

Articles of Faith

Revised March 29, 2015

1. The Scripture

We believe that the Bible, consisting of 66 books, is inspired by God and is the infallible authority for faith and conduct. We believe that the Holy Spirit supernaturally guided human authors in the writing of the original Scriptures, with His guidance extending to all parts equally, even to the choice of each word. The result is the inerrant Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16–17; 2 Pet. 1:21).

2. God

We believe that there is but one living and true God (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 45:5–6) who eternally exists (Ps. 90:2) in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that these three are one God, otherwise known as the Trinity (Matt. 28:19–20; 2 Cor. 13:14). Each person has the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and is worthy of the same worship, confidence, and obedience (John 1:1–2; Acts 5:3–4).

a. **The Father.** We believe that the Father is the Creator and Sustainer of all (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 102:25; 1 Cor. 8:6); that He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3); and that He is the Father of all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12–13).

b. **The Son.** We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God (Matt. 3:16, 17; Rom. 1:4); that all things were made and are sustained through Him (John 1:3; Col. 1:15–17; Heb. 1:3); that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20); that He was born of a virgin, Mary (Matt. 1:18–23; Luke 1:31–35); that He is both full deity and true humanity in one person (Phil. 2:5–8); that He was tempted in all things even as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15); that in all things He submitted to the will of God the Father (John 6:38); that He was crucified for our sins (1 Pet. 3:18); that on the third day He rose again bodily from the dead on account of our justification (Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:3–4); that He appeared to many people before ascending into heaven where He now sits at the right hand of the Father, interceding for those who are His own (1 Cor. 15:5–8; Heb. 1:3; 7:25); and that He will return for His Church and rule over His kingdom (John 14:1–3; 1 Thess. 4:13–18; Isa. 9:6–7).

c. **The Holy Spirit.** We believe that the Holy Spirit regenerates all who believe in Jesus Christ (John 3:3–8; Tit. 3:5); that He seals them in Christ to the end of this age (Eph. 1:13–14; 4:30); that He indwells all believers and places them into the Church, the Body of Christ (John 14:16–17; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19; 12:13); that He

sanctifies all believers (1 Pet. 1:2); that He guides believers and intercedes for them (Rom. 8:14, 26–27); that He empowers believers for ministry (Acts 1:8); and that His ministry to the world is to convict of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7–11).

3. **Man**

We believe that the first man, Adam, was created by God in His image (Gen. 1:26–27); and that he willfully sinned and incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12–21). We also believe that this spiritual death has been transmitted to the entire human race, with the result that every child (except Christ) is born into the world with a sinful nature, unable to please God (Ps. 51:5; Isa. 64:6; Rom. 3:23; 5:12; Eph. 2:1–3; 1 John 1:8, 10).

4. **Redemption**

We believe that because man is a sinner he must be redeemed from sin (Rom. 3:23–24; 6:23; Heb. 9:22); that the Lord Jesus Christ provided for our justification by shedding His blood on the cross, dying in place of sinful man, and being raised from the dead (Rom. 3:21–26; 4:25; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:7); and that salvation is appropriated only by personal faith in Jesus Christ as the resurrected Savior, not by works (John 3:36; Rom. 10:9; Eph. 2:8–9; Tit. 3:5).

5. **Christian Life**

- a. **Security.** We believe that everyone who is regenerated by the Holy Spirit through personal faith in Jesus Christ is eternally secure in Him (John 10:27–29; Rom. 8:33–39; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 John 5:13).
- b. **Sanctification.** We believe that sanctification is to be understood in three aspects: (1) positionally, every believer has a perfect standing before God in Christ (Heb. 10:10); (2) progressively, every believer is to grow by faith in his new life in Christ (Rom. 1:16–17; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18); and (3) ultimately, every believer will be fully sanctified at his entrance into glory (1 Thess. 5:23; Jude 24).
- c. **Spirit-filled life.** We believe that every believer is to live in submission to the Holy Spirit, who alone enables the believer to fulfill the commands of Christ (John 14:15–21; Gal. 2:20; 5:16, 22–25; Eph. 5:18).
- d. **Separated living.** We believe that every believer is to live in a manner that glorifies God, avoiding all sinful practices (Rom. 6:11–14; 12:1–2; 1 Cor. 10:31; 1 John 2:15–17) and separating from all religious apostasy (2 Cor. 6:14–7:1; 2 John 9–11).
- e. **Sexuality and Marriage.** We believe that God established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin (Gen. 2:24–25; Ex. 20:14, 17, 22:19; Lev. 18:22–23, 20:13, 15–16; Matt. 19:4–6, 9; Rom. 1:18–31; 1 Cor. 6:9–10, 15–20; 1 Tim. 1:8–11; Jude 7). We believe that God created the human race male and female and

