

The Apostolic Faith: A Doctrinal Overview

by William Seymour

The Apostolic Faith is a restoration of the faith once delivered to the saints, emphasizing justification, sanctification, and the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire.

Scripture: Ezekiel 33:15, Matthew 9:13, Mark 1:14, Luke 15:21, Luke 18:13, Luke 19:18, John 3:3, John 17:15, John 17:20, Acts 2:1, Acts 3:19, Acts 10:42, Acts 10:45, Acts 17:30, Acts 19:6, Romans 3:25, Romans 4:25 - 5:1, 1 Corinthians 4:21, 2 Corinthians 1:15, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Corinthians 7:9, Hebrews 13:12

Topics: "Apostolic Doctrine", "Holy Spirit"

Description

William Seymour preaches about the Apostolic Faith Mission's commitment to restoring the old-time religion of camp meetings, revivals, missions, and Christian unity based on the faith delivered to the saints. He emphasizes the importance of repentance, godly sorrow for sins, confession, restitution, and faith in Jesus Christ as foundational steps in the believer's journey. Seymour teaches on the first work of grace, justification, and the second work of grace, sanctification, highlighting the cleansing and empowering work of the Holy Spirit. He stresses the significance of the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire for experiencing God's love, power, and truth, with speaking in tongues as a sign. Seymour also addresses the importance of marriage, water baptism, feet washing, and the Lord's Supper as essential ordinances in the Apostolic Faith Mission.

Transcript

The Apostolic Faith stands for the restoration of the faith once delivered to the saints, the old-time religion of camp meetings, revivals, missions, street mission work and Christian unity everywhere. According to God's word (John 17:20,21).

Teaching on repentance (Mark 1:14,15).

Godly sorrow for sins (Examples: Matt. 9:13; 2 Cor. 7:9,11; Acts 3:19; Acts 17:30).

Confession of sin (Luke 15:21; Luke 18:13).

Restitution and faith in Jesus Christ (Ezek. 33:15; Luke 19:18).

Jesus died for our sins and arose for our justification (Romans 4:25).

The first work of grace. Justification is that act of God's free grace by which we receive remission of sins (Rom. 3:25; Acts 10:42,43; Rom. 5:1,10; John 3:3,14; 2 Cor. 5:17).

The second work of grace. The Holy Ghost calls the second work the "second benefit." The margin reads "second grace." And the Syriac reads that you might receive the grace "doubly" (2 Cor. 1:15).

Sanctification is the second work of grace and is that act of God's grace by which He makes us holy in doctrine and life (John 17:15, 17; Heb. 13:12; 2:11; Heb. 12:14). Jesus opened the Bible to his disciples before He went back to heaven (Luke 24:24-50). He taught His doctrine to them well before He went to Heaven so when we get sanctified Jesus will teach us the Bible also, bless the Lord.

Sanctification is cleansing to make holy. The disciples were sanctified before the day of Pentecost. By careful study of scripture, you will find it is so now. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" and Jesus had breathed on them the Holy Ghost (John 15:3; John 13:10; John 20:21,22). You know that they could not receive the Spirit if they were not all clean. Jesus cleansed and got all doubt out of His church before He went back to glory. The disciples had the grace of the Spirit before the day of Pentecost. The disciples had an infilling of the Spirit before the day of Pentecost. For Jesus had cleansed the sanctuary and they had the witness in their hearts that He was their risen Lord and Savior and they were continually in the temple praising and blessing God (Luke 24:51,53).

The baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire means to be flooded with the love of God and power for service, and a love for the truth as it is in God's word. So when we receive it we have the same signs to follow as the disciples received on the day of Pentecost. For the Holy Spirit gives us a sound mind, faith, love and power (2 Tim. 1:7). This is the standard Jesus gave to the church.

The greatest evidence of the Holy Spirit abiding in the believer is what Jesus Christ promised He would do. Jesus promised He would teach us all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said so He means what He says. (John 14:17-26; John 16:7-15). So when He comes He does that in the believer, for He does it for me.

Seeking healing. We must believe, with great joy, that God is able to heal "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26; Jas. 5:14; Psalm 103:3; 2 Kings 20:5; Matt. 8:16,17; Mark 16:16-18). "Behold I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for Me?" (Jer. 32:27; Luke 24:52,53).

God, Spirit and Word go together. They are the two witnesses spoken of in Zech. 4:3-14 and Rev. 11:3. When these two witnesses are not recognized all kinds of confusion will be manifested in the church.

