

Waverly Place Baptist Church

Statement of Faith

Introduction

The following statement of faith holds forth a basic understanding of Christianity compiled using the words of the Second London Baptist Confession (1689). It summarizes the clear teaching of the Bible on the most essential parts of the faith “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3). While this statement does not contain the full breadth of teaching found in the Baptist Confession, using its language, it contains the portions which we find essential to hold and that every new believer ought to come to understand in the early days of their following of Christ by faith. Each article is given here along with Scriptural proofs for the various words, phrases and ideas conveyed.

Article I: Of the Holy Scripture

The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience. Although the light of nature, and the works of creation, and providence so plainly reveal the goodness, wisdom, and power of God as to leave all mankind without excuse, yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and His will which is necessary for salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord—at various times and in different ways—to reveal Himself, and to declare His will to His church. Then, for the better preservation and spread of the truth, and more surely to establish and comfort the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and of the world, God committed the same revelation entirely to writing. This means that the Holy Scriptures are most necessary, because God’s former ways of revealing His will to His people have now ended. The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man’s salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture. Nothing is to be added to the Scripture at any time, whether by new revelation of the Spirit or human traditions.

(2Ti 3:15-17; Isa 8:20; Luk 16:29,31; Eph 2:20; Rom 1:19-21; 2:14-15; Psa 19:1-3; Heb 1:1; Pro 22:19-21; Rom 15:4; 2Pe 1:19-20)

Article II: Of the Nature of God

The Lord our God is but one, only living, and true God. His subsistence is in and of Himself. He is infinite in being and perfection, and His essence cannot be understood by anyone but Himself. He is a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions. He alone has immortality, and dwells in the light which no man can approach. He is unchangeable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, infinite in every way, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute. He works all things according to the counsel of His own unchangeable and most righteous will, for His own glory. He is most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; and is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. At the same time, He is most just and terrible in His judgments, hating all sin, and will by no means clear the guilty.

(1Co 8:4,6; Deu 6:4; Jer 10:10; Isa 48:12; Exo 3:14; Joh 4:24; 1Ti 1:17; Deu 4:15-16; Mal 3:6; 1Ki 8:27; Jer 23:23; Psa 90:2; Gen 17:1; Isa 6:3; Psa 115:3; Isa 46:10; Pro 16:4; Rom 11:36; Exo 34:6-7; Heb 11:6; Neh 9:32-33; Psa 5:5-6; Exo 34:7; Nah 1:2-3)

Article III: Of the Trinity

In this divine and infinite Being there are three persons, the Father, the Word or Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are of one substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, yet the essence undivided. The Father is not derived from anyone — He is neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. They are all infinite, without beginning, and therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being. Nevertheless, they are distinguished by several distinctive, relative properties, and by personal relations. This doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God and our comfortable dependence on Him.

(1Jo 5:7; Mat 28:19; 2Co 13:14; Exo 3:14; Joh 14:11; 1Co 8:6; Joh 1:14,18; Joh 15:26; Gal 4:6; Joh 5:26; Psa 148:13; Psa 119:68; Job 22:2-3; Rom 11:34-36; Dan 4:25,34-35; Heb 4:13; Eze 11:5; Act 15:18; Psa 145:17; Rev 5:12-14)

Article IV: Of the Fall of Man & Sin

After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, with rational and immortal souls, making them suitable for that life to God for which they were created. They were made in the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness. Our first parents fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and we fell in them. By this, death came upon all. All became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. All actual transgressions proceed from this original corruption, by which we are utterly disinclined, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil.

(Gen 1:27; Gen 2:7; 2:16-17; Ecc 7:29; Gen 1:26; Rom 2:14-15; Gen 3:6; Rom 3:23; Rom 5:12, Ti 1:15; Gen 6:5; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:10-19; Rom 8:7; Col 1:21; Jam 1:14-15; Mat 15:19)

Article V: Of the Glory of Jesus Christ

It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the Mediator between God and man; the Prophet, Priest, and King; to be the Head and Savior of the church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world. To the Lord Jesus, God, from all eternity, gave a people to be His seed, in time to be redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified by Him.

(Isa 42:1; 1Pe 1:19-20; Act 3:22; Heb 5:5-6; Psa 2:6; Luk 1:33; Eph 1:22-23; Heb 1:2; Act 17:31; Isa 53:10; Joh 17:6; Rom 8:30)

Article VI: Of the Person of Jesus Christ

The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, is very and eternal God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance and equal with Him. He made the world and upholds and governs all things He has made. When the fullness of time had come, He took upon Himself man's nature, with all its essential properties and common infirmities, yet without sin. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary. In this way, two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. This person is true God and true man, yet He is one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.

(Joh 1:14; Gal 4:4; Rom 8:3; Heb 2:14,16-17; 4:15; Mat 1:22-23; Luk 1:27,31,35; Rom 9:5; 1Ti 2:5)

Article VII: Of Justification & Saving Faith

Christ, by His obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified; He made a proper, real and full satisfaction to God's justice in their behalf, by the sacrifice of Himself, in the blood of His cross, undergoing in their place the penalty due to them. However, insofar as He was given by the Father for them, and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their place, their justification is only of free grace, so that both the exact justice and the rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners. Faith receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness in this way is the sole instrument of justification. However, it is not alone in the person justified, but is always accompanied by all other saving graces; it is not dead faith, but it works by love.

