

Articles of Faith

I The Bible

We believe that the Bible (consisting of the sixty-six books of the old and New Testaments) was written by men who were so moved by the Holy Spirit that what they wrote was what God wanted written—even in the choice of the words—and without error.

While the original manuscripts of Scripture no longer exist, we believe that God has providentially preserved His Word so that none of its truth has been lost. The Bible is our complete rule and final authority in all matters of Christian faith and practice, and reveals the doctrines, principles and examples by which man will be judged. We also recognize the unique place which the King James Bible occupies among English-speaking Christians and encourage its use in the public services of Faith Baptist Church, (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; John 10:35).

II God

We believe that three distinct eternal persons, known in Scripture as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, share equally in one divine essence, the Trinity; that this one and only God is infinite, inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love, (Deut. 6:4; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 1:1, 14, 17; Acts 5:3-4; Phil. 2:11).

III Jesus Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God; that He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, thus to continue forever as both true God and true man—one Person with two natures. (John 1:1, 14; Luke 1:35; Phil. 2:5-8).

We believe that by His death He voluntarily offered Himself as a substitute in the sinner's place, bearing our sins in His own body on the cross, and satisfied the demands of God's holiness toward our sins. (Rom. 3:24-25; 5:6-10; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24).

We believe that He rose again from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He suffered and died, thus guaranteeing our salvation and demonstrating the Father's acceptance of His atoning death. (Luke 24:36-43; John 2:19-21; John 20:19-29; Acts 17:31; Rom. 1:4).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven, exalted on the right hand of God, where He fulfills the ministry of intercession and advocacy as His people's High Priest. (Heb. 1:3; 4:14-16; 7:23-25; 9:24; 12:2; 1 John 2:1, 2).

IV

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal with and of the same nature as God the Father and God the Son; that He was active in creation; that He convinces unbelievers of their sin, the necessity of righteousness, and the certainty of approaching judgment; that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel when it is preached; that He accomplishes the New Birth; that He baptizes, seals, guides, teaches, sanctifies, helps and gives gifts to the believer. (Matt. 28:19; Gen. 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; John 3:3,8; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14; Rom. 8:14,16).

We believe that certain gifts of the Spirit such as apostleship, prophecy and tongues (among others) were temporary, needed only in the foundational period of the Church, and have no valid exercise today. (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 13:8-11).

V

Satan

We believe that Satan, an evil spirit being, is a real person; that he is the unholy god of this age, the source and leader of all the powers of darkness; and that he will certainly be judged in the lake of fire forever. (Matt. 4:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:10).

VI

Creation

We accept the Genesis account of creation, which we believe to narrate historical fact, and we affirm that man is a direct creation of God and not the result of any process of evolution. (Gen. 1-2; Col. 1:16,17; John 1:3).

VII

The Fall of Man

We believe that the first man, Adam, was created by God in untested creaturely holiness; that he was under moral obligation to obey the command of his Creator; but that by voluntary disobedience he fell from his sinless state. Because all human beings sinned in Adam, they therefore stand under just condemnation before God. (Gen. 3:16,24; Rom. 5:12-19; Rom. 1:18,32).

VIII

God's Grace in Salvation

We believe that a sinner escapes from God's wrath only by being saved, and that to be saved he must be born again. The new birth is instantaneous and not a process; in the new birth a person who was dead in sins is made a partaker in the divine nature and receives eternal life as the free gift of God. The new birth is brought about in a way that we cannot understand, by the Holy Spirit using divine truth so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel. The proper evidence that the new birth has taken place appears in the holy fruits of a godly life. (John 3:3-8; 2 Cor. 5:17; 2 Pet. 1:4; Eph. 2:1-9; 1 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 2:10).

We believe that salvation is free to all men by the Gospel, and that nothing prevents the salvation of the worst sinner but his own rejection of God's Son. (John 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:9).

IX

The Benefits and Condition of Salvation

We believe that some of the chief benefits of salvation are: (1) the forgiveness of sins (Acts 10:43); (2) justification (Rom. 5:1), by which our sins are blotted out from God's Book and Christ's righteousness is put to our account; (3) propitiation (1 John 2:2), which means that God's holiness has been satisfied by Christ's death; (4) redemption (Gal. 3:13), which means we have been purchased by Christ's death and set free from bondage; (5) reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-20), which means that we who once were God's enemies have now been made His friends (Rom. 5:10); and (6) regeneration or the new birth (John 3:3), which means we have been given eternal life (John 3:16).

We believe that all believers are positionally sanctified at their conversion (Heb. 10:10-14); that all believers can experience progressive sanctification through daily obedience to God's Word (John 17:17; Heb. 12:10); and that all believers will be completely sanctified when Christ returns (1 Thess. 3:13).

We believe that faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ and in His bodily resurrection from the dead is the only condition of salvation and that no good work or religious observance has the power to bring or to help to bring salvation. (Acts 16:31; Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:8-9).

X

The Security of the Believer

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God so that they can never be lost. (Phil. 1:6; John 10:28-29; Rom. 8:29-30).

XI

The Universal Church

We believe that all in this age (from the day of Pentecost to the Rapture) who are truly born again have been baptized into the Body of Christ, which can properly be called the universal or invisible church. (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22,23; 5:25-27).

XII

The Local Church

We believe that each local church is a visible expression of the Body of Christ and that God's program for this age is to be carried out through the local church, which is the Pillar and Ground of the Truth. A local church is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, organized for worship and service, observing the ordinances, and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word. (Acts 2:41; 14:27; 1 Tim. 3:15).

We believe that there are two scriptural offices in the local church: the office of the pastor (also called elder or bishop) and the office of deacon.

We believe that the local church is self-governing; ruled by the democracy of the saints (Acts 6:1-6; 15:22,23; 1 Cor. 5:1-13); subject to the Scriptures only, and free of any external ecclesiastical authority (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Acts 20:17, 28, 29).

We believe that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel, and that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. (Acts 15:1-4; 22-31).

XIII

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the single immersion of a believer in water to show forth in picture form his faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in His death to sin and resurrection to a new life. We believe that baptism is a prerequisite to the privilege of a church relation. (Acts 8:26-39; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21).

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death until He comes. Since it is for obedient believers, it should be preceded by solemn self-examination. (1 Cor. 11:23-24).

XIV

Future Events

We believe that Christ could return for His Church at any time. When He comes He will first remove His Church by resurrection and translation, then pour out the righteous judgments of God upon the unbelieving world during the tribulation period. Afterward He will descend with His Church to establish His literal kingdom over all the nations for a thousand years, at the close of which He will raise and judge the unsaved dead. Finally, as the Son of David He will deliver up His Messianic Kingdom to God the Father, in order that as the eternal Son of God He may reign forever with the Father in the New Heaven and the New Earth. (Titus 2:11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 6:1-18,24; 19:1; 20:6; 20:11-15; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 21:1; 22:6).

We believe that the souls of the saved at death go immediately to be with Christ in heaven. There they abide in joyful fellowship with Him until His return for the Church, when their bodies shall be raised from the grave and changed into the likeness of His glorious body. At that time their works shall be brought before the Judgment Seat of Christ for the determination of rewards, a judgment which may issue in the loss of rewards but not in the loss of the soul. (Phil. 1:22-24; 2 Cor. 5:1-8; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 John 3:2; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15).

We believe that the souls of the unsaved descend at death into Hades. There they are kept under punishment until the judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the millennial kingdom. At that time they will be judged according to their works and cast into the place of final and everlasting punishment, the lake of fire. (Luke 16:19-31; Rev. 20:11-15; Matt. 10:28).