Too many have confused the grace of sanctification with the enduement of power or the baptism with the Holy Ghost. Others have taken "the anointing" which we receive after we are sanctified for the baptism and failed to reach the glory and power of a true Pentecost (John 20:21-24; Acts 2:3,4).

We read in the second chapter of Colossians, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." This chapter tells us about Christ blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that were against us and contrary to us, and I am glad He did nail these ordinances to the cross with Him. He took them out of the way, nailing it to His cross. Bless the Lord. These were the old Jewish ordinances of divers washings, Sabbath days, new moons, circumcision and the Passover supper, and so on. But Jesus has ordinances in His church. Bless His dear Name.

Three ordinances Christ Himself instituted in His Church. First, He commands His ministers to baptize in water in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost and it was practiced by the apostles (Matt. 28:19; Acts 32:38; Acts 22:16; Acts 8:12,17). The eunuch was baptized (Acts 8:35). The Apostle Paul was baptized. So many cases we can find in Acts where it was practiced after John the Baptist had died.

We believe in water baptism. Our mode is immersion only, and single, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Matt. 28:19,20; 2 Cor. 13:13; and as much light as the Holy Ghost will reveal to us by His word.

Second, foot washing is an ordinance that Jesus Himself instituted in His church and we, His followers, should observe it. For He has commanded us to observe all things that He has commanded us to teach. So we find we will have to recognize these three ordinances.

We believe in the feet washing; we believe it to be an ordinance. Jesus said, in the John 13-17, "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord: neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

We believe in the ordinance of the Lord's supper, as it is set forth in 1 Cor. 11:2, 23-34 and Matt. 26: 26-29. We believe in taking unfermented wine and unleavened bread.

We the ministers, must be the husband of one wife (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-9). We do not believe in unscriptural marriage (Rom. 7:2-4; 1 Cor. 7:39).

In Matt. 19:3-9, Matt. 5:32 and Mark 10:5-11, Jesus restored marriage back to the Edenic standard. Many are confused over the meaning of these passages. If either the husband or wife have defied themselves in the sins mentioned Jesus does not give either recognition as being legally married, while the first husband or wife is still living. They must repent to God and be reconciled to each other "for as Christ forgives so must we forgive" (1 Cor. 7:11). If a man or woman marry and either one has a living husband or wife their continuing to live together as a committing of fornication or adultery and the party who has a living husband or wife should be put away by the other, leaving the man or woman who has no living companion free to marry again to some one who is also free (1 Cor. 7:2; Matt. 19:9).

We do not believe in making a hobby of this doctrine of divorce, but we believe in the truth be comparing scripture with scripture, that no one in this work can marry the second husband or the second wife, while the first one is living (Rom. 7:2,3,4; 1 Cor. 7:10,11; 1 Cor. 7:39; 1 Tim. 3:9; Matt. 5:32; Luke 16:18; Mark 2-12).

Bishop Hurst says, in his Church History, that the gift of tongues has appeared in communities under powerful religious stimulus, as among the Cornisards, early Quakers, Lasare in Sweden in 1841-43, in the Irish Revival in 1859, and in the Catholic Apostolic (Irvingite) Church (Vol. 1, page 90).

I can say, through the power of the Spirit, that wherever God can get a people that will come together in one accord and one mind in the Word of God, the baptism of the Holy Ghost will fall upon them, like as at Cornelius' house (Acts 10:45,46). It means, to be in one accord, as the word says in Acts 2:42,47.

The blood of Jesus will never blot out any sin between man and man they can make right; but if we can't make wrongs right, the blood graciously covers (Matt. 5:24; Matt. 6:15; Matt. 18:35; 1 John 1:7-9).

Dear loved ones, God's promises are true. We read in Exodus 12:3, God commanded Moses to take a lamb for a house and a house for a lamb when He was about to bring the children out of Egypt. Bless His holy Name, amen! They were to kill the lamb and take its blood and sprinkle it over the door overhead and the sides to save them from the destroyer. But in the very house they were instructed to eat the body. The blood saved them from the destroyer, but the body of the lamb saved them from disease and sickness. Glory to His Name! May we obey God's word and voice and we shall be saved through Jesus from sins and feast on His perfect body. Jesus is founder of His church, the Christian church, by His own precious blood. Hallelujah! So, Jesus is the Christian Passover. When the Jews eat the Passover they remember God bringing them out of Egypt and point to His coming. So we eat the Christian Passover and remember Calvary, how Jesus died and saved us, and we look forward to His coming again.

