

BAPTIST UNION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
A PROPOSED STATEMENT OF BELIEF
Revised at Florida Baptist Church, Johannesburg
June, 2017

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Acknowledgements

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1. We believe (1) that the Holy Scriptures consist of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments in their original writing; (2) that the Spirit of God so influenced the authors that these writings are the Word of God; (3) that because of the divine origin and inspiration of its words, the Scriptures are true in all that they affirm and are trustworthy and without error; (4) that these Scriptures are the complete and only written revelation of God to people; (5) that every translation that is faithful to the originals and responsibly interpreted clearly reveals those truths necessary for our salvation, godly living, and maturity in Christ; and (6) that Scripture alone is our sufficient and final authority in all matters of belief and practice.

1) Rom 3:2; Mt 5:18; Lk 24:27; Rev 22:18-19; Deut 4:1-2; Prov 30:5-6

2) 2Pet 1:19-21; Lk 1:70; Acts 1:16; Acts 3:18; Eph 6:17; Heb 3:7

3) Jn 10:35; Jn 17:17; 2Tim 3:16-17; Jn 14:26

4) Mt 24:35; Rom 3:2; Acts 7:38; 1Cor 9:8-10; 1Cor 4:6; Deut 4:1-2; Prov 30:5-6; Rev 22:18-19

5) 2Tim 2:15; 2Pet 3:16; Acts 17:11; 2Pet 1:3-4; Ps 19:7-14

6) Jude 1:3; Lk 16:29-31; Mt 4:1-4; Mk 7:9-13; Rom 15:4

2. We believe (1) in one God who eternally exists in three co-equal persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; (2) that though each divine person is fully and equally God, they differ in relationship towards each other and their work in the world; (3) that this triune God is perfect and infinite in His being and attributes - an all-holy, all-loving, and all-wise Sovereign; (4) that from before creation, God determined to save sinners through the sacrifice of His Son, to govern all history according to His sovereign plan and to finally bring all things under one head, even Christ; and (5) that all things exist from Him, through Him, and for Him, and are created to display the glory of His wonderful Name.

1) Deut 6:4; Isa 46:9; 1Cor 8:6; 1Tim 2:5; Mt 3:16-17; Mt 28:19; Mt 14:16-17; 1Pet 1:1-2; Rev 1:4-6

2) Jn 1:1-3, Jn 3:16; 1Cor 8:6, 1Cor 12:4-5; Gal 4:4-6; Eph 1:3-14; 1Pet 1:1-2

3) 1Tim 6:15-16; Isa 6:3; 1Pet 1:15; Deut 7:9; Ps 86:15; Ps 89:14; Ps 117; Rom 8:37-39; 1Jn 4:16; Rom 11:33-36; 1Tim 1:17; Isa 55:9; Rom 16:27

4) Jn 3:16; Eph 1:4-5, 11, 13; 1Tim 1:15; 2Tim 1:9; Rev 13:8; Gen 50:20; Isa 9:7; Isa 46:8-11; Dan 4:35; Acts 17:26; Eph 1:10

5) Isa 48:11; Rom 11:36; Eph 1:5, 6, 14; Eph 2:7; Rev 5:13

3. We believe (1) that in the beginning God sovereignly created all things visible and invisible and took delight in it all; (2) that He created humankind male and female as his image bearers, endowing each with a dignity of equal worth and calling to govern and care for His creation; (3) that human life is sacred to God and begins at conception, and should not be unnecessarily terminated at any stage; (4) that God created marriage to be an exclusive and lifelong union between a natural man and a natural woman, giving the man the responsibility of loving leadership and the woman the role of compatible support; (5) that the first man Adam sinned and thereby incurred the penalty of death, physical and spiritual, for all people, and as a consequence of his sin, all humans inherit a sinful nature, which results in actual transgression and personal guilt.

1) Col 1:16; Rev 4:11; Gen 1:1, 31

2) Gen 1:26-31; Mk 10:6; James 3:9

3) Gen 9:6; Ps 119:73; Ps 139:13-16; Jer 1:5; Isa 42:5; Zech 12:1 Lk 1:41

4) Gen 2:24; Mal 2:15; Mt 19:5-6; Eph 5:22-24; Eph 5:25-31; Heb 13:4; Lev 