

DOCTRINAL CLARIFICATION FOR IFCA APPLICANTS

When doctrinal questions arise within IFCA International, we always seek to be true to the Bible in every way. That is the bedrock commitment every member of IFCA International shares. Our union (official membership) in IFCA International is based on that shared commitment to the Bible as articulated in the IFCA doctrinal statement. To become a member of IFCA, among other things, one must be in "full agreement with the articles of Faith and be willing to abide by the Constitution and By-Laws of IFCA International" (Article VI, Section 2).

Every church and individual applying for membership must be in full agreement with the IFCA International Articles of Faith and Doctrine. And every member church and individual member must also submit an annual reaffirmation ("Yes, I still am in full agreement with the IFCA International doctrinal statement").

From time to time during the application process, some men have asked about different parts of the IFCA International Articles of Faith and Doctrine. Here are some helpful clarifications regarding four recurring questions we note in the responses of our applicants:

Person and Work of Christ

In Article IV. Section 3.b we state: "We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for all mankind as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that the sufficiency of this atoning sacrifice to accomplish the redemption and justification of all who trust in Him is assured by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead." When we say "all mankind" we mean that Christ's atonement is sufficient for all mankind without exception.

The Two Natures of the Believer

In Article IV. Section 8 we state: "We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural." We consider the belief equating the old nature with the flesh to be an acceptable expression qualifying one for membership in IFCA International.

The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

In Article IV. Section 11.a we state: "We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and, that the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today; and, that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established." The New Testament lists other spiritual gifts (such as serving, exhortation, giving, leadership, mercy, helps) that are left unmentioned in our Articles of Faith and Doctrine. We acknowledge that these gifts of ministry continue, just as we acknowledge that God works supernaturally according to His sovereign will.

Dispensationalism

In Article IV. Section 13 we state: "We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these - the age of law, the age of the Church, and the age of the millennial kingdom - are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture." **We require agreement with the careful wording and specific language of this statement, and to the clear distinction between Israel and the Church that this statement requires.**