that all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's birth gender is immoral and therefore sin (Gen. 1:27; Deut. 22:5).

6. The Church

- a. **Nature of the Church.** We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ had its beginning on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–47); that it is composed of all believers in Jesus Christ; that it is the Body of Christ and submits to Him as its Head (Eph. 1:22–23; Col. 1:18); that it has its expression in local assemblies (1 Cor. 16:19); that it gathers for worship, edification, and fellowship (Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11–12); and that it will be united with Christ at the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13–18).
- b. **Ordinances of the Church.** We believe that the Bible commands two ordinances to be observed by all believers: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that baptism is a symbol and proclamation of the believer's identification with Christ, death to sin, and resurrection in newness of life, and that it is best expressed by immersion (Matt. 28:19–20; Rom. 6:3–4). We believe that the Lord's Supper proclaims Christ's death until He comes again (1 Cor. 11:23–26). We believe that neither of these ordinances is essential to salvation, but that both testify to the believer's faith.
- c. **Purpose of the Church.** We believe the purpose of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ worldwide through preaching the gospel, edifying believers, and equipping them for ministry (Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 4:11–13).
- d. **Spiritual gifts of the Church.** We believe that the Holy Spirit equips every believer with one or more spiritual gifts for ministry (Rom. 12:3–8; 1 Cor. 12:7–11). We believe that the gifts of apostle, prophet, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, healing, and miracle-working were instrumental in the founding of the Church and are not normative for this present age (Acts 2:4; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:20; Heb. 2:3–4). We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:29–30). We believe that, although the ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation at the resurrection, God sometimes chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing (1 Cor. 15:42–44; James 5:14–16).

7. Angels, Satan, and Demons

We believe that God created eternal spirit beings, known as angels, with free will in order to serve and worship God (Heb. 1:4–14). Some of these angels chose to rebel. We believe that Satan, an angel created by God, sinned and became the enemy of God and of God's people (Luke 10:18; Eph. 6:11–12; Rev. 12:7–10). We believe that he was judged at the cross, but that he presently opposes the work of the Church by blinding unbelievers to the gospel, accusing believers before God (Rev. 12:10), and tempting believers to sin against God, and that he will do so until Jesus Christ returns (John 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:3–4). We believe that he will be bound for 1,000 years after Christ's return. He will then lead a final, unsuccessful rebellion against God and be cast into the Lake of Fire forever along with those angels who joined him in rebellion (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:1–10).

8. Last Things

We believe in that blessed hope, which is the personal, premillennial, and imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ (Tit. 2:13). At that time those who have died in Christ will be resurrected and believers who are still alive will be gathered to Christ to be with Him forever (John 14:1–3; 1 Thess. 4:13–18). We believe that there will be a seven-year period of tribulation, after which the Lord Jesus Christ will return with His Church to reign over the earth for 1,000 years (Dan. 9:24–27; Rev. 19:11–20:10); and the redeemed of all ages will be raised to participate in His kingdom (Dan. 12:2, 13; 1 Cor. 15:20–28; Phil. 3:20–21). We believe that after the 1,000 years, Christ will raise the unbelieving dead to be judged and to be cast into the Lake of Fire to be tormented forever (Matt. 13:49–50; John 5:28–29; Rev. 20:5–15). We believe that the saints of all ages will be forever with the Lord as joint heirs with Him in His inheritance (Rom. 8:16–17; Rev. 21:1–22:5).