



BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

ARTICLES OF FAITH

I. The Bible

We believe the Bible is the inspired word of God and is inerrant in the original writings. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally to each word and to all parts of the sixty-six canonical books. We believe that all the Scriptures center on the Lord Jesus Christ, both the Old and New Testament and that they are the final authority in all matters of faith and life.

Luke 24:27; John 5:46; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:19-21, 3:15-16

II. The True God

We believe that there is only one living and true God existing in divine unity as three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe that the members of the Godhead equally share the same divine nature, essence and attributes and are worthy of the same worship and honor.

Isaiah 48:16; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:21-22; 2 Corinthians 13:14

A. God the Father. We believe the Father created and sustains the universe and all that is in it, possessing complete knowledge of all things, whether actual or potential. We believe he is the sovereign ruler over all creation and works out his purposes both providentially and miraculously. We believe he sent the Son as his gift into the world, and is worthy of all love, honor, trust, and obedience.

Exodus 20:2-3; Deuteronomy 6:4-5, 29:29; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11

B. God the Son. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, eternal and equal with the Father, born of the virgin Mary, and that he is both true God and true man. We believe that all things were created by him and for him. We believe that he died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a voluntary and substitutionary sacrifice. We believe that he was raised physically from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He is now ministering as our advocate and high priest. We believe that he will receive us to himself at his coming and will return to establish his Millennial Kingdom on Earth.

Isaiah 53:4-6, 53:10-12; Matthew 1:18-25, 28:1-7; John 1:1-3, 8:58, 14:3; Acts 1:10-11, 2:32-33; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:16-20, 2:9; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18; 1 John 2:2

C. God the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person who is equal with the Father and Son. We believe he shared in the creation of all things and superintended the writing of Scripture. We believe he convicts the world of sin and regenerates and sanctifies believers. We believe that at their conversion, the Holy Spirit places believers into the body of Christ, seals them as God's possession, indwells them, and gives them gifts for ministry. We believe that the miraculous sign gifts of the Holy Spirit marked historic time periods of divine revelation and authenticated the ministry of the Prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles.

Genesis 1:1-2; Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:8; Luke 24:49; John 3:5-6, 14:16-17; Acts 5:30-32; Romans 8:14-16, 26-27; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 1:13-14; Hebrews 2:2-4

III. Angels and Satan

We believe that angels are spirit beings created to serve and worship God and to render assistance to believers as God directs. We believe that though all angels were created holy, a large number of them followed Satan in his rebellion against God and continue to oppose him. We believe that Christ's work on the cross defeated Satan and his demons, making certain their judgment and eternal punishment. We believe demonic control over Christians is limited to external influences which may be resisted by the believer.

We believe in the reality and person of Satan, the Devil. We believe that he was created by God as an angel but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator. We believe that Satan became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness. We believe Satan is destined to the judgment of eternal justice in the lake of fire.

Genesis 3:1-5; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:12; Hebrews 1:6, 2:14-15; 1 John 5:19; Revelation 5:11, 20:10

IV. Creation

We believe that the biblical account of creation is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God. We believe that Adam and Eve were created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all people are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, the first parents of the entire human race. We believe that God created two distinct sexes: male and female, established at conception in our biology and normally evident in our physical anatomy. We believe one's expression of their gender as man or woman ought to conform to one's God-given biological sex (male or female). In light of God's creative design, we believe that the Bible teaches that marriage is the joining of one man and one woman and that sexual intimacy is to be expressed only within the bonds of a biblically defined marriage. We believe that any other form of marriage or sexual intimacy is immoral and contrary to God's design.

Genesis 1:1-2:25; Psalm 139:13-14; Matthew 19:4-6; John 1:3; Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, 7:1-5; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 13:4

V. The Fall of Mankind

We believe all humans are made in the image of God and that human life, beginning at conception, is therefore sacred. We believe that all mankind descended from Adam and Eve, the original created pair, and that man fell through sin and as a consequence became dead in trespasses and sins and became subject to the power of Satan. We believe that sin has been transmitted to the entire human race so that every descendant of Adam is born into the world with a fallen nature devoid of spiritual life and with no power to recover oneself from this condition.

Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7, 3:1-24; Psalm 139:13-16; Romans 3:1-23, 5:12-14; James 3:9

VI. Salvation

We believe that salvation is entirely of God, by grace, through personal faith in the work of Christ, wholly apart from any human merit, works, or foreseen faith. We believe that believers were chosen sovereignly by God before the foundation of the world for salvation and are enabled by the Spirit to believe. We believe that believers are justified before God as their sins are imputed to Christ and His righteousness is reckoned to them.

We believe that all believers were set apart unto God at the point of salvation and are progressively brought closer to conformity with the holiness of God, a process culminating at the return of Christ. We believe that all who are truly born again will be kept by Christ and will persevere in faith until the day of redemption. We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. We believe that repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit and is an integral part of saving faith.

John 3:3-7, 3:16-17, 14:6, 10:27-29; Acts 16:31, 17:30-31; Romans 5:1, 8:33-39; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 1:3-4, 2:1-10; Philippians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 3:4-7; 2 Peter 1:3-4

VII. The Church

We believe that at salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, every believer enters into a covenant relationship with God, and is placed into covenant community with all true believers, known as the Body of Christ, which began at Pentecost. We believe that local churches represent specific covenant communities, of which each believer is to be an active part, and that in turn, these churches represent the Body of Christ expressed more fully. We believe that the local church has the right of self-government as an independent church, while operating in voluntary cooperation with other independent churches of like faith and practice, as found in early church practices of cooperation and accountability.

We believe that leadership within the local church is vested in two biblical offices, identified as elders and deacons. We believe that men and women are equal in value, dignity, worth, and importance to God and we affirm that women can serve in any role in the church aside from the position of elder, which is reserved in Scripture for men. We believe that the ordinances of the church are baptism by immersion as the identifying symbol of one's belief in Christ's death and resurrection, and communion, which is a commemoration of Christ's death until he comes. We believe the church has the responsibility to take the gospel message to all nations of the earth and to be a voice for justice and truth in the world. We believe in separation from all sinful practices and all spiritual apostasy.

Matthew 16:18, 18:15-17; Acts 2:37-47, 15:1-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; 2 Corinthians 6:14, 8:18-24; Galatians 1:2, 1:22; Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:11-12; Colossians 4:13-18; 1 Timothy 2:12, 3:2; 1 John 2:15-16, 4:1-3

VIII. Civil Government

We believe that governing authorities are appointed by God to bring order to society, to promote good and to punish evil. We believe that mankind is to submit to and respect his governing authorities, including praying for his leaders and paying taxes. We believe that governing authorities should be obeyed, except when obedience results in violation of the will of God.

Daniel 3:17-18; Matthew 22:15-22; Acts 5:27-29; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2

IX. Israel

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is distinct from the church, and that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ. We believe that Israel will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the church, will be saved as a nation at the second coming of Christ.

Genesis 13:14-17; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 37:1-28; Romans 11:1-32

X. Future Events

We believe in the imminent coming of Jesus Christ for his church at the Rapture, at which time all church saints will be raised, glorified and rewarded. We believe that the Tribulation, which follows the rapture of the church, will be culminated by the return of Christ to earth as messianic king to establish the Millennial Kingdom, overthrow Satan, and regather Israel to her promised land according to the Old Testament promises. We believe in the physical resurrection of all the dead: the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to eternal judgment and separation from God in the lake of fire. We believe the eternal state will begin after the judgment of the lost with believers of all time enjoying God forever in the New Heaven and Earth.

John 14:1-3; Romans 14:10-13; 1 Corinthians 15:22-26; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 1:4-7, 19:11-16, 20:1-6, 21:1-4, 22:1-21

Core Beliefs

There is only one true God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God is sovereign as creator and sustainer of all things.

The 66 books of the Bible are inspired by God and authoritative.

All people are sinners in need of salvation.

Jesus lived a perfect life, died, and rose again to save us from our sins.

Through faith in Jesus our sins are forgiven, we receive salvation, and we are made right with God.

The church is established by God and vital to Christian living.

Jesus is coming back again to rule and reign.