



first baptist
— fort smith —



what we teach



Our constitution states "First Baptist Church adheres to the statement of faith detailed in The Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention." This document, while including the elements of our statement of faith, provides further detail of the beliefs that have historically been embraced and taught by First Baptist Church.

On a primary level, there are obvious beliefs that are necessary for a church to be "orthodox". The word orthodox means beliefs that are foundational to a church that is biblio-centric. Examples of these beliefs would include the authority of Scripture, the Trinity, and the doctrines of Christ and the Church.

On a secondary level, there are beliefs that make a church a Baptist church. These are very important and are necessary to clearly identify a church as "Baptist". Examples of such beliefs and doctrines would include the security of the believer, the priesthood of the believer, the baptism of the believer, etc.

On a tertiary level, there are beliefs that are historically important to the First Baptist Church of Fort Smith. These are teachings that are not unique to First Baptist but are clearly important to our connection to the Scriptures. These tertiary positions do not require that one be a member of the church, but have deep roots in our local church identity. Examples of these beliefs and teaching would be eschatological teachings concerning the Second Coming of Christ, the Rapture of the Church, and a literal embrace of a millennial Kingdom, the work of the Holy Spirit in spiritual gifting, Special Creation, and a Young Earth.

Foundational to this document is The Baptist Faith and Message, with the addition of more precise focus on doctrine that First Baptist Church values and embraces.

The Holy Scriptures

- The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired of God and is God's revelation of Himself to man. God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so guided and inspired the human authors

The Holy Scriptures

that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man without error in the whole or in the part.

2 Peter 1:19-21; Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16

- The Word of God is inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed.
Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10
- The Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice and is the perfect and complete treasure of divine instruction.
Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21
- It has God for its Author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. Psalm 119:11, 89, 105, 140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; John 17:17; Hebrews 1:1-2
- It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world and for all eternity, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried.
Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25
- All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.
Luke 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; Acts 2:16; 17:11
- It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of Scripture.
2 Peter 1:19-21



God

- There is one and only one living and true God.
Deuteronomy 6:4
- The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.
Mark 1:9-11; 1 John 5:7
- He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being – the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe.
Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3, 15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13
- God is infinitely holy and perfect.
Leviticus 22:2
- God is all powerful and all knowing, and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures.
Exodus 15:11
- To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.
Deuteronomy 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Matthew 6:9

God the Father

- God as Father reigns with providential care over His creation, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events.
Genesis 1:1; 1 Chronicles 29:11; Revelation 4:11
- He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise.
Exodus 15:11; 1 Timothy 1:17

God the Father

- As Creator, God is fatherly in His attitude toward all men. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.
Matthew 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:17; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17
- He has decreed for His own glory that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11
- In His sovereignty, He is neither the author nor approver of sin, nor does He diminish the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures.
Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47; 1 Peter 1:17
- He saves from the penalty and bondage of sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.
John 6:37

God the Son

- Christ is the eternal Son of God.
Psalm 2:7; Matthew 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16; 17:5; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:7; 1 Corinthians 1:30
- In His incarnation as Jesus the Christ, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.
Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 1:34-35; Galatians 4:4-5
- Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of the Father, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin.
Matthew 3:17; 11:27; 17:5; John 1:1-18; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Philippians 2:5-11; 2 John 7-9

God the Son



- He honored and fulfilled the divine law by His perfect personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin.
John 1: 29; 11:25-27; Romans 1: 3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Colossians 1:13-22; Hebrews 5:9; Revelation 5:9-14
- He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion.
Luke 24:46; John 20:1-20, 28; Romans 1: 34; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Ephesians 1:20; 4:7-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18
- He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of the Father where He is the One Mediator and High Priest, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man.
Psalm 110:1; Acts 1:9; 7:55-56; Romans 8:34; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 4:14-15; 5:9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14
- He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission.
Psalm 110:1; Matthew 16:27; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; Titus 2:13-14; Revelation 12:10-11; 19:16
- He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.
John 17:21-22; Romans 8:9; Acts 7:55-56; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6
- God the Father created all things according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation.
John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2
- In the incarnation of the eternal Son, the second Person of the Trinity, without altering His divine nature or surrendering any of the divine attributes, made Himself of no reputation by taking on a full human nature, yet without sin.
Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26

God the Son

- Our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross. His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive.
John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24
- On the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God.
Romans 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18
- Our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest.
Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1
- In the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God the Father confirmed the Deity of His Son and gave proof that He has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers.
John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23
- Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth.
Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20
- The Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind.
John 5:22-23

God the Holy Spirit



God the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine.
- He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures.
- Through illumination He enables men to understand truth.
- He exalts Christ.
- He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.
- He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration.
- At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ.
- He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church.
- He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption.
- His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer in the fullness of the stature of Christ.
- He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7-24; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10, 12; Luke 1:35; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11, 13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:15; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8, 14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17

- The Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith.

