

Who We Are

(text of pamphlet)

Many people that we meet for the first time are curious, suspicious, and even fascinated by our life together. Many have sincere questions or concerns about our life and our beliefs.

We realize that the lifestyle we have chosen to live may seem strange to those around us. And, with all those horrifying, sensationalized "sect stories" in the news today, it also may cause people to be afraid of us. Some people have also labeled us a *SECT*. Of course, we do not like to be numbered among those bizarre groups, for, upon close inspection our religious beliefs and practices are in no way strange or novel, but are fundamentally the same as those planted by the first believers in Jerusalem nearly 2,000 years ago. Yet many people do not know what we actually believe, but base their judgment upon things that are not even true.

We want to clearly and simply write down for you what we really believe, based on what is written in the Bible (the same Holy Bible you have on your shelf, the same Bible your priest or minister reads), so that you can check out for yourself if we are actually a *sect* as some say.

By definition, the word *sect* means the way of life or thought of a group of persons within an organized religion, whose adherents recognize a special set of teachings.

The Bible speaks about how the first disciples¹ and even the zealous Jews were referred to as a sect.² So, perhaps in the true definition of the word, being a sect was not such a bad thing...

We hope you will take just a little time from your day to read this small booklet, and decide for yourself if there is really any reason to fear us.

Let your priest or minister also read it and he should also confirm that the truths for which we stand are not the dangerous ideas of a so-called "sect", but rather the strict, literal adherence to ancient Bible truths.

¹Acts 28:22

²Acts 5:17, 15:5

In our country, any man is free to live by his conscience in religious freedom without fear of the blind bigotry and prejudice which has stained the history of mankind. If we are to be hated and insulted, may it be for what we actually do believe, and not for some unfounded idea or rumor about us.

What We Believe

We come from varied walks of life, with an assortment of different religious and economic backgrounds. Formerly, we were teachers, lawyers, construction workers, housewives, and outdoorsmen. Yet we have sacrificed what we had and were before, in order to come together to serve our God in obedience to the truth of His Word.³ So, though we all were very different, we all had one thing in common. We all recognized the truth when we found it (or perhaps it is better said that "it found us"). Somewhere deep inside, all of us discovered that the life we were living was not the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose for us. When we heard the cutting words of the gospel, as proclaimed in the Bible,⁴ we knew that we were guilty of violating our consciences, of breaking the instinctive natural laws of God in our hearts. We knew that we were headed for eternal punishment, and we deserved it.⁵

With All of our Heart

When we heard about our Master, God's only Son, dying for our sins and taking our place in death, we responded. We said "Yes" to this Good News and believed in Him with all of our hearts. He gave us eternal life. Now we know we have passed out of death into life because we love our brothers and sisters.⁶ We were saved not by good works but, on the contrary, we were saved for the good works He has prepared in advance for us to do.⁷ Now, with this new life that we live daily, we are together in a life of love, the way true disciples have always lived in

³Mt 10:37,38; Mk 10:28-30; Lk 14:33

⁴Rom 10:17

⁵Rev 21:8, 22:15

⁶1 Jn 3:14-24

⁷Eph 2:9,10

response to the truth of the gospel.⁸ These good works are the essence and only purpose for our lives. Since we have believed in Him, we are learning to love one another as He commanded us.⁹ It is our desire that this love would be perfected in unity so that the world will know God sent His son and that he loves them like He loves His very own Son and that all men will know that we are His disciples.¹⁰

We believe that if we are not loving as He commanded,¹¹ then we are not His disciples. We want to share what we have found with everyone. We do not want anyone to be confused about us or what we believe. We want to share the truth of the eternal life we have found with you.

If you have questions about us, we welcome them at a personal level. We love visitors, and you are invited to our home.¹² We have deeply-felt views on many things, and are glad to talk about them. Many people have different views than ours or contrary opinions. From time to time things are said about us which distort who we are and what we believe. People who don't know us can't help but be affected by such mis-information. We encourage you to find out for yourself the truth of who we are.

We believe everyone is entitled to live their lives according to the dictates of their own consciences, and to make their own choices in life. We don't force people to do what they don't believe in; nor do we force anyone to accept anything for which they have no faith.

We do not believe, nor have we ever believed, that everyone outside our community is bound for eternal damnation; or that everyone else on the face of the earth is evil if they are not with us. We respect what is good in all men, from the President of the country, to the most faithful and hardworking garbage man on the block.¹³

⁸Acts 4:32, Heb 3:13

⁹1 Jn 3:23, Jn 13:34

¹⁰Jn 17:23, Jn 13:35

¹¹Jn 13:34,35

¹²1 Pet 2:12

¹³Rom 2:14-16, Gen 3:16-19

It is clear from the Bible that all men will be judged according to their deeds, and not according to whether or not they are Christians. Those who are not truly His disciples will be judged according to how they treated others in this life, based on the instinctive knowledge that all men have in their consciences.¹⁴ Therefore all men are without excuse.¹⁵

As far as our fundamental doctrines are concerned, we believe that we are cleansed from all our sins by the blood of the only-begotten Son of God, who existed eternally with the Father before all things were made, who Himself is God, and through whom all things were created.¹⁶

We also believe that He became a human being, in that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of a virgin.¹⁷ Therefore He was fully human¹⁸ although He didn't have the inherited sin of the race of Adam.

