

Great Commission Association of Churches
Doctrinal Test for Elders And Commissioned Ministers
Version Without Answers
(May 2001)

Introduction

The primary purpose of this questionnaire is to determine a pastoral candidate's ability to "exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1:9). More specifically this test is based upon the GCAC Statement of Faith, and is organized according to the 10 headings of that Statement. The test is to be given orally to candidates to see if they have the ability to "think on their feet".

For this test, I would like to thank Kurt Jurgensmeier for writing the original draft. Also I want to thank the GCAC pastors who took time to edit this tool, particularly Dave Bovenmyer and Doug Brown.

John Hopler, GCLI Editor

The Scripture

"The sole basis of our beliefs is the Bible, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. It was uniquely, verbally, and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit and was written without error in the original manuscript. It is the supreme and final authority in faith and life in every age."

1) How would you defend the claim that the Bible is the inspired Word of God instead of simply the writings of men?

2) How would you answer the criticism that there are contradictions in the Bible?

3) What are some important rules and/or attitudes for properly interpreting the Scriptures?

4) How would you respond to the claim that other religious books such as the Book of Mormon, or the Koran are also inspired by God?

5) How would you respond to the general claim that the King James version of the Bible is the only correct or trustworthy translation available today?

God

“There is but one God, infinite in power, wisdom, justice, goodness and love, Creator of the universe, eternally existing in three persons — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — each of whom possesses all the attributes of Deity and the characteristics of personality.”

1) How would you define the Trinity and what verses of Scripture would you use to demonstrate the existence of the Trinity?

2) How would you defend the claim that there is only one God?

3) What Scriptures would you use to demonstrate the love of God and more specifically His willingness to forgive sinners?

- 4) **What Scripture would you use to demonstrate the holiness of God and more specifically His willingness to punish sinners?**

Man

“God created man in His own image, and man as he was originally created, was innocent before God. But man chose to sin by disobeying God, and therefore was alienated from his Creator and came under divine condemnation. Thus all human beings are born with a corrupted nature and without spiritual life, and are totally incapable of pleasing God in and of themselves.”

- 1) **What is the doctrine of “original sin” and what are its consequences?**

- 2) **What Scriptural arguments would you use to demonstrate that unbelievers are currently objects of God’s condemnation?**

Jesus Christ

“God the Father, by His own choice and out of love for sinful men and women, sent Jesus Christ into the world to reconcile sinners to Himself. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. He was God in the flesh, both true God and true man. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life and voluntarily suffered and died as our substitute to pay the penalty for our sins, thus satisfying God’s justice and accomplishing salvation for all those who trust in Him alone. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which he lived and died. He bodily ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father, where He, the only mediator between God and man, makes intercession for His own. He will return to earth personally, visibly, and bodily to judge all men and establish His kingdom.”

- 1) **What Scriptural arguments would you use to prove that Jesus Christ was and is God?**

2) In Revelation 3:14, Jesus is referred to as, “the Beginning of the creation of God” (NAS). Some, including Jehovah’s Witnesses use this verse to claim that Christ was the first created being. How would you respond to such a claim?

3) What Scripture would you use to demonstrate the humanity of Christ?

4) What Scripture would you use to demonstrate the sinlessness of Christ?

5) What Scripture would you use to demonstrate that Christ is the one and only Savior of mankind?

6) What is the importance of Christ’s physical resurrection?

7) What are some events associated with the Second Coming of Christ, recognizing that the precise chronology of these events is a difficult and disputed matter?

Salvation

“Men and women are freed from the penalty for their sins not as a result, in whole or in part, of their own works, goodness, or religious ceremony, but by the undeserved favor of God alone. God declares righteous all who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation.”

1) In general, what is necessary for a person to gain salvation?

2) What Scripture would you use to demonstrate that salvation is solely through the grace of God and not through human effort?

3) Although it is clear that we cannot know the state of someone else’s soul with certainty, the Scriptures indicate that church leaders especially should be able, and are even responsible, to make some judgements regarding the authenticity of someone’s conversion. What are some of the ways in which we can discern the genuineness of someone’s claim to be a Christian, and why is it important to do so?

The Holy Spirit

“The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ, to convict men and women of their sins, and to impart new life to all who place their faith in Christ. He indwells believers from the moment of spiritual birth, seals them until the day of redemption, and empowers them to live a life pleasing to God.”

1) What Scriptural arguments would you use to demonstrate the deity of the Holy Spirit?

2) What Scriptural arguments would you use to demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is a person, as opposed to simply some kind of force or power?

3) What are several of the purposes of the Holy Spirit?

4) What is the “baptism of the Spirit” and when does it occur?

5) What is the “filling of the Holy Spirit”, how is it obtained, and what is its result”?

Assurance

“All who are born again of the Spirit can be fully assured of their eternal life from the very moment they put their faith in Christ. This assurance is not based on any kind of human merit, but upon the fact of God’s election, upon Christ’s complete payment for our sins, and upon the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who is the deposit guaranteeing our inheritance.”

1) What Scriptures would you use to support the claim that “All who are born again of the Spirit can be fully assured of their eternal life from the very moment they put their faith in Christ”

2) What is referred to as the “unpardonable sin”?

3) Some would claim that Hebrews 6:4-6 is Scriptural proof that someone can lose their salvation. How would you respond to this?

The Resurrection of the Dead

“At physical death, the believer enters immediately into eternal, conscious fellowship with the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his or her body to everlasting glory, and blessing. At physical death, the unbeliever enters into eternal, conscious separation from the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his or her body to everlasting suffering, judgment, and condemnation.”

1) How would you Scripturally support the claim that “At physical death, the believer enters immediately into eternal, conscious fellowship with the Lord”?

2) What Scripture would you use to support the literal resurrection of the physical body?

3) What Scripture would you use to prove the existence of Heaven?

4) What Scripture would you use to prove both the existence and the attributes of Hell, particularly its painful and eternal nature?

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

“Jesus Christ has instructed those who believe in Him to be baptized in water as a symbol of their new birth in Christ. Baptism is only for those who have personally believed in Christ. Our practice is to baptize by immersion. The Lord also instituted the Lord's Supper as a remembrance of His suffering, death, and resurrection. Neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper have any merit in helping a person obtain eternal life.”

1) Some use 1 Peter 3:21 to support the claim that water baptism is necessary for salvation. How would you respond to such an argument?

2) What is the purpose of water baptism?

3) What Scripture would you use to support the practice of baptism by immersion?

4) What is the purpose of the Lord's Supper?

The Church

“All true believers make up the church worldwide and should assemble together in local churches for worship, prayer, fellowship and teaching, in order to become conformed to the image of Christ and to become equipped to carry out the “Great Commission” that Christ gave His followers in Matt. 28:19-20.”

1) What are the differences between the “universal Church” and the local church?

2) What is the purpose and criteria for excommunication from the local church?