

Calvary Baptist Church

Articles of Faith

NOTE: The following is identical (excepting that "I" has been changed to "we") to the doctrinal statement provided to Calvary Baptist Church by Pastor Larry K. Wilson, Sr., in January of 2002. These articles of faith served as the basis for Pastor Wilson's ordination to the gospel ministry. These articles were reviewed and accepted in their entirety by a presbytery of seven Independent Baptist Pastors.

1. The Scriptures

We believe in the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, as originally written; that it was verbally and plenary inspired by God's Spirit as he guided the human authors, and is therefore infallible and inerrant in all matters of which it speaks.

Only as we subject ourselves to the teaching of Holy Scripture may we find Christian unity. The Bible is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creed, and opinions must be measured. *2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:19-21*

2. The Godhead

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three divine persons – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, coequal in all powers and attributes. *Exodus 20:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11*

3. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, His activity in the Creation, His restraining of the evil one until God's purpose should be fulfilled, and His convicting of sin, righteousness and judgment. He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and witnessing. He is the Agent of salvation. It is He who seals, empowers, guides, teaches, sanctifies, helps and comforts those who have been saved. *John 14:16, 17; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5, 6; Ephesians 1:13, 14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Romans 8:14, 16, 26, 27*

4. Satan, Angels, Demons

We believe that our Adversary, the Devil, Satan, is a real and personal being. God created him as an angel, yet he became the enemy of his Creator through pride and rebellion. He became the unholy god of this age. He rules the powers of darkness. His irrevocable destiny is the lake of fire where he shall suffer eternal justice. *Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10*

We believe that God created an innumerable company of angels, that they are distinct from man, that they are outside of God's plan of redemption, that they serve as His ministering spirits, that they give Him praise, glory and worship, that they bring aid and encouragement to believers, and that they announce and bring judgment to the lost. *Hebrews 1:7,14; 12:22; Ps. 148:1, 2, 5; Revelation 7:1; 8:2; 14:6-7; 16:1*

We believe that demons are fallen angels, that they were created holy, that they fell in their pride and rebellion, and that they are destined to an eternity in the lake of fire. *Matthew 25:41; Genesis 1:31*

5. Creation

We believe in the creation of the physical universe, angels, and man, by direct, immediate act of God, apart from any evolutionary process. We believe that the Biblical account of the creation is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account. We reject the day-age theory, the gap theory and theistic evolution as unnecessary attempts to reconcile Scripture with pseudo-scientific teachings. We believe in an historical Adam, created directly by God and not from previously existing life forms. All men are descended from Adam and Eve, the first parents of the entire human race. *Genesis 1; 2; Colossians 1:16, 17; John 1:3*

6. The Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God in a state of innocence, but by voluntary transgression Adam fell, and all men sinned in him. Therefore, all men are totally depraved, are partakers of Adam's fallen nature, and are sinners by birth and by choice, and are thus under just condemnation without defense or excuse. *Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:10-19; 5:12, 19; 1:18, 32*

7. The Virgin Birth

We believe that Jesus was uniquely begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, and that He was born of the virgin Mary. He is both the Son of God and God, the Son. He became, in His incarnation, fully human. *Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14; 1 Timothy 2:5*

8. Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who, by the appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, and honored the divine law by His personal obedience, thus qualifying Himself to be our Savior; and that by the shedding of His blood in His death He fully satisfied the just demands of a holy and righteous God regarding sin; that 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. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an 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; Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24, 25; John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7, 8; Hebrews 2:14-17; Isaiah 53:4-7; 1 John 4:10; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24*

9. Resurrection and Priesthood of Christ

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in His ascension into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest interceding for us. He is touched with the feelings of our infirmities, yet unites in His person all the divine perfection, thus qualifying Him alone to be our intercessor. *Matthew 28:6, 7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 51; Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 8:6; 12:2; 7:25; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; 4:15; 5:9, 10*

10. Grace and the New Birth

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; thus becoming a new creation in Christ Jesus. Salvation is instantaneous and not a process. In this miracle of the new birth, one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives God's free gift of eternal life. While the human agency is the preaching of the gospel to all men, this new creation 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. The believer evidences his conversion through the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life. *John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:1; Acts 16:20-33; 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13; John 3:8.*

