

Confession of Faith

of The First Baptist Church of Caro, Michigan

I. Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men supernaturally inspired; that it is the truth without any admixture of error for its matter. Therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creed, and opinions should be tried.

By “The Holy Bible” we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not contain and convey the Word of God, but IS the very Word of God.

By “Inspiration” we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

II. Of the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth (Ex. 20-2-3, Gen. 17:1; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; John 4:24; Psalms 147:5; Psalm 83:1; Psalm 90:2; Jer. 10:10); inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible worship, confidence, and love (Ex. 15:11, Rev. 4:11; I Tim. 1:17; Rom. 11:33; Mark 12:30); that in the unity of the Godhead there are 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. (Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; I Cor. 12:4-6; I John 5:7; John 10:30; John 17:5; Acts 5:3-4; I Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6; Eph. 2:18; II Cor. 13:14)

III. Of the Virgin Birth

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner; (Gen. 3:15); born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman. (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Mark 1:1; John 1:14; Psalm 2:7; Gal. 4:4); that he is both the Son of God, and God the Son, and as such is truly God and truly man. (I John 5:20; I Cor. 15:47)

IV. Of The Holy Spirit

That the Holy Spirit is a divine person equal with God the Father (John 14:16-17), God the Son (Matt. 28:19) of the same nature (Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35); that He was active in the creation (Genesis 1:1-3); that in His relation to the unbelieving world, He restrains the Evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled (II Thess. 2:7); that He convicts of sin, of judgment, and of righteousness (John 16:8-11); that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony (John 15:26-27; Acts 5:30-32); that He is the agent in the New Birth (John 3:5-6); that He seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer (Eph. 1:13-14; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; John 16:13; John 14:26; Rom. 8:14; Rom. 8:16; II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2; Rom. 8:26-27)

V. Of the Devil or Satan

We believe that Satan was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell; (Isa. 14:12-13; Ezek. 28:14-17); drew after him a host of angels (Rev. 12:9, Jude 6; II Pet. 2:4; Eph. 2:2; John 14:30); that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world (I Thess. 3:5; Matt. 4:1-3). We hold him to be man's great tempter (I Peter 5:8); the enemy of God and His Christ (Zech. 1:3, I John 3:8; Matt. 13:25; 37-39; Luke 22:3,4); the accuser of the saints (Rev. 12:10); the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy (II Cor. 11:13-15; Mark 13:21-22), the lord of the anti-christ; (I John 4:3, II John 7; I John 2:22); the author of all the powers of darkness—destined however (Rev. 13:13-14; II Thess. 2:8-11) to final defeat at the hands of God's Son and (Rev. 19:11, 16, 20; Rev. 12:7-9; Rev. 20:1-3) to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels. (Rev. 20:10; Matt. 25:41)

VI. Of the Creation

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Acts. 4:24; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 11:3; John 1:3; Rev. 10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jer. 10:12; Neh. 9:6); that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness (Gen. 1:26-27; I Cor. 11:7); that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms (Gen. 2:7; Gen. 2:21-23); that all animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind" (Gen. 1:11; Gen. 1:24)

VII. Of the Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker (Gen. 3:1-6; Gen. 3:24), but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state (Rom. 5:12; Rom. 5:19); in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but of choice (Rom. 3:10-19; Eph. 2:1,3; Ezek. 18:19-20); being of nature utterly void of that state required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil (Rom. 1:32; Rom. 1:20; Rom. 1:28; Gal. 3:22); and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

VIII. Of the Atonement for Sin

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (Eph. 2:8; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24) through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins (John 3:16; Matt. 18:11; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14; Isa. 53:4-7; Rom. 3:25; I John 4:10; I Cor. 15:3; II Cor. 5:21); that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the 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 (John 10:18; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 1:4; I Pet. 2:24; I Pet. 3:18; Isa. 53:11; Heb. 12:2); that, having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and all-sufficient Savior. (I Cor. 15:20; Isa. 53:12; Heb. 9:12-15; Heb. 7:25; I John 2:2)

IX. Of Grace in the New Creation

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; (John 3:3); that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus (II Cor. 5:17); that it is instantaneous, and not a process (Luke 5:27; I John 5:1; John 3:6-7; Acts 2:41; Acts 16:30-33); that in the new birth the one dead in his trespasses and sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God (II Pet. 1:4; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1; II Cor. 5:19; Col. 2:13); that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; (John 3:8; John 1:12, 13); that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life. (Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9)

X. Of Justification

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness (Acts 13:39; Isa. 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 5:9; Rom. 5:1); that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us. (Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 1:17; Heb. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Rom. 4:1-8; Heb. 10:38)

XI. Of Sanctification

We believe that Bible sanctification has three aspects: First, the believer is set apart positionally before God the moment he believes (I Cor. 1:2-3; Heb. 10:10; John 17:17-19; II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2; I Cor. 6:11). Secondly, he is set apart progressively in his walk day by day as he grows in grace. Thirdly, he is set apart from the very presence of sin when his sanctification is completed at the coming of Christ for the Church.