(Heb 10:14; 1Pe 1:18-19; Isa 53:5-6; Rom 8:32; 2Co 5:21; Rom 3:26; Eph 1:6-7, 2:7; Rom 3:28; Gal 5:6; Jam 2:17,22,26)

Article VIII: Of Sanctification & Good Works

Those who are united to Christ — who are effectually called and regenerated and have a new heart and a new spirit created in them through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection — are also further sanctified, really and personally, through the same virtue, by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them. Good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and living faith. By these good works, believers demonstrate their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brothers, adorn the profession of the gospel, silence the adversaries, and glorify God whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus for good works, so that — bearing fruit leading to their holiness — they may reach the goal: eternal life.

(Act 20:32; Rom 6:5-6; Joh 17:17; Eph 3:16-19; 1Th 5:21-23; Rom 6:14; Gal 5:24; Col 1:11; 2Co 7:1; Heb 12:14; Jam 2:18,22; Psa 116:12-13; 1Jo 2:3,5; 2Pe 1:5-11; Mat 5:16; 1Ti 6:1; 1Pe 2:15; Phi 1:11; Eph 2:10; Rom 6:22)

Article IX: Of the Church & the Communion of the Saints

The universal church, may be called invisible with respect to the internal work of the Spirit and truth of grace. It consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ, its head. The church is the bride, the body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. All saints are united to Jesus Christ, their Head by His Spirit and by faith. Although this does not make them one person with Him, they have fellowship in His graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory. Also, being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and are obliged to discharge their public and private duties in an orderly way, so as to bring about their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man. As all believers are bound to join themselves to particular churches, when and where they have opportunity so to do; so all that are admitted unto the privileges of a church, are also under the censures and government thereof, according to the rule of Christ.

(Heb 12:23; Col 1:18; Eph 1:10,22-23; 5:23,27,32; 1Co 1:2; Act 11:26; Rom 1:7; 1Jo 1:3; Joh 1:16; Phi 3:10; Rom 6:5-6; Eph 4:15-16; 1Co 12:7; 3:21-23; 1Th 5:11,14; Rom 1:12; 1Jo 3:17-18; Gal 6:10)

Article X: Of Baptism

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be to the person who is baptized a sign of his fellowship with Him in His death and resurrection; of his being engrafted into Christ; of remission of sins; and, of his giving up of himself to God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life. Those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to our Lord Jesus, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance.

(Rom 6:3-5; Col 2:12; Gal 3:27; Mar 1:4; Act 22:16; Rom 6:4; Mar 16:16; Act 8:36-37; 2:41; 8:12; 18:8; Mat 28:19-20; Act 8:38; Mat 3:16; Joh 3:23)

Article XI: Of the Lord's Supper

The supper of the Lord Jesus was instituted by Him the same night wherein He was betrayed. It is to be observed in His churches to the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance and showing forth the sacrifice of Himself in His death; for the confirmation of the faith of believers in all the benefits of Christ's death; for their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him; for their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe to Him; and, to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Him, and with each other.

(1Co 11:23-26; 1Co 10:16-17, 21; Mat 26:26-28; 15:9; Exo 20:4-5)

Article XII: Of the Perseverance of the Saints

Those whom God has accepted in the Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, and to whom He has given the precious faith of His elect, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace. They shall certainly persevere, therein, to the end and be eternally saved. This is because the gifts and callings of God are without change of mind. Therefore, He still creates and nourishes in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit that lead to immortality. And, though many storms and floods arise and beat against them, yet such things shall never be able to sweep them off that foundation and rock upon which they are fastened by faith. Believers may — through the temptation of Satan and of the world, the prevalence of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of means of their preservation — fall into grievous sins and continue in them for a time. Because of this they incur God's displeasure and grieve His Holy Spirit, come to have their graces and comforts impaired, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded, hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves. Nevertheless, they shall renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end.

(Joh 10:28-29; Phi 1:6; 2Ti 2:19; 1Jo 2:19; Psa 89:31-32; 1Co 11:32; Mal 3:6; Mat 26:70,72,74; Isa 64:5,9; Eph 4:30; Psa 51:10,12; Psa 32:3-4; 2Sa 12:14; Luk 22:32,61-62)

Article XIII: Of the Last Judgement

God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given by the Father. In that day not only shall the apostate angels be judged, but in the same way all people who have lived upon the earth shall appear before the judgement seat of Christ. They shall give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds, and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil. The bodies of the unjust shall be raised by the power of Christ to dishonor. The bodies of the just shall be raised by His Spirit to honor, and be made conformable to His own glorious body. Christ wants us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity. For this reason He keeps that day unknown to men, in order that they may shake off all carnal security and always be watchful, because they do not know at what hour the Lord will come, and so may always be prepared to say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Amen."

(Act 17:31; Joh 5:22,27; 1Co 6:3; Jude 1:6; 2Co 5:10; Ecc 12:14; Mat 12:36; Rom 14:10,12; Mat 25:32-46; 2Co 5:10-11; 2Th 1:5-7; Mar 13:35-37; Luk 12:35-40; Rev 22:20; Act 24:15; Joh 5:28-29; Phi 3:21)