasure. “We hold that it is utterly impossible to embrace all of the scriptures speaking of the believer’s security and those scriptures that warn the believers against failure and hold to the doctrine of Unconditional Eternal Security.”