John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18

Man

- Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation.
Psalm 8:3-6; Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-23; 9:6
- In the beginning, man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation.
Psalm 1:4-6; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:12
- Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable men to fulfill the creative purpose of God.
Psalm 32:1-5; Romans 6:6; 7:14-25; 1 Corinthians 15:19; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22
- The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.
Acts 17:26-31; Romans 5:6,8,19; 8:14-18; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; Colossians 3:11
- God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world.
Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11
- Because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration.
Genesis 3:15; Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12



Salvation

- Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from repentance and personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.
- Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance and faith which are inseparable experiences of grace.
Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7, 19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22, 31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45, 65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 16:30-31; 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10, 19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5, 13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2
- Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God. Justification before God is an act of God by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins and confess Him as Lord. This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us. By this means God is enabled to "be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus".
Romans 2:4; 3:20, 26; 4:6; 8:33; 10:9-10; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; 2 Corinthians 4:5; 5:21; 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1:30; Philippians 2:11; Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24

Salvation

- Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life. Every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God in justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and precedes progressive sanctification. Positional sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition. There is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ. Every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible in this life, but in this life, the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin.
[Acts 20:32](#); [1 Corinthians 1:2, 30](#); [6:11](#); [John 17:17, 19](#); [Romans 6:1-22](#); [2 Corinthians 3:18](#); [Galatians 2:20](#); [5:16-25](#); [Ephesians 4:22-24](#); [Philippians 3:12](#); [Colossians 1:9-12](#); [3:1-10](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:3-4](#); [5:23](#); [1 Peter 1:14-16](#); [1 John 3:5-9](#)
- Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.
[1 John 3:2-3](#)

Grace and Election: God's Purpose of Grace

- Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end.

Salvation



It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

Ephesians 2:8-9

- God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love. This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 9:11-16; Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9

- Sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord.

Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 10:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17

Perseverance of Saints

- All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24

- Believers are to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality.

Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14

The Church

Separation

- Out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. Separation from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God.
Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11
- Believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ and affirm that the Christian life is a life of obedient righteousness that reflects the teaching of the Beatitudes and a continual pursuit of holiness.
2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2, 14; Matthew 5:2-12; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10

The Church

Universal Church

- The New Testament speaks of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.
- The church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age. The church is distinct from Israel, a mystery not revealed until this age.
Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32; 1 Corinthians 10:32
- All who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church, the bride of Christ, of which Christ is the Head.
1 Corinthians 12:12-13; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8; Colossians 1:18

The Church



- The one supreme authority for the church is Christ and that church's leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures.
1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18

Local Congregation

- A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through congregational processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord.
- First Baptist Church recognizes two scriptural New Testament offices: Pastor and Deacon. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, these offices are limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The Pastor serves as the elder or overseer of the church and is the under-shepherd of the church and all organizations of the church as contemplated in the New Testament. He is responsible for the worship, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and evangelism functions and organizations of the church and is assisted in these duties by a ministerial staff of ordained men and by other functional and administrative staff as needed. He has the authority to enlist, train, and direct all leadership in these areas. He has the right to approve or disapprove all literature, publications, and materials used in these organizations.

Deacons shall serve as a council of advice and conference with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. With the pastor, they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all things pertaining to the salvation of souls, the development of Christians, and the extension and growth of the church.

The Church

They are to seek to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the church membership.

They are to serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging, and developing all who are in need. In counsel with the pastor, and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct in accordance with the New Testament teachings, deacons are to have oversight of the discipline of the church.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42; 47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23, 27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-6, 9-13; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3

- The local church has autonomy free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations. True churches cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith.
Titus 1:5
- All saints are called to the work of service.
1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12
- The church is to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:7-12; Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11

The Ordinances



Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Baptism

- Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his Faith in the final resurrection of the dead.
Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12
- Baptism is not for infants or those who are not capable of moral action, but only for those who give credible testimony that they have repented of their sins and placed their faith in Christ as Savior.
- Being a church ordinance, baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

Lord's Supper

- The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.
Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29
- The Lord's Supper is for those who have confessed faith in Christ, have been baptized by immersion in a church of like faith, and are willing to participate in the humility of self-examination and worshipful observance.

The Lord's Day

The Lord's Day

- The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 29:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1-15; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3, 33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1, 19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10

The Kingdom

- The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over His creation and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly, the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come, and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10, 23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6, 9, 15; 5:10; 21-22

Angels

- Holy Angels - Angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him.
- Fallen Angels - Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator, by taking numerous angels with him in his fall, and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve.

Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14; Genesis 3:1-15

Last Things



- Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man; that he is the prince of this world, who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire.
- [Isaiah 14:12-17](#); [Ezekiel 28:11-19](#); [Matthew 4:1-11](#); [25:41](#); [Romans 16:20](#); [Revelation 12:9-10](#); [20:10](#)

Last Things

- God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all humanity individually in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous (those who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ) in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in heaven with the Lord. [Isaiah 2:4](#); [11:9](#); [Matthew 16:27](#); [18:8-9](#); [19:28](#); [24:27](#), [30](#), [36](#), [44](#); [25:31-46](#); [26:64](#); [Mark 8:38](#); [9:43-48](#); [Luke 12:40](#), [48](#); [16:19-26](#); [17:22-37](#); [21:27-28](#); [John 14:1-3](#); [Acts 1:11](#); [17:31](#); [Romans 14:10](#); [1 Corinthians 4:5](#); [15:24-28](#), [35-58](#); [2 Corinthians 5:10](#); [Philippians 3:20-21](#); [Colossians 1:5](#); [3:4](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:14-18](#); [5:1-11](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:7-12](#); [2](#); [1 Timothy 6:14](#); [2 Timothy 4:1](#), [8](#); [Titus 2:13](#); [Hebrews 9:27-28](#); [James 5:8](#); [2 Peter 3:7-18](#); [1 John 2:28](#); [3:2](#); [Jude 14](#); [Revelation 1:18](#); [3:11](#); [20:1-22:13](#)
- As to the means and methods God will use to accomplish these things, we rely on a literal interpretation of the Scriptures in their grammatical and historical context. The pre-tribulational rapture of the church saints is followed by a seven-year tribulation, then the pre-millennial return of Christ to the earth and His literal rule of 1,000 years. After this one-thousand-year reign comes the Great White Throne judgment and then the New Heaven and New Earth which will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another. Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever. [1 Corinthians 15:24-28](#), [51-58](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#); [5:1-9](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [2 Peter 3:10](#); [Revelation 19-22](#)

Position on Israel

Position on Israel

- Scripture recognizes a distinction between Israel and the Church and organizes the Bible into different dispensations or administrations.
- God called a people to Himself who are the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Israel is the Wife of Jehovah, unfaithful in the past, divorced in the present, and to be reunited in the future.
Exodus 19:6; Deuteronomy 4:37; 7:6-8; 9:4-5; 10:15-16; 14:2; 2 Kings 13:22-23; Romans 11:29; Hebrews 6:13; Jeremiah 3:8
- God has indicated His future purpose in Israel through four covenant promises. Israel will:
 1. Become a great nation, recipients of physical land, a blessing to all, and a father of many descendants.
 2. Promise of return to land after Israel has broken the covenant.
 3. Enemies will be subdued and an eternal King on an eternal Throne established.
 4. A new covenant with God's law in their minds and written on their hearts, knowing the Lord, and their sins will be forgiven forevermore.
- God intends to fulfill all His promises to Israel in a literal way just as His warning and judgments were fulfilled in a literal way.
Genesis 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-21; 22:15-18; Deuteronomy 29-30:20; 2 Chronicles 17:10-15; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 11:1-5
- While God preserves for Himself a remnant of believing Jews in Christ Jesus through His election of grace until His unconditional covenants are fulfilled, the Gentile nations have been offered the gift of Salvation so that in humility, Gentiles will extend the message of Christ's salvation to all nations of the world until the end of the Church Age.
Romans 11:11-35
- During the literal one-thousand-year reign of the Messiah on Earth over Israel and the Gentiles, the Church will co-reign with the Messiah and all the provisions of the unconditional covenants will be fulfilled, including the land, seed and blessing aspects.
Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Hosea 6:1-3; Romans 11:26; 1 Corinthians 6: 2; Revelation 20:4, 6-7



Evangelism, Missions and Discipleship

- It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teaching of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the Gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.
Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-8; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8, 16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17
- Scripture teaches that it is our duty to go make disciples. Leading nations to Christ is not the end of our commission—it is the beginning. The word disciple is *mathētēs*, which in its simplest form means learner. Therefore, we are to be learners and help build more learners. We are to be committed to equipping the saints, teaching them all the commandments of Christ, so that the body can grow and be more like Him.
Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Proverbs 27:17; Matthew 10:24-42; 28:18-20; Luke 9:23; Ephesians 4:12-16

Education

- Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abides all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.
Deuteronomy 4:1, 5, 9, 14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7-14; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13-35; 4:1-10; 8:1-7, 11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24-27; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3, 8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17

