

STATEMENT OF FAITH FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

TOGETHER WITH THE CHURCH IN ALL AGES,

We believe in one GOD THE FATHER Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord JESUS CHRIST, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who, for us humans and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the HOLY SPIRIT, the Lord and Giver of Life;
who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And we believe in one Holy Universal and Apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

FURTHERMORE,

Concerning the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction;¹ that it has God for its author, salvation for its end,² and truth without any mixture of error for its matter;³ that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us;⁴ and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union,⁵ and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.⁶

Concerning the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is Yahweh, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth;⁷ inexpressibly glorious in holiness,⁸ and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love;⁹ that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;¹⁰ equal in every divine perfection,¹¹ and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.¹²

Concerning the Fall of Man

We believe that Man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker;¹³ but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state;¹⁴ in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners,¹⁵ not by constraint but choice;¹⁶ being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin,¹⁷ without defense or excuse.¹⁸

Concerning the Way of Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace;¹⁹ through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God;²⁰ who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin;²¹ honored the divine law by his personal obedience,²² and by his death made a full atonement for our sins;²³ that having risen from the dead he is now enthroned in heaven;²⁴ and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.²⁵

Concerning Justification

We believe that the great Gospel blessing which Christ²⁶ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification;²⁷ that Justification includes the pardon of sin,²⁸ and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness;²⁹ 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;³⁰ by virtue of which faith His perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God;³¹ that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.³²

Concerning the Freeness of Salvation

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel;³³ that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith;³⁴ and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel;³⁵ which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.³⁶

Concerning Grace in Regeneration

We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again;³⁷ that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind;³⁸ that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth,³⁹ so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel;⁴⁰ and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life.⁴¹

Concerning Repentance and Faith

We believe that Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God;⁴² whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ,⁴³ we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy;⁴⁴ at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King, and relying on Him alone as the only and all sufficient Savior.⁴⁵

Concerning God's Purpose of Grace

We believe that Election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which He graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners;⁴⁶ that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end;⁴⁷ that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable;⁴⁸ that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy;⁴⁹ that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree;⁵⁰ that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the Gospel;⁵¹ that it is the foundation of Christian assurance;⁵² and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.⁵³

Concerning Sanctification

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness;⁵⁴ that it is a progressive work;⁵⁵ that it is begun in regeneration;⁵⁶ and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means, – especially, the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.⁵⁷

Concerning the Perseverance of Saints

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end;⁵⁸ that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors;⁵⁹ that a special Providence watches over their welfare;⁶⁰ and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.⁶¹

Concerning the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel

We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government;⁶² that it is holy, just, and good;⁶³ and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin;⁶⁴ to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the Means of Grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.⁶⁵

Concerning a Gospel Church

We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers,⁶⁶ associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel;⁶⁷ observing the ordinances of Christ;⁶⁸ governed by His laws;⁶⁹ and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His word;⁷⁰ that its only scriptural officers are Bishops, or Pastors, and Deacons,⁷¹ whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

Concerning Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ, obligatory upon every believer, by the command of Christ,⁷² wherein he is baptized in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;⁷³ that it is to be done by immersion to show forth in a solemn and beautiful symbol our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and our death to sin and resurrection to a new life;⁷⁴ that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper,⁷⁵ in which the members of the church by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ;⁷⁶ preceded always by solemn self-examination.⁷⁷

Concerning the Lord's Day

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day;⁷⁸ and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes⁷⁹ by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private⁸⁰ and public;⁸¹ and by preparation for that rest that remains for the people of God.⁸²

Concerning Civil Government

We believe that Civil Government is of Divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society;⁸³ and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed;⁸⁴ except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ,⁸⁵ who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.⁸⁶

Concerning the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked;⁸⁷ 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;⁸⁸ while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse;⁸⁹ and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.⁹⁰

