

Articles of Faith

The Holy Scriptures

We believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and that they compose the entire Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible, and God-breathed; and therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and divine revelation of God to man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only English-language translation used by Downtown Baptist Church. (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21)

The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each coeternal in being, co-identical in nature, coequal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14; John 14:10, 26)

The Person and Work of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; II Corinthians 5:19-21; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Romans 3:24-25; I Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:3-5) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministries of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; Romans 8:34; I John 2:1-2)

The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person Who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14) We believe that He is the Divine Teacher Who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 1:17-18; 5:18; I John 2:20, 27) We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry. (Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12:4-11, 28;

Ephesians 4:7-12) We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (I Corinthians 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

The Fallen Nature of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and, that all men are sinners by birth and by choice, and, of themselves, utterly unable to remedy their lost condition. (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; I Peter 1:18-19) and 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.

The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers

We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 38-39; I Corinthians 1:4-8; I Peter 1:4-5) We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)

The Church

We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons. (I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27) We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11) We believe in the autonomy of the local church, free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Romans 16:1, 4; I Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; I Peter 5:1-4) We recognize water baptism and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; I Corinthians 11:23-26)

Separation

We believe that all the saved should live in a manner that does not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations is commanded of God. (Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; II Timothy 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11)

The Second Advent of Christ

We believe in that "blessed hope," the personal, imminent return of Christ Who will rapture His Church prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom which was promised to the nation of Israel. (Psalm 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; I Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

The Eternal State

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men—the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13) We believe that the souls of the redeemed are at death absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6) We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection when, with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15)

The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin, and the cause of the fall of man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10)

Creation

We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11)

Civil Government

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: (1) the home, (2) the church, and (3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and are governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and has balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14)

Unchaste Conduct

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate physical activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and

pornography is a sinful perversion of God's original intent for a physical relationship between a husband and wife. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that the biblical definition of marriage is between one man and one woman. We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Although divorced and remarried persons may hold positions of service in a church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon of a church. (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; I Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, inexcusable taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5, 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

Missions

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8, II Corinthians 5:20)

Lawsuits Between Believers

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (I Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32)

Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; I Timothy 5:17-18; I John 3:17)

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.