Moses' lamb was a type of Christ, the true Lamb, so Christ is our Lamb, bringing health to our imperfect body. Moses was founder of the Jewish church, by God, through the paschal lamb by the blood and body of the lamb. But Jesus is the Lamb of God, the founder of the Christian church.

Amended Articles of the Doctrines*

The Apostolic Faith Mission, 312 Azusa Street, stands for the following scriptural doctrines, ordinances, and truths, to-wit:

First, as amended: "Justification by faith, which we interpret as being the 'forgiveness of sins,' which is the 'new birth' spoken of in John 3:1-13" (Also Acts 10:42-43; Rom. 3:25). The doctrine of justification shall not be changed.

Second, as amended: "Sanctification by faith as a second definite work of grace upon the heart, which represents entire cleansing, made holy in heart" (John 17:15-17; 1 Thess. 4:3-5; Thess. 4:3; Heb. 2:11-13; Heb. 10:10; Heb. 13:12). The doctrine of sanctification cannot be changed.

Third, as amended: "The baptism with the Holy Ghost as a gift of power upon the sanctified life, and anointing for service and work" (Acts 2:1-4; Acts 10:45-46; Acts 19:6; 1 Cor. 4:21).

Fourth, as amended: "The speaking in tongues being one of the 'signs following' the baptized believers and other evidences of the Bible, casting out devils, healing the sick and with the fruits of the Spirit accompanying the signs" (1 Cor. 13; Mark 16:16-19; Acts 2:2-3; Acts 10:44-45-46; Act 19:6).

Fifth, as amended: "We believe and teach that God intended and Jesus taught that there could be no holy union between man and woman after divorcement for any cause, so long as both parties to the first covenant live" (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 5:32; Matt. 19:3-9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; Rom. 7:1-4; 1 Cor. 7:39).

Sixth, as amended: "We believe in the ordinance of 'water baptism,' and teach that immersion is the only mode, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, only one dip, in the name of the Trinity."

Seventh, as amended: "We believe in the ordinance of the Lord's supper as instituted by Jesus and followed by the apostles, and teach that it should be frequently observed in holy reverence."

We do not believe in baptizing babies or children before they come to the age of accountability. A little child cannot believe.

Eighth, as amended: "We believe in feet washing as an ordinance, as it was established by our Master before the Lord's supper, according to John 13:4-18, and believe it was practiced by the Apostles and disciples through the First Century" (1 Tim. 5:10).

To belong to this faith they must obey its teachings.

Amended Articles of Incorporation

Whereas, at a meeting of the members of the Apostolic Faith Mission, a corporation, regularly and legally called and held at the office of said corporation at 312 Azusa Street, City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California, on the 19th day of May, 1914, at the hour of 7:30 P.M. all of the members of said Apostolic Faith Mission in good standing being present and voting, it was determined by resolution passed and adopted by unanimous vote, duly recorded, to amend the articles hereto, to-wit: on the 24th day of April, 1907, duly filed in the office of the County Clerk of Los Angeles County, State of California; that said amended articles and the constitution which is a part of these articles of incorporation, as hereinafter set forth were read, duly considered and adopted by the members of said Apostolic Faith Mission; that at said time and place the said board of trustees of said Apostolic Faith Mission, at its meeting duly and regularly called, unanimously, adopt said hereinafter amendments including said constitution which are a part of these amended articles of incorporation.

Now, therefore, these amended articles of incorporation and constitution, witnesseth:

I

That the name of this corporation shall be the Apostolic Faith Mission and shall be carried on in the interests of and for the benefit of the colored people of the State of California, but the people of all countries, climes, and nations shall be welcome.

II

That the purpose for which this corporation is formed are to do evangelistic work, conduct, maintain, control, carry on, supervise and found missions and also revivals, camp-meetings, street and prison work in the State of California and elsewhere, by its members, and those who become members by compliance with the constitution and by-laws and the tenets and beliefs of the Apostolic Faith Missions; to establish Sunday schools, supervise and carry on apostolic endeavors. It shall have the power to acquire such real and personal property as may be necessary for its use in carrying out its purposes and objects, and dispose of the same when no longer necessary for its use. It shall have the power to encumber all property, both real and personal, owned by it, when deemed advisable so to do; and generally to perform all acts requisite and necessary to more fully carry out its purposes aforesaid.

III

That the place where the principal business of the corporation is to be transacted is the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California.

IV

That the term for which this incorporation is to exist is fifty (50) years from and after the date of the original incorporation.

