

ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally and plenary inspired and the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore, is true without any mixture of error for its content.

We believe that God preserved the content of the inspired manuscripts through many faithful copies of these original documents, and from the multitude of these documents reliable translations have been, and are being, made in many languages. These languages, when based upon the best texts and translated literally, are sufficient in every way for faith and practice (1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Mark 13:31; 1 Peter 1:25).

2. THE TRUE GOD

A. God the Father

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite, sovereign Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth. He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love. The unity of the Godhead is in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Ex. 20:2-3; Deut. 6:4; John 4:24; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rev. 4:11; 2 Tim. 2:5; 2 Cor. 13:14).

B. God the Son

We believe in the absolute deity of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was divine as no other man can be, being God of very God, existing from all eternity, and co-equal with the Father and the Spirit. His humanity did not consist in laying aside His deity. As a man He was miraculously begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (John 1:1-2; 1 John 5:20; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:26-38; Phil. 2:5-8).

C. God the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature. He was active in creation, and in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled. He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony. He is the agent in the new birth. He indwells, seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer. The gifts of tongues and healing were sign-gifts until the Scriptures were completed. The gifts ceased at that time (John 14:16-17; Matt. 28:19; Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Gen. 1:1-3; John 16:7-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5-6; Eph. 1:13-14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Rom. 8:14, 16, 26-27; 15:19; Heb. 2:4; 1 Cor. 13:8; 12:13).

3. THE DEVIL, OR SATAN

We believe that Satan is a created angelic being that originally was perfect but fell through pride and rebellion against God.

We believe in the personality of Satan that he is the prince of this world and the ruler of all the powers of darkness, and is destined to be chained and cast into the bottomless pit for the one thousand-year millennial kingdom and released to eternal judgment in the lake of fire (Ezek. 28:11-19; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:1-11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:10; John 12:31; 14:20; Rev. 12:9; 20:1-3).

4. CREATION

We believe the Genesis account of creation as being neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process. Man, spirit, soul and body, were created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life. All people are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race (Gen. 1 and 2; Col. 1:16-17; John 1:3).

5. THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in innocence in the image and likeness of God under the law of his maker. By voluntary transgression Adam fell from his sinless and blessed state, and, because of this all people are born in sin, and thus are totally depraved and partakers of Adam's fallen nature. Everyone is a sinner by nature and by conduct, and therefore are under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Gen. 1:26; 3:1-6, 24; Rom. 3:10-19; 5:12; 1:18, 32; Eph. 2:1-3).

6. SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father voluntarily took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin. He was the only and perfect sacrifice for man's sin. By the shedding of His blood in His death, Christ fully satisfied the just demands of a holy and righteous God regarding sin. His sacrifice 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 sins in His own body on the tree. Having risen from the dead He is now enthroned in Heaven. Christ is in every way qualified to be the substitute, a compassionate and all-sufficient Savior.

We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. Repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit and is an integral part of saving faith (Jonah 2:9; Eph. 2; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24-25; John 3:16; Matt. 18:11; Phil. 2:7-8; Heb. 2:14; Isa. 53:4-7; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:12-14, 22; 1 Peter 21:24).

7. RESURRECTION AND PRIESTHOOD

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ, in His ascension into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest interceding for us (Matt. 28:6-7; Luke 24:2-6; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 8:6; 12:2; 7:25; 1 Tim. 2:4; 1 John 2:1; Heb. 2:17; 5:9-10).

8. GRACE AND THE NEW BIRTH

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again. The new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus, and is instantaneous and not a process. 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. Also the new birth is brought about by our sovereign God 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. Its evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith and newness of life (John 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 John 5:1; John 3:6-7; Acts 16:30-33; 2 Peter 1:4; John 3:16; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1, 5; 2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 2:13; John 3:8).

9. JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the believer righteous upon the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ. It is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood (Rom. 3:24; 4:5; 5:1, 9; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9; Acts 13:39; Isa. 53:11; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Titus 3:5; Rom. 8:1).

10. SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God, which is accomplished in a threefold manner. First, it is 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, it is a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life. Third, it is the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return (Heb. 10:10-14; John 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 4:3-4; 5:23-24; 1 John 3:2; Jude 24-25; Rev. 22:11; 2 Cor. 1:10).

11. ADOPTION

We believe that adoption is the act whereby the Father, for the sake of Christ, places new believers into the honored position of adult sons, in contrast with regeneration whereby the believer receives the nature of God and becomes a child of God. The full benefits of the position accorded by adoption as the sons of God awaits the glorification of the believer at the coming of the Lord (Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:1-7; John 1:12; 1 John 3:1-2).

