

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH DECLARATION OF FAITH

Section I. Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally inspired by God and the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore, has truth without any admixture of error for its matter. We believe the Bible to be God's Word, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions, shall be tried. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Section II. Of the True God

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. Exodus 20:2-3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11; 1 John 5:7.

Section III. Of Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is a divine person of the Trinity with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, that He was active in and sustains the creation, that He was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, that He, being sinless was made sin for us, was crucified, buried and rose again victorious over death, that He ascended unto the Father and is seated at His right hand. Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-4, 10, 14; Colossians 1:13-18; Galatians 4:4-7; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 12-21; Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 1:1-14.

Section IV. Of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the New Birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer. John 14:16-17; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5-6; Ephesians 1:13-14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Romans 8:14; Romans 8:16; Romans 8:26-27.

Section V. Of the Devil, or Satan

We believe in the personality of Satan, that he was created by God as an angel but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator, that he became the unholy god of this age, and the author of all the powers of darkness, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. Matthew 4:1-3; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10.

Section VI. Of the Creation

We accept the Genesis account of creation, and believe that man came by direct creation of God and not by evolution. Genesis Chapters 1 and 2; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:3.

Section VII. Of Man

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker. God is the giver of life and the final authority in the cessation of life. Therefore, all human life is sacred and to be protected, including care for the pre-born, handicapped, infirmed, needy and aged. Genesis 3:1-6, 24; Exodus 20:13; Psalm 82:3-4; Psalm 139:13-16; Job 12:9-10.

Section VIII. Of the Fall of Man

Man, through the sin of Adam, by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but of choice; and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse. Romans 5:1-19; Romans 1:18, 32; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 53:6.

Section IX. Of Gender and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as a male or a female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (Including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, rape, pedophilia and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity as people created in the image of God. Genesis 1:26-27; Matthew 5:16; Matthew 15:18-20; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31; Romans 6:23; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.

Section X. Of the Atonement for Sin

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, Who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the just dying for the unjust; Christ, the Lord, bearing our sin in His own body on the tree; that having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in Heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior. Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24; John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14; Isaiah 53:4-7; Romans 3:25; 1 John 4:10; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Section XI. Of Grace in the New Creation

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life. John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:1; John 3:6-7; Acts 16:30-33; 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:13; John 3:8.

Section XII. Of Faith and Salvation

We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. Acts 16:31.

Section XIII. Of Justification

We believe that a great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification.

- a. That justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life, on principles of righteousness.
- b. That it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed to us. Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Romans 8:1; Romans 5:9; Romans 5:1.

Section XIV. Of Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner: first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return. Hebrews 3:1, 10:10-14; John 17:17, 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 1 John 3:2, Jude 24-25.

Section XV. Of the Security of the Saints

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6; John 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1

Section XVI. Of the Local Church

We believe that a local church is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers are pastors, and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties, are clearly defined in the Scriptures, we believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations, and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is Scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation, on all matters of membership, of policy of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final. Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 4:11; Acts 20:17-28; 1 Timothy 5:17; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23-24; Acts 15:13-18.

Section XVII. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of his death until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. Acts 2:41-42; Acts 8:26-39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 11:23-38.

Section XVIII. Of Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society, that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth. Romans 13:1-7; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21-22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:20; Acts 4:19-20; Daniel 3:17-18.

Section XIX. Of Marriage and the Family

We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in a covenant commitment. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the only channel of sexual expression according to biblical teaching, and the means for procreation of the human race. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:15-25; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Proverbs 5:15-20; Proverbs 6:20-22; Proverbs 13:24; Proverbs 22:6, 15; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; Matthew 18:2-5; Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; Ephesians 6:1-4; 1 Timothy 5:14; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Section XX. Of the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost. Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17-18; 1 John 5:19; Romans 7:6; Romans 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 6:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21.

Section XXI. Of the Resurrection, Personal, Visible, Premillennial Return of Christ, and Related Events

- (a) We believe in the Bodily Resurrection of Christ.
Matthew 28:6-7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6.
- (b) We believe in the Ascension of Christ.
Acts 1:9-11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 12:2.
- (c) We believe in the High Priesthood of Christ.
Hebrews 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 5:9-10.
- (d) We believe in the Second Coming of Christ.
John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; James 5:8; Hebrews 9:28.
- (e) We believe in the Resurrection of the Righteous Dead.
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44; 1 Corinthians 15:52.
- (f) We believe in the Change of the Living in Christ.
1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Philippians 3:20-21.
- (g) We believe in the Throne of David.
Luke 1:32; Isaiah 9:6-7; Acts 2:29-30.
- (h) We believe in the Millennial Reign of Christ.
1 Corinthians 15:25; Isaiah 32:1; Isaiah 11:4-5; Psalms 72:8; Revelation 20:14;
Revelation 20:6