Appendix D
Doctrinal Statements on Salvation

<u>The following is from my ordination council doctrinal paper in 2006:</u>

SOTERIOLOGY

I believe that since man is spiritually dead (Eph 2:1) and stands condemned before God (John 3:18), that God in his mercy and love provided a means for his salvation through his Son, Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Rom 5:8-10). God's plan to save lost sinners was made in eternity past (Matt 25:34; Eph 1:4-5; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8) and is entirely of God from initiation to completion (2 Thess 2:13; Phil 1:6). Salvation is a gift from God that cannot be earned in any way by man (Acts 18:27; Eph 2:8, 9; 2 Tim 1:9).

Salvation is composed of the following components given in their theological order:

<u>Election</u>: God's sovereign, unconditional choice in eternity past of individual sinners (regardless of their merit and by his own good pleasure) to salvation in Christ with all its attendant blessings and obligations (Rom 8:28; Eph 1:4-5; 2 Pet 1:2-3; 2 Thess 2:13).

<u>Calling</u>: God's urgent invitation to all who hear the gospel to come and be saved (general call; Isa 45:22; 2 Thess 2:14) and his bringing of the elect to salvation (effectual call; John 6:65; Rom 8:30; 2 Tim 1:9).

<u>Regeneration</u>: God's instantaneous, supernatural impartation of spiritual life to the spiritually dead (John 1:13; 3:3-8; 1 Cor 2:13-16; Eph 2:4-5; Titus 3:3-5; 1 John 5:1).

<u>Repentance</u>: A change of mind away from sin and toward God (Heb 6:1; Acts 20:21). It is the immediate and voluntary response of the regenerated heart expressed in a change of view, feeling and purpose concerning God, sin and the sinner himself (Acts 26:20; 1 Thess 1:9). It involves a recognition of sin (Ps 51:3), a regret for sin (2 Cor 7:9-10), and a forsaking of sin (Acts 26:20).

<u>Faith</u>: Saving faith is the knowledge of (Rom 10:17), assent to (Heb 11:1, 6), and unreserved trust (Acts 16:31) in the finished work of Christ as revealed in Scripture. It is a gift of God (Acts 14:27; Eph 2:8-9; Phil 1:29) and the voluntary act of the sinner in which he turns to Christ (Acts 20:21). Only the elect exercise saving faith (John 10:26; Acts 13:48).

<u>Union with Christ</u>: That inseparable spiritual bond between the believer and Jesus Christ that results from the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which judicially places the believer into the Body of Christ, the church (1 Cor 12:13).

<u>Justification</u>: The judicial act of God by which he declares the sinner righteous and treats him as such (Rom 5:1, 9).

<u>Adoption</u>: The judicial act of God whereby he places the believer into the family of God as an adult son with all attending rights and privileges (Gal 3:26; Eph 1:5).

<u>Sanctification</u>: The setting apart of the believer from sin unto God. It is the progressive outworking of spiritual life received in regeneration (1 Cor 6:11; 2 Cor 3:18; 1 Pet 1:5).

<u>Perseverance</u>: The work of God whereby he renders certain that believers will neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but will certainly continue therein to the end (1 Cor 1:8-9; Phil 1:6; 1 Pet 1:5), thus assuring them of eternal security (John 6:39; Rom 5:9-10; 8:30, 38-39).

Glorification: The consummation of salvation whereby God frees man eternally from the presence of sin (1 Thess 3:13; Jude 24).

Though God desires all to be saved (2 Pet 3:9), only those who are elect by God from the foundation of the world will be saved (Eph 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13). Essential to the salvation of the elect is the proclamation of the Gospel so they may appropriate it (Rom 10:13-17; Acts 11:14), thus the Gospel must be universally proclaimed (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). God's absolute sovereign and exclusive work in the salvation of man does not negate man's responsibility to seek the Lord (Acts 17:27, 30) nor the Christian's obligation to present the gospel clearly and urgently (Rom 10:14; 1 Thess 2:9). Final correlation of these truths in man's finite mind will prove fruitless because of the Creator-creature distinction (Isa 55:8-9). The end result, however, will be endless praise offered "to him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb" (Rev 5:13), "to the praise of his glorious grace" (Eph 1:4-14).

The following is from the doctrinal statement of Orwell Bible Church:

Section 7: Salvation

We believe that God's salvation of sinners wholly depends upon His grace through Jesus Christ our Lord (Acts 15:11; Rom 3:24; Eph 2:1-9), as there is not one who is righteous or seeks God (Rom 3:10-18; 5:8-10). Eternal life is a gift of God that cannot be earned in any way by man but is received by faith alone in Christ alone (Isa 64:6; Acts 18:27; Rom 3:28; 6:23; Eph 2:8-9).

Even though all sinners justly deserve nothing but eternal damnation, before the foundation of the world God was moved—solely by His grace, love, and according to His perfect will and good pleasure—to choose to save some to salvation in Jesus Christ (Acts 13:48; Rom 8:28-30; Eph 1:3-14; 2 Tim 1:9).

Through the gospel message the Holy Spirit convinced us of our sinful condition (John 16:8-11; Rom 8:30; Jas 1:18; 1 Pet 1:2-3, 23), the Father drew us to Himself (John 6:37, 39, 44, 65), and our hearts were opened to respond to the Word (Acts 16:14; 26:18; 2 Cor 4:6).

Having had our eyes opened to our rebellion against our holy God and truly seeing our hopeless and perilous condition before His infinite justice, we willingly turned from our wicked ways and trusted Jesus Christ alone for salvation (Acts 13:48; 20:21; 26:20; Phil 1:29; 1 Thess 1:9).

God forever united us with Christ in His body (1 Cor 12:13; Eph 2:16), justified or declared us righteous by the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness (Rom 5:1, 9, 19; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9), forgave all our sins (Acts 13:38-39; Eph 1:7; 4:32; Col 2:13) and brought us into His family (Gal 3:26; Eph 1:5).

Though we still possess a sin nature (Gal 5:16-17; 1 Pet 2:11), God has separated us from the power of sin unto Himself (1 Cor 1:2; 6:11) and we must grow in holiness through the indwelling Spirit and our obedience to the Word (2 Cor 3:18; 7:1; Col 3:1-17; Heb 12:14; 1 Pet 1:14-17).

God preserves us secure in Christ (John 6:39; 10:27-30; Jude 1) and enables us to persevere in Christ and never fall away (Phil 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 21), thus assuring us of eternal life (2 Pet 1:3-11; 1 John 5:13) until we are forever with Him (Rom 8:30; Jude 24).

The gospel must be proclaimed, heard, and believed for anyone to be saved (Acts 11:14; Rom 10:13-17; 2 Tim 2:10). While the salvation of any sinner is due entirely to God's grace (John 6:65; Acts 13:48), the damnation of every sinner is due entirely to their sin and unbelief (John 3:18; Acts 13:46).