11. 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 to the believer, not in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood. *Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1, 9; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9*

12. Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God. Positional sanctification 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. Progressive sanctification is a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life and the believer yields increasing control of his life to God. Permanent sanctification, the final accomplishment of this process, shall be realized at our Lord's return. *Hebrews 10:10-14; 3:1; John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4; 5:23, 24; 1 John 3:2; Jude 24, 25; Revelation 22:11*

13. The Security of the Believer

We believe that all who are truly born again shall never perish, being kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ. We believe that this is a comfort to the penitent, not a cushion to the presumptuous. *Philippians 1:6; John 3:16; 10:28,29; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1*

14. Missions

We believe that the church must use its resources to fulfill the Great Commission. We are to proclaim the Gospel locally, regionally, nationally and world wide. *Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 11 Corinthians 5:20*

15. The Church

We believe that a local church is an organized congregation of believers baptized by immersion, united in a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; We believe that its officers are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe that the true mission of the church is the faithful proclaiming of Christ to all men through the preaching of the Word and through personal witnessing as we have opportunity.

We believe that the local church should be a self-governing body, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations. The one and only Superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit. We believe that it is Scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; but that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; that on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final. *1 Corinthians 11:2; Acts 20:17-28; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Acts 2:41, 42*

We believe in the unity of all New Testament believers in the Church which is the Body of Christ. *1 Corinthians 12:12, 13; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:1-6; 4:11; 5:23; Colossians 1:18; Acts 15:13-18*

16. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the single immersion of a believer in water. We believe that it has no saving power, but rather serves to show forth our identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life. We believe that baptism is to be performed under the authority of the local church; and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He come, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe that the Biblical order of the ordinances is baptism first and then the Lord's Supper, and that participants in the Lord's Supper should be immersed believers. *Acts 8:36, 38, 39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41, 42*

17. Separation

We believe that we must separate ourselves unto God from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy. We further hold that Bible-preaching churches must not unite with the modern ecumenical movement. We oppose the charismatic movement with its practice of speaking in tongues and its use of divine healers. *1 Corinthians 13:8; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17; James 5:15; 2 John 9-11*

18. Civil Government

We believe that civil government is divinely ordained for the good order of human society; that we should pray for, honor and obey civil rulers, except in those things which are opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of our conscience and the coming King of kings. *Romans 13:1-7; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21, 22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29; 4:19, 20; Daniel 3:17,18*

19. Marriage, Human Sexuality, Gender Roles, Abortion

We believe that in God's eyes, marriage is the union of one man and one woman, that all sexual relations are to be enjoyed within this union, and that all other sexual activity is a perversion of God's plan. *Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:20-24; Romans 1:26-29; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4*

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. *Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12*

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused 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. *Exodus 21:22-25; Psalms 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20; Luke 1:44*

20. Israel

We believe that God has chosen Israel as His eternal, covenant people, that she is now scattered because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, but that she will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, Israel will "look upon Him whom they have pierced" and turn again to God at the second advent of Christ. *Genesis 13:14-17; Zechariah 12:10; Romans 11:1-32; Ezekiel 37*

21. Rapture and Subsequent Events

We believe in the imminent, premillennial return of Christ, at which 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. We believe that the Lord will deliver His children from the wrath to come, thus the Rapture will occur prior to the seven-year Tribulation period.

1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:20, 21; Revelation 3:10

We believe that the Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial kingdom.

Daniel 9:25-27; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11:1-9; Acts 2:29, 30; Revelation 20:1-4, 6

22. The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His sight; while all those who persist in their impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; thus there is a vast and real difference between the righteous and the wicked; a distinction which remains after death as much as in life, resulting in everlasting felicity in Heaven for the saved and the everlasting, conscious suffering in the lake of fire for the lost. *Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23;*

Romans 6:17, 18; 1 John 5:19; Romans 7:6; 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21; Revelation 20:14, 15

SECTION 2—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The 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 teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members.