

Statement of Core Beliefs

THE SCRIPTURES

The Holy Bible was written by divinely inspired individuals and is God's revelation of Himself to humanity. 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. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the thing that unifies all Christians, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21

GOD

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

GOD THE FATHER

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all humanity.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7

GOD THE SON

Christ is the eternal, one and only begotten Son of God. He is from the beginning, being part of the triune God Himself; specifically He is the Word of God through whom all creation came to be, to which He brings grace and truth. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with humanity yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of humanity from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is affected the

reconciliation between God and humanity. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the trinity, fully divine. He inspired select and holy individuals to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables humanity to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts humanity of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls human beings to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer individually and the church collectively in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

SALVATION

Scripture teaches that God is distinct from us in person and essence. He is the Creator of all things and has made us in His image and likeness within His creation. We were made for a relationship with Him, though He is superior to us in every way. God's character is holy, meaning that He is perfectly balanced in qualities like His love and justice. Being holy, it is right and necessary for God to hold all humanity accountable for sin and yet He lovingly provides a way of escape from judgment.

Salvation is God's deliverance of people from his holy wrath through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All of humanity has rebelled against God and are condemned to eternal death and separation from Him. Jesus, God's Son, was sent to die in the place of condemned sinners to make it possible for them to be brought back into a right relationship with their Creator. This was the only way redemption could be bought; God gave His son and Jesus sacrificed Himself willingly and with full knowledge of this. Only through faith in Jesus, who was raised from the dead, people can experience God's forgiveness and have hope of eternal life with Him.

When a person turns to God and places their trust fully in Jesus they are "born-again" by the Holy Spirit. This means that the Holy Spirit comes to dwell forever in the spirit of the believer making them alive to God and able to live a "new" life that honors the Lord. The believer is sealed by the Holy Spirit for the day of Christ's return and is assured of being spared from God's wrath. After Christ's return, believers will dwell with God forever.

Salvation is experienced when a person's faith is placed in Jesus Christ for forgiveness and a right relationship with God. This is the experience of "new birth" sometimes referred to in the Bible as "regeneration." Salvation is worked out in our lives as we submit to the work of Christ's Spirit, motivating and empowering us to obey Him, sometimes referred to in the Bible as "sanctification." Salvation will be realized fully when Christ returns again to take us to be with Him forever, referred to as "glorification."

The following statements further explain various aspects of the salvation that can be experienced through faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:19-22; 8:18,29-30; Philippians 2:12-13; 1Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:3:4-6

GRACE

We believe that God's grace does not come to us as the result of human effort or worthiness, but is the provision of God's mercy and love freely given to those who will believe in His Son. Grace gives to us what we do not deserve nor can earn by our performance. It is by God's grace that a person is able to experience forgiveness and a right relationship with Him. Believers in Jesus Christ stand in the grace of God, and by it they have hope. For those in Christ, grace abounds far beyond sin and its consequences, to the end that condemned sinners are now able to have eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:24-28; 5:2,15-19, 20-21; 11:6; Ephesians 1:6-7; 2: 4-10, 8-9

SIN

We believe that all people are sinners and unable by human performance to earn, deserve, or merit salvation. We believe that the wages of sin is death, and that apart from God's grace no one can be saved. We believe that none are righteous before God, and that apart from the conviction and regeneration of the Holy Spirit, none can be saved. All of humanity is clearly fallen, separated from God, and lost in sin.

John 1:12-13; 16:8-11; Romans 3:10-12; 3:23; 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; ; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:23-25

FORGIVENESS

We believe that Jesus Christ died as a substitute for and a satisfaction of God's righteous judgment against sin "for the whole world". God redeems and forgives all who will believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation from sin, death, and hell. We believe that eternal life is a gift of God, and that "whoever believes" in Jesus Christ will not perish, but will have eternal life. I Timothy 4:10 says "...we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe." Hebrews 2:9 states that Jesus "...was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. " The atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ was clearly sufficient to save the entire human race, but becomes effective only in those who believe.

John 3:16-18; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 1:7; 1Timothy 4:10; I Peter 1:18-19; 2 Peter 2:1; I John 2:2; 4:9-10

ELECTION

We believe that God chose believers before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight and in love has predestined them to be adopted as His children. Those whom God has

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foreknown He has predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. We believe that God offers salvation to all who will call on His name. Romans 10:13 says, "...for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" We also believe that God calls to Himself those who will believe in His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible also teaches that there is a universal command to repent given to all people. Revelation 22:17 states, "...whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life." I Peter 1:2 tells us we are, "...chosen [*elect*] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood..." Matthew 22:14 says, "For many are called, but few are chosen(*elect*)." God clearly does choose, but man must also accept God's invitation to salvation.

Acts 17:30-31; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4-6

PERSEVERANCE

We believe that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, and that there is no condemnation to those who are in Jesus Christ. We believe that the promise of Jesus in John 10:27-28 is clear: "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand". Jesus said in John 6:37, "...whoever comes to me I will never drive away". We have this assurance in Philippians 1:6 "...being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus". We believe that the Holy Spirit has sealed us for the day of redemption.

Romans 8:1; 38-39; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30

THE CHURCH

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are elders and deacons. Both men and women are gifted for service in the church. The office of elder is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The office of deacon is open to men and women.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all ages, believers from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to faith in the final resurrection of the dead. We highly value and prioritize baptism as a public declaration in response to obedience of faith in Christ.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12

THE LORD'S DAY

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10

THE KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which individuals enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22

LAST THINGS

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all humanity in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in the new Heaven and new Earth with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13

EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS

It is the responsibility and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of a person's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the responsibility of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ through various forms of communication and a witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17

STEWARDSHIP

God is the source of all blessings—both temporal and spiritual and all that we have comes from Him. Christians, therefore, have the privilege to worship God by stewarding every good gift to His glory. Out of love believers choose to live generous with their time, talents, treasures and touch. The Bible directs disciples of Christ to give cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the gospel and the glory of our great God and Savior. As stewards of God's resources we long to hear Jesus say one day; "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19

Adapted and Referenced From:

Cornerstone Doctrinal Statement 2019

<https://cornerstonelife.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Doctrinal-Statment-2019-2.pdf>

The Faith and Baptist Message 2000

<http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>

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