12. SECURITY OF THE SAINTS

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ. This assurance of eternal life is founded solely on the testimony of God in His written Word.

We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in this assurance which, however, forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Phil. 1:6; John 10:28-29; 6:47; Rom. 8:35-39; 1 John 5:13; Jude 1; Rom. 8:12-17; 13:13; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

13. THE CHURCH

We believe in the unity of all true believers in the Church which is the Body of Christ, which was established on the day of Pentecost, and that all believers, from Pentecost to the Rapture, both Jews and Gentiles, are added to the Church by the baptism of the Holy Spirit when we accept Christ as Savior.

We believe that this Church is manifested through the local church which 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, exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word. 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 people 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. The one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit. It is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel. Each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. On all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is final (Eph. 3:1-20; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:11; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23-24; Acts 15:13-18; Matt. 16:18; Acts 11:15).

14. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that scriptural baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, under authority of the local church, in obedience to the Lord's command, and shows forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, through whom we died to sin and rose to a new life. Baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of membership in Faith Baptist Church. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of Christ's death until He returns, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination.

We believe that the biblical order of the ordinances is baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that participants should be immersed believers (Acts 8:36, 39; Matt. 3:16; Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 11:23-28; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42).

15. SEPARATION

We believe in obedience to the biblical commands to separate entirely from worldliness unto God. This includes separation from churches or other groups which adhere to unbiblical doctrine (2 Cor. 6:14--7:1; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Rom. 16:17; 2 John 9-11).

16. GOVERNMENTS

A. Civil Order

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good of human society. The 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 King of kings (Rom. 13:1-7; 2 Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:21-22; Acts 23:5; Matt. 22:21; Acts 5:29; 4:19-20; Dan. 3:17-18).

B. Church Order

We believe that the government of this local church is vested in the body of believers of which it is composed. In keeping with historic Baptist faith, the government of this church shall be democratic in its operation, remaining independent as it assumes sole responsibility for its actions and decisions (Matt. 18:15-17; Acts 15:3-4, 6-7, 22).

C. Family Order

We believe that marriage and family units are ordained of God and are basic to the social order of the human race. We furthermore accept the biblical prohibitions of sexual union and cohabitation outside of marriage, and the biblical directives concerning husband and wife and family as fully applicable to believers in our time (Gen. 2:24; Ex. 20:14; Prov. 6:24-33; Matt. 19:4-10; 5:27-28; Heb. 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-8).

D. Sexual Immorality

1. 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 than any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13.4)
2. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

17. LAST THINGS

A. The Rapture

We believe in the imminent, pre-millennial return of Christ for His Church, and at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seventieth week of Daniel (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:42-44, 51-54; Phil. 3:20; Rev. 3:10).

B. The Tribulation

We believe that the rapture of the church saints will be followed by a seven-year period called the Tribulation or Daniel's seventieth week. The church will be in Heaven during these years, during which time believers will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. The last three and a half years of the Tribulation is called the Great Tribulation or Jacob's Trouble, a time of severe judgments upon the whole earth (Dan. 9:27; Jer. 30:7; Matt. 24:15-21; Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 16:1-21).

C. The Millennial Kingdom

We believe the Tribulation will be terminated by Christ's coming in judgment to establish the Millennial Kingdom, during which time He will fulfill the promises to Israel concerning their earthly kingdom.

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be regathered in the land of Palestine as promised in the Abrahamic Covenant and, after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ (Gen. 13:14-17; Rom. 11:1-32; Ezek. 37; Isa. 65:17-25; Rev. 20:3; Jer. 31:31-34).

D. The Judgment of the Wicked

We believe the Millennial Kingdom will terminate with the release of Satan from the bottomless pit, who will lead an insurrection against the Son of God and will be eternally defeated by God. This will be followed by the Great White Throne Judgment, where all unbelievers will be judged and sentenced, but will be in conscious torment forever (2 Thess. 1:7-9; Mark 9:42-48; Rev. 20:2-3, 7-10).

E. The New Heaven and the New Earth

We believe in the new Heaven and the new earth, wherein dwells righteousness, and which will be the abiding place of the redeemed for all eternity, where Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 21:1-27; 22:3; 19:16).

18. DISPENSATIONALISM

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life, which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose (John 1:17; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25; Heb. 7:19; Rev. 20:2-6).