Concerning the World to Come

We believe that the end of the world is approaching;⁹¹ that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven,⁹² and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution;⁹³ that a solemn separation will then take place;⁹⁴ that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy;⁹⁵ and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.⁹⁶

Notes

¹ 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16, 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Psa. 119:11; Rom. 3:1-2

² 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:16; John 5:38-39

³ Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 3:4

⁴ Rom. 2:12; John 12:47-48; 1 Cor. 4:3-4; Luke 10:10-16; 12:47-48

⁵ Phil. 3:16; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Pet. 4:11

⁶ 1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3:5; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 119:59-60; Phil. 1:9-11

⁷ John 4:24; Psa. 147:5; 83:18; Heb. 3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:10

⁸ Exod. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:6-8

⁹ Mark 12:30; Rev. 4:11; Matt. 10:37; Jer. 2:12-13

¹⁰ Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 1 John 5:7

¹¹ John 10:30; 5:17; 14:23; 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6

¹² Eph. 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5

¹³ Gen. 1:27, 31; Eccl. 7:29; Acts 17:26-29; Gen. 2:16

¹⁴ Gen. 3:6-24; Rom. 5:12

¹⁵ Rom. 5:19; John 3:6; Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:15-19; 8:7

¹⁶ Isa. 53:6; Gen. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-18

¹⁷ Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18, 32; 2:1-16; Gal. 3:10; Matt. 20:15

¹⁸ Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:20; 3:19; Gal. 3:22

¹⁹ Eph. 2:5; Matt. 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; Acts 15:11

²⁰ John 3:16; 1:1-14; Heb. 4:14; 12:24

²¹ Phil. 2:6-7; Heb. 2:9, 14; 2 Cor. 5:21

²² Isa. 42:21; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 3:21

²³ Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 4:25; 3:21-26; 1 John 4:10; 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:1-3; Heb. 9:13-15

²⁴ Heb. 1:8, 3; 8:1; Col. 3:1-4

²⁵ Heb. 7:25; Col. 2:9; Heb. 2:18; 7:26; Psa. 89:19; Psa. 14

²⁶ John 1:16; Eph. 3:8

²⁷ Acts 13:39; Isa. 3:11-12; Rom. 8:1

²⁸ Rom. 5:9; Zech. 13:1; Matt. 9:6; Acts 10:43

²⁹ Rom. 5:17; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom. 5:21

³⁰ Rom. 4:4-5; 5:21; 6:28; Phil. 3:7-9

³¹ Rom. 5:19; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12

³² Rom. 5:1-3, 11; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Matt 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8

³³ Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Luke 14:17

³⁴ Rom. 16:26; Mark 1:15; Rom. 1:15-17

³⁵ John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; Rom. 9:32; Prov. 1:24; Acts 13:46

³⁶ John 3:19; Matt. 11:20; Luke 19:27; 2 Thess. 1:8

³⁷ John 3:3, 6-7; 1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7-9; 21:27

³⁸ 2 Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:28-29; 5:5; 1 John 4:7

³⁹ John 3:8; 1:13; James 1:16-18; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 2:13

⁴⁰ 1 Pet. 1:22-25; 1 John 5:1; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-11

⁴¹ Eph. 5:9; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 3:14-21; Matt. 3:8-10; 7:20; 1 John 5:4, 18

⁴² Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:8; 1 John 5:1

⁴³ John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31

⁴⁴ Luke 18:13; 15:18-21; James 4:7-10; 2 Cor. 7:11; Rom. 10:12-13; Psa. 51

⁴⁵ Rom. 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 4:14;

⁴⁶ 2 Tim. 1:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:1-2; Rom. 11:5-6; John 15:15; 1 John 4:19; Hos. 12:9

⁴⁷ 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt. 20:16; Acts 15:14

⁴⁸ Exod. 33:18-19; Matt. 20:15; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:23-24; Jer. 31:3; Rom. 11:28-29; James 1:17-18; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 11:32-36