We also teach that He lived a sinless life, perfectly obeyed the law of Moses, and was therefore the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. He was crucified, tasted death once for all mankind by suffering the agony of death for three days and three nights¹⁹ in the center of the earth²⁰ and because of His righteousness, was raised incorruptible by the power of the Holy Spirit.²¹ He was also received into heaven, where He now sits, as a man, on His Father's throne, waiting for all His enemies to be made a footstool for His feet.²²

We believe that He has sent the Holy Spirit, who is equally God, to dwell within those who obey the Good News, calling on the name of the Lord. We also believe, that on a day and at an hour which the Father alone knows, His Son will return to the earth in His physical body, in just the same way as He ascended, will take dominion over it, and will judge all of humanity, both living and dead.²³

¹⁴Rev 20:12-15

¹⁵Rom 1:20,28

¹⁶Jn 1:1

¹⁷Lk 1:31-35

¹⁸Jn 1: 14

¹⁹Mt 12:40

²⁰Mt 12:40; Acts 2:24

²¹Acts 2:24

²²Heb 10:13

²³2 Thes 1:8, Rev 19:14,15

We live together like the first century church, because we believe by the Holy Spirit in us²⁴ that the church can be no other way than the way it was in the beginning, when it was pure. It is recorded for us in Acts 4:32-37. This record of how the first church lived is preserved for us in the Scriptures, in order that we could have a clear standard of what the Spirit Himself established through the apostles²⁵ before the compromise, strife and division came in, to cause the life of the Spirit to wane.²⁶

We are not followers of any one man, although we do believe that God has established men with true authority from God to lead and shepherd the flock, and to equip the disciples to do the works of service which God prepared in advance for us.²⁷

We all know our God and have a personal relationship with Him that is confirmed by the love we have for one another on a daily basis. We follow the Messiah of the Scriptures in the most basic, down-to-earth manner we know. We call Jesus by His Hebrew name,²⁸ *Yahshua* (since He was a Hebrew), the name He was called by His foster father Yoceph, and His mother Miriam when He lived on the earth. His name Yahshua means: YAHWEH SAVES. We love our God and Saviour with all our heart, and this love is demonstrated by the way we treat and care for each other.

We believe in marriage and fidelity; we believe in parents raising their children to be respectful and obedient; we believe in loving God and being good neighbors; we believe in sharing all that we have with one another: our material possessions, our joys and sorrows; we do not believe in "free love", or in sex outside of marriage; we believe in working with our own hands and in earning an honest living.²⁹

We educate our children at home, with each child being under the authority and responsibility of his parents. Our teens receive academic training as well as apprenticeship

²⁴1 Jn 3:24

²⁵Mt 28:19,20

²⁶Rev 2:4; 1 Cor 1:10,13; Gal 5:19-21

²⁷Eph 2:10, 4:11,12

²⁸Mt 1:21

²⁹2 Ths 3:10,11

training in different skills.³⁰ Our educational program is recognized by state governments as required by law.³¹

We believe in discipline and correction.³² We spank our children, we don't abuse them. We love them. They are our hope for our future. We strive to teach them right from wrong, and to develop their ability to listen to their conscience, so that they can respond to the truth as they reach their teenage years. We believe in honesty and in respecting our Father in heaven and in obeying His word.³³

We want to respect our neighbors and to act responsibly in preserving the earth.³⁴ We love all that God has created, and want to see the earth and all of mankind restored to the way life was created to be here on the earth, before the Fall.

We are not perfect in these things: we make mistakes, but desire to be quick to receive correction whenever we wrong anyone. We want to be examples of admitting our mistakes and always doing whatever it takes to make things right when we have hurt our neighbors.

We believe that in these last days, God's people will be joined together again to be His very own possession.³⁵ We believe this coming together to live a life of peace and unity will be the proof that God is restoring all things, and that He sent His Son, and that He truly does love the world.

These people will come out of every place, from every nation and continent, including every religion, to be this restored people. They will have no other purpose than to be obedient to His Word.

Obviously, what we believe, we believe with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength. Each of us has given up the life we used to have, to join ourselves to this gathered people. We know that the Gospel we preach will draw some and repel others. We believe that is the truth.

³⁰Pr 22:6,15

³¹Rom 13:1-5

³²Pr 13:24; 23:13,14; 19:18; 29:15-17

³³Jn 14:21-24

³⁴Isa 24:5,6; Rev 16:8,9

³⁵1 Pet 2:9,10

We are here for those who want to hear the Good News of the reign of God. For those who don't wish to respond, it is their own choice. In faith, we believe in the way we live and we take our stand on it.

Anyone may come see our life. You can come for a day or to stay. We extend an open invitation to anyone to visit us in our home at:

[insert address and phone number]

We are an open community and enjoy visitors all the time, especially every Friday night at 6 pm. We dance and sing and share a wonderful meal together with all our friends.

Come and see for yourself.