

ARTICLE III STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS

1. The Scripture

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, truth without any mixture of error, written by men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct for all who follow Christ.

(Exodus 34:27-28; 2 Samuel 23:2; Psalm 19:7-11; Mark 12:36; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

2. The Trinity

We believe in one God, creator and sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(One God: Deuteronomy 4:35; Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; Three Persons: Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:13-14; The Father is God: Matthew 6:9; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; The Son is God: John 1:1, 14; Colossians 1:19-20; 2:9; Philippians 2:5-11; The Spirit is God: Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18)

3. The Father

We believe God the Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of human history according to His purposes. He is perfect in character, power, knowledge, and love. God is Father in truth to those who become His children through faith in Jesus Christ.

(Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 1 Chronicles 29:11; Matthew 6:9-13; 7:11; Acts 17:24-28; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:4-7)

4. The Son

We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. He rose bodily from the dead, ascended to the right hand of God, and is now our High Priest.

(John 1:1, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 1:30-35; 1 Peter 1:18-22; 2:24; 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:1-6; Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11; 2:32-36; Hebrews 4:14-16)

5. The Holy Spirit

We believe the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, convict people of sin, regenerate those who believe, and indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the Christian for Godly living and service.

(John 16:7-15; John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10; 12:4-7; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 1:7)

6. The Nature of Humanity

We believe all people are created in the image of God and therefore every person has worth and value. The image of God in humans also enables each person to experience a personal relationship with God. However, every person has forfeited that relationship because each one, according to his or her sinful nature and by acts of his or her will, has rejected God.

(Genesis 1:26-27; 9:6; James 3:9-10; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 John 1:3; Psalm 53:1-3; Romans

1:18-23; 3:23; 5:12)

7. The Salvation of Humanity

We believe salvation from sin is provided by God only through the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross for our sins, and that salvation is available as a free gift of God to all who repent of their sin and trust in Christ as Lord and Savior. The result of receiving God's gift of salvation is restoration to the relationship with Him for which we were created.

(John 1:29; John 3:14-16; Romans 5:6-11; 6:23; Colossians 1:14-15; 1 Peter 1:18-22; 3:18; 1 John 2:2)

8. The Security of the Believer

We believe that all true believers by virtue of their faith in Christ are kept secure in Him forever. True believers will experience temptations, doubts, and times of unfaithfulness to Christ but will ultimately persevere in faith.

(John 10:27-30; John 6:35-39; Ephesians 1:13-14)

9. The Conduct of the Believer

We believe that a Christian is to live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellow humans; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should faithfully use his possessions to serve and honor God; and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the goal of full maturity as a disciple of Christ.

(1 Corinthians 10:31; Philippians 3:10-15; 1 Peter 2:11-12, 17; 4:7-19; 2 Peter 1:3-8; 1 John 1:5-10; 2:3-6; 3:13-18; Jude 1:20-25)

10. The Church

We believe a New Testament church is a local body of baptized believers who voluntarily band themselves together on the basis of shared commitment to Christ as Savior and Lord, to one another as fellow believers in Christ, and to continuing His saving mission in the world. The local church is a self-governing body operating under the Lordship of Christ with pastors and deacons as its scriptural leaders. We also believe that the New Testament speaks of the church as the body of Christ which is composed of all the redeemed of all the ages.

(Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:42-47; 13:1-3; 14:21-28; 1 Corinthians 12: 12-13, 27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 5:25; Colossians 1:18; Pastors [overseers] and Deacons: Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13)

11. The Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus instituted the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper to be observed by all believers until His return. Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to symbolize their faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Lord's Supper commemorates the death of Christ through the symbols of bread for his body and the cup for his blood. We believe the ordinances are not necessary for salvation but as acts commanded by Jesus they are essential expressions of Christian commitment.

(Baptism: Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-41; 8:35-38; 16:14-15; 16:31-33; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12; Lord's Supper: Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

12. Human Sexuality and Marriage

We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. We believe marriage is a biblical institution established by God as described in Scripture and is, therefore, the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union. We believe God ordained sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other.

(Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-24; Matthew 19:1-9; Hebrews 13:3-4; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

13. Last Things

We believe in the personal, visible, and imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ to reign as King over all. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead and the judgment of all people by Christ in righteousness following His return. Following judgment the believer will enter into everlasting joy in heaven with the Lord, and the unbeliever into everlasting punishment in hell apart from the Lord.

(Matthew 24:26-31, 36-44; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-11; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; 1 John 2:28-3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15; John 14:1-6; Revelation 21:1-8, 27; 22:1-6)

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of First Baptist Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the senior pastor in consultation with the deacons is the church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.