XII. Of the Freeness of Salvation

We believe in God's electing grace (I Thess. 1:4; Col. 3:12; I Pet. 1:2; Titus 1:1; Rom. 8:29-30); that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel (Matt. 11:28; Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Rom. 10:13; John 6:37); that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith (Isa. 55:7; John 3:15-16; I Tim. 1:15; I Cor. 15:10; Eph. 2:4-5; John 5:40); that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel (Isa. 55:6; Acts 2:38), which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation. (John 3:18; John 3:36)

XIII. Of Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations (Acts 20:20), and also inseparable graces, (Mark 1:15) wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God (Acts 2:27-38); thereby, being deeply convicted of guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, and confession (Luke 18:13; Rom. 10:13; Psalms 51:1-4; Isa. 55:6-7; Psalm 51:7); at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior. (Luke 12:8; Rom. 10:9-11)

XIV. Of the Church

We believe that a local church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel (Acts 2:41-42); observing the ordinances of Christ (I Cor. 11:2); governed by His laws and (Eph. 1:22-23) exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word (Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:4; I Cor. 8:11); that its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures; (Acts 14:23; Acts 6:5-6; Acts 15:23; Acts 20:17-28; I Tim. 3:1-8) we believe the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20). To make individual disciples; to build up the church by baptism; to teach and instruct, as He has commanded (We do not believe in the reversal of this order).

We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit (Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23-24; I Pet. 5:1-4); that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation (Acts 15:22; Jude 2-3; II Cor. 8:23-24; I Cor. 16:1; Mal. 3:10; Lev. 27:32; I Cor. 5:11-13) on all matters of membership, of policy of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

XV. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer; (Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:6; John 3:23; Rom. 6:4-5; Matt. 3:16) into the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19); to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12); that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation and to the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20); in which the members of the church by the sacred use of bread and wine are to commemorate together the death of Christ until He comes (I Cor. 11:23-28); preceded always by solemn self-examination; we also extend the courtesy of the Lord's table to all true believers.

XVI. Of the Security of the Believer

We believe that every person, immediately upon acceptance of Christ as his personal Savior, receives the gift of Eternal Life, and is made at once a son of God. As such a special Providence watches over his welfare so that he is kept in a state of grace until it is succeeded by a state of Glory. (John 10:28-29; John 1:12; I John 5:10-13; I Pet. 1:5; Phil. 1:6; Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 1:13-14)

XVII. Of the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Mal. 3:18; Gen. 18:23; Rom. 6:17-18; Prov. 11:31; I Pet. 4:18); that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem (Rom. 1:17, I Cor. 15:22, Acts 10:34-35; I John 2:29; I John 3:7; Rom. 6:16); while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse (I John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 7:6; Rom. 6:23); and this distinction holds among men both after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost. (Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matt. 25:34, 41; John 8:21; Luke 9:26; John 12:25; Matt. 7:13-14)

XVIII. Of Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society (Rom. 13:1-7; II Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:21-22); that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed (Acts 23:5; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Pet. 2:13-14; I Pet. 2:17); except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 5:29; Acts 4:19-20; Dan. 3:17-18); who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth. In this connection we stand firmly for the separation of the church and state. (Matt. 10:28; Matt. 23:10; Phil. 2:10-11; Psa. 72:11)

XIX. Of the Resurrection, Return of Christ and Related Events

We believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at the face and full value.

- a) The Bodily Resurrection (Matt. 28:6-7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2, 4, 6)
- b) The Ascension (Acts 1:9; Acts 1:11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 8:1; Heb. 12:2)
- c) The High Priesthood (Heb. 8:6; I Tim. 2:5; I John 2:1; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 5:9-10)
- d) The Second Coming (Premillennial) (John 14:2; Acts 1:11; I Thess. 4:16; Matt. 24:27; Matt. 25:13; James 5:8; Matt. 24:42; Heb. 9:28)
- e) The Resurrection of the Righteous Dead (I Thess. 4:16; I Cor. 15:42-44; I Cor. 15:52)
- f) The Change of the Living in Christ (I Cor. 15:51-52; I Thess. 4:17; Phil. 3:20-21)
- g) On the Throne of David (Luke 1:32; Isa. 9:6-7; Acts 2:29-30)
- h) His Reign on Earth (I Cor. 15:25; Isa. 32:1; Isa. 11:4-5; Psa. 72:8; Rev. 20:1-4; Rev. 20:6)
- i) The White Throne Judgment of Unsaved, and the New Heaven and the New Earth (Rev. 20:11-15; Rev. 21:1,2)

XX. Of Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that marriage is the exclusive, covenantal union of one man and one woman as designed by God and taught in Scripture, and that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman. Any form of sexual immorality is sinful and offensive to God. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:27-28; Acts 15:20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 15-20; Galatians 5:19; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)



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