⁴⁹ 1 Cor. 4:7; 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; 4:16; Col. 3:12; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:10; 1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:12

⁵⁰ 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Cor. 9:22; Rom. 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 2 Pet. 1:10

⁵¹ 1 Thess. 1:4-10

⁵² Rom. 8:28-30; Isa. 42:16; Rom. 11:29

⁵³ 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11

⁵⁴ 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; 13:9; Eph. 1:4

⁵⁵ Prov. 4:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Phil. 3:12-16

⁵⁶ 1 John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14

⁵⁷ Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18; 4:30

⁵⁸ John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:9; 5:18

⁵⁹ 1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9

⁶⁰ Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Psa. 121:3; 91:11-12

⁶¹ Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 24-26; Heb. 1:14; 2 Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; 1 John 4:4

⁶² Rom. 3:31; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20; 4:14

⁶³ Rom. 7:12, 14, 22; Gal. 3:21; Psa. 119

⁶⁴ Rom. 8:7-8; Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; John 6:44; 5:44

⁶⁵ Rom. 8:2, 4; 10:4; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; Jude 20-21; Heb. 12:14; Matt. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 12:28

⁶⁶ 1 Cor. 1:1-13; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1; 11:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; 14:23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3:5

⁶⁷ Acts 2:41-42; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 5:12-13

⁶⁸ 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 11:23; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:6; 2 Cor. 2:7; 1 Cor. 4:17

⁶⁹ Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess. 4:2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6:2; all the Epistles

⁷⁰ Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 12:14

⁷¹ Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1

⁷² Acts. 8:36-39; Matt. 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 16:32-34; 18:8

⁷³ Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Gal. 3:27-28

⁷⁴ Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Acts 22:16

⁷⁵ Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts and Epistles

⁷⁶ 1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20

⁷⁷ 1 Cor. 11:28; 5:1, 8; 10:3-32; 11:17-32; John 6:26-71

⁷⁸ Acts 20:7; Gen. 2:3; Col. 2:16-17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19; 1 Cor. 16:1-2

⁷⁹ Exod. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; Psa. 118:24; Isa 58:13-14; 56:2-8

⁸⁰ Psa. 119:15

⁸¹ Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 11:26; 13:44; Lev. 19:30; Exod. 46:3; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2, 3; Psa. 26:8; 87:3

⁸² Heb. 4:3-11

⁸³ Rom. 13:1-7; Deut. 16:18; 1 Sam 23:3; Exod. 18:23; Jer. 30:21

⁸⁴ Matt 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:1-8

⁸⁵ Acts 5:29; Matt. 10:28; Dan. 3:15-18; 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20

⁸⁶ Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4; Rev. 19:16; Psa. 72:11; Psa. 2; Rom 14:9-13

⁸⁷ Mal. 3:18; Prov. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Gen. 18:23; Jer. 15:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 6:16

⁸⁸ Rom. 1:17; 7:6; 1 John 2:29; 3:7; Rom. 6:18, 22; 1 Cor. 11:32; Prov. 11:31; 1 Pet. 4:17-18

⁸⁹ 1 John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; John 3:36; Isa. 57:21; Psa. 10:4; Isa. 55:6-7

⁹⁰ Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Prov. 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; 9:23-26; John 12:25-26; Eccl. 3:17; Matt. 7:13-14

⁹¹ 1 Pet. 4:7; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; 13:39-40; 2 Pet. 3:3-13

⁹² Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-11

⁹³ Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:12-59; Luke 14:14; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; 6:40; 11:25-26; 2 Tim. 1:10; Acts 10:42

⁹⁴ Matt. 13:49, 37-43; 24:30-31; 25:31-33

⁹⁵ Matt. 25:35-41; Rev. 22:11; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Pet. 2:9; Jude 7; Phil. 3:19; Rom. 6:32; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Cor. 4:18

⁹⁶ Rom. 3:5-6; 2 Thess. 1:6-12; Heb. 6:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev. 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 4:17