V

The number of its trustees shall be three or five, and the names and addresses of the undersigned, who are hereby named as trustees of the corporation for the first year after the filing of these articles are:

Spencer James, 1632 West 35th Place, Los Angeles, California

James Ross, 312 Azusa Street, Los Angeles, California

And the name and residence of the one appointed for the first two years is:

Richard Asbery, 312 Azusa Street, Los Angeles, California

And the names and residences of the ones appointed for the first three years are:

Rev. W. J. Seymour, 312 Azusa Street, Los Angeles, California

Jennie E. M. Seymour, 312 Azusa Street, Los Angeles, California

That the said trustees are to be selected in the manner provided for in the constitution and by-laws of the Apostolic Faith Church.

VI

That on the 19th day of May, 1914, in the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California, an election was held for trustees; that said election was held in accordance with a resolution at the last regular prior meeting of the said Apostolic Faith Mission, held on the 12th day of June in the office of said Corporation at the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California; that notice of such meeting for the election of directors or trustees was given to the members of said Apostolic Faith Mission; that a majority of the members of said corporation who were present voted at such election, and that the result thereof was that the trustees hereinbefore named were duly elected for the respective terms.

VII

That this corporation has no capital stock and is not formed for profit.

Constitution of the Apostolic Faith Mission

Article A

Section 1. The name of this corporation shall be the "Apostolic Faith Mission."

Section 2. The objects of this corporation are set in "II" of the amended articles as above set forth.

Section 3. There shall be no political discussions or any other discussions contrary to the law of God. The bishop shall decide what discussions shall take place in the mission.

Article B

This mission shall have jurisdiction over all Subordinate missions that may hereafter be formed or come under the supervision of this mission. It shall have the right and power of granting charters to subordinate missions hereafter formed, or of suspending or annulling or revoking the same for proper cause.

Article C

This mission shall be composed of one bishop, one vice bishop, one secretary, one treasurer, five trustees, three deacons, two deaconsesses, two elders, one superintendent of Sunday schools, one superintendent of apostolic endeavor. The bishop, vice bishop and trustees must be people of color.

Article D

The mission shall hold its annual meeting on the first Monday in April at 7:30 P.M. of each and every year. There shall be such other meetings as the bishop may elect.

Article E

The elective officers shall be the board of trustees who are elected as follows: Two for one year, one for two years and two for three years. All to be elected by ballot or the yea or no. That said trustees have been elected as hereinbefore set forth. After the first year there shall be three trustees only. The bishop and wife shall be trustees for life.

Article F

The founder and organizer of the mission shall be the bishop. He shall be a colored person, thoroughly converted and sanctified.

Article G

The other officers, trustees and bishop, shall be appointed by the bishop and hold office during such time as the bishop may direct and be subject to removal by the bishop.

The bishop shall approve all members taken into this mission, grant charters, revoke charters, establish rules and discipline for the guidance of the mission. Preside and lead at all meetings. Appoint all officers except the trustees. Remove all officers except trustees and perform any and such other and further duties that may devolve upon him from time to time. The bishop and wife shall be trustees for life time. The bishop and wife shall be head trustees of the church. The bishop shall remove trustees only for failing to obey the laws and doctrines of the church.

The vice bishop shall be appointed by the bishop and he shall be a colored man who has served the mission faithfully and well. His duties are as follows: Upon the death, removal, resignation or disqualification of the bishop, the vice bishop shall succeed the bishop. The vice bishop shall assist the bishop as he may direct. Help the bishop ordain preachers of the gospel as well as missionaries.

The duties of the other officers shall be as the bishop may provide.

Article H

There shall be such other committees as the bishop may provide and from time to time select, all to serve under the direction of the bishop and in the interests of the mission.

Article I

There may be such other subordinate missions as may from time to time be established. That upon the written request of not less than twenty-five persons who are converted, a mission may be founded and established. There must be passed a resolution by said twenty-five persons to the effect that they desire to found an Apostolic Faith Mission. The resolution expressing their desire must be forwarded to this mission. If the bishop is satisfied with the resolution he may then proceed to grant a charter to said mission, which is all times under the control and supervision of this mission. When the said charter is granted, the said mission becomes a part of this mission.

Article J

The bishop shall have power to hear all matters pertaining to the expulsion of any member of said mission and of any subordinate mission.

The bishop shall have power to expel or suspend any member for any misconduct or for any violations of the scriptures. Every member against whom any charge is filed shall have a hearing before the bishop and two other members or officers chosen by the bishop. If after hearing the evidence the said member may be expelled or suspended from the mission if the bishop and one member to order. But no one shall be expelled or suspended from the membership without the bishop's consent.

Article K

This Constitution may be amended in the manner provided by the consent of the bishop or by-law.

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