

Article III: Statement of Faith

This church holds the following Statement of Faith as being a summary of Christian doctrine whose authority consists only in its agreement with the Word of God.

A. The Bible

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. It is inerrant and infallible in its original manuscript which is to be taken as verbally inspired. It reveals the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions would be tried. We deny that other books are inspired by God in the same way as the Bible. **(Ps. 19:7-10; Mt. 5:17-18; Acts 17:11; Rom. 16:25-26; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21)**

B. God: the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit

We believe in the one true and living God, the sovereign creator and sustainer of all things. He is infinite, eternal, perfect in all of His attributes and unchangeable. He is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

The Father is the head of the Godhead, and into His hands the kingdom shall be delivered. The Son is the Promised Messiah of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin Mary, hence the God-Man. He lived a sinless life. He died on the cross to redeem man, physically rose again from the dead to justify the believer, ascended to the right hand of God where He intercedes for us, and in the Father's own time will return in visible, personal form to overthrow sin and judge the world. The Holy Spirit is the one sent from God to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment, to regenerate and cleanse from sin. He is the resident guide, teacher, and strengthener of the believer. **(Gen. 1:1-2; Ex. 3:14; Deut. 6:4; Ps. 19:1-3, 51:11; Mark 1:9-11; John 1:1-18, 29, 4:24, 14:6-13; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:13-22; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:1-3; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; Rev. 5:9-14)**

C. Satan and Sinful Man

We believe that man was created innocent, that he was tempted by Satan and sinned; because of this men have been born in sin since that time and are by nature the children of wrath. We believe that Satan is a personal devil who with his angels carries on the work of iniquity and the end of sin is eternal separation from God. **(Gen. 1:26-30, 3:1-24; Ps. 51:5; Job 1:6-7; Rom. 3:10-18, 23, 5:6-12; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Peter 5:8; Rev. 20:10, 15)**

D. Salvation

We believe that salvation is wholly of God, and by His grace. It is not based on human merit or works. It involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification.

1. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.
2. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.
3. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
4. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

We believe that true salvation can never be lost. It is complete at the moment of conversion, thus requiring no additional experience such as the blessing or a subsequent baptism with the Holy Spirit. The evidence of salvation is progressively revealed by the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit and in holiness of life and obedience to our Lord, for which a continual filling with the Holy Spirit is necessary. **(Gen. 3:15; Mt. 1:21, 4:17; John 3:3-21, 5:24, 10:28-29; Acts 2:21, 4:12; Rom. 1:16-18, 3:23-25, 5:8-10, 6:1-23, 8:1-18, 29-39, 10:9-13; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:8-10; Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 1:9-22; 1 Thess. 5:23-24; 2 Tim. 1:14; Titus 2:11-14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11, 4:13)**

E. Resurrection

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in the final bodily resurrection of all men, just and unjust. Accordingly, we believe that the bodies of men after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God—the righteous to rest with Him, the wicked to be reserved under darkness to the judgment. We believe that those who commit their lives to Jesus Christ during this life will be raised to everlasting life, but those who are not committed to Jesus Christ in this life will be raised to everlasting condemnation. **(Ps. 103:14; Ecc. 3:20; Mt. 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; John 5:25-29; Rom. 6:1-14; 1 Cor. 15:1-58; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 3:10-21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)**

F. The Church and Church Ordinances

We believe that the Lord commissions the church to give the Gospel to the world, and that Christ is supreme Head of the Church.

We believe that a New Testament church is a voluntary, autonomous association of baptized believers in Christ who covenant together to follow the teachings of Scripture in doctrine, worship, and practice.

We believe that a church is a congregational organization served by two offices, pastors and deacons, and that the Bible teaches that only men are to be ordained into these offices.

We believe the only two ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper. We likewise believe that only those who are committed to Jesus Christ as Lord are Scriptural subjects for baptism and that immersion is the only proper mode of baptism. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a memorial to the Lord's death. The bread symbolizes His body which was given for us. The fruit of the vine symbolizes His blood which was shed for us. **(Mt. 3:13-17, 16:15-19, 26:26-30, 28:18-20; Mark 1:9-11, 14:2-26; Acts 1:8, 2:41-42, 47, 6:3-6, 13:1-3, 20:28; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; Eph. 1:22-23, 2:19-22, 5:22-32; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:18; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)**

G. Stewardship

We believe that God is the source of all blessing, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others.

We believe that God's method of financing the purpose, mission, ministry, and activities of the church is by the tithes and offerings of His people. The tithe is to be given to the Lord through His church or storehouse to be distributed as directed by the leadership of the Spirit as the need arises.

We believe that tithing was instituted before the law was ever given and was practiced by the early church. **(Gen. 14:20; Lev. 27:30-32; Malachi 3:8-12; Mt. 6:1-4, 19-21; Luke 12:16-21; Acts 2:44-47, 17:24-25, 20:35; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:1-2, 6:19-20, 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15; Phil. 4:10-19)**

H. Baptist Distinctives and Cooperation

We are Baptists because we believe that Baptists stand for distinctive truths to which other denominations do not adhere. We believe that these truths are contained in the Southern Baptist Faith and Message of 2000. We believe that we cannot compromise these truths without being disloyal to our Lord and to His Word. We do seek to cooperate with all others who are committed to Jesus Christ as Lord. **(1 Cor. 1:10-17, 3:5-15; Eph. 4:1-16; Phil. 1:15-18; 2 Tim. 2:15)**

I. Civil Government

We believe that God established civil government. We likewise believe in the complete separation of church and state. **(Mt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-5)**

J. Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that the term 'marriage' has only one meaning: marriage is sanctioned by God and joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography and/or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all person employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this statement on marriage and sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

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. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are neither in accordance with Scripture nor the doctrines of the church. **(Gen. 1:26-28, 2:15-25; Mt. 19:4-6; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-20, 7:1-16; Eph.5:21-33)**

K. Conflict Resolution and Church Discipline

We believe that the Lord calls us to live peaceably with others, seeking to resolve conflict as soon as possible. We believe Scripture encourages discipline of believers involved in persistent, unrepentant sin for the purpose of restoring them to a right relationship with God and fellowship with the church. When discipline is enacted, it should be carried out with an attitude of love, humility, and commitment to biblical process as defined in Scripture. **(Matthew 5:22-24, 18:15-18; Rom. 12:18; Heb. 12:14; 1Timothy 5:19-21)**