Stewardship

- God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the Gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and sacrificially for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.
Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21, 42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 16:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19

Cooperation



Cooperation

- Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objectives of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of the New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

First Baptist Church cooperates with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, the Concord Baptist Association, and other associations in kingdom work that the church desires to enter.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17-26; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1-24; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1-47; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18

The Christian and the Social Order

- All Christians are under an obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to

Christians & Social Order

bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends, Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3-12; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8

- God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced these responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God.
Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13-14
- It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.
- Despite mankind's best efforts to avoid war, Jesus said it is inevitable that wars will continue until He returns, and He did not oppose earthly governments or their right to maintain armies. Other New Testament passages accept the necessity of maintaining armies and the worthiness of military occupations.
Matthew 5:38-45; 8:5-10; Mark 13:7-8; Luke 3:14; Acts 10:1-6; Romans 12:17-21
- However, the true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2

Religious Liberty



Religious Liberty

- God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom, no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The Gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19

The Family

- God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.
- Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in the exclusive, comprehensive, and conjugal "one flesh" covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

Genesis 2:15-25; Proverbs 5:15-20; 18:22; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; Hebrews 13:4

The Family

- The husband and wife are of equal worth before God since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.
Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Joshua 24:15; Proverbs 12:4; 14:1; 18:22; 24:3; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7
- Children are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipleship, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.
Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 6:20-22; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 18:2-5; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5
- Human life begins at conception and the resulting unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life and is therefore unscriptural and contrary to the will of God.
Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44
- The direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus, an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering (Euthanasia), is contrary to the will of God.
Exodus 20:13; 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28

The Family



- Sexual acts outside marriage are sinful. Consequently, church members should resist and refrain from any and all sexual acts outside marriage - including but not limited to adultery, fornication, cohabitation (living together while not legally married), and homosexuality.
Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:7–23, 20:10–21; Deuteronomy 5:18; Matthew 5:27–28, 15:19; Romans 1:26–27; 1 Corinthians 6:9–13; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:17–19; Colossians 3:5; Hebrews 13:4;
- God created mankind in His image: male (man) and female (woman), sexually different but with equal personal dignity. Consequently, church members should affirm their biological sex and refrain from any and all attempts to physically change, alter, or disagree with their predominant biological sex.
Genesis 1:26–28; Romans 1:26–32; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11
- God created and ordered human sexuality to the permanent, exclusive, comprehensive, and conjugal “one flesh” covenant union of man and woman. Consequently, church members should affirm the sexual complementarity of man and woman and resist any and all same-sex sexual attractions and refrain from any and all same-sex sexual acts or conduct.
Genesis 1:27; 2:24; Matthew 19:4–6; Mark 10:5–9; Romans 1:26–27; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11; Ephesians 5:25–27; Revelation 19:7–9; 21:2
- Recognizing that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, we encourage all to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ by grace alone through faith in Him and to live our lives unto Christ redemptively through putting off sin and putting on Christ by the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are all broken by sin and each of us struggles with its effects in our lives and relationships. Yet, the regeneration, sanctification, and justification that are ours by faith in Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, allow us to walk in complete forgiveness and provide true hope that in Christ our lives can be transformed and redeemed (1 Corinthians 6:9–11). In grace, church members should treat with respect, compassion, and sensitivity all who experience same-sex attractions or confess sexually immoral acts, but are committed to resisting sexual temptation, refraining from sexual immorality, and conforming their behavior consistent with the teaching

The Family

and admonition of Scripture as affirmed in the First Baptist Church Statement of Faith.

Matthew 11:28–30; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1–10; I Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 2:17–18; 4:14–16

- The Holy Scripture grants two life-enhancing options for human sexual behavior:
 1. Covenant Union
 - The conjugal “one flesh” marital covenant union of one man and one woman.
 2. Celibacy
 - Both marriage and celibacy are gifts from God, given as He wills for His glory and the good of those who receive and rejoice in His gift to them. Celibacy and faithful singleness are to be celebrated and affirmed.

Genesis 1:27–28; 2:18, 21–24; Matthew 19:4–6; Mark 10:5–8; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 7:1–8; Matthew 19:12; 1 Corinthians 12:12–13; Romans 12:10; 1 Timothy 5:1–2
- First Baptist Church, for itself and each of its ministers and pastors, reserves the right to refuse to participate in any religious ceremony of any kind, or to facilitate any union or other conduct, that involves a relationship or other conduct contrary to these religious tenets.

James 3:1; 1 Corinthians 3:12–15; Luke 12:47–48; 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; Acts 20:28; 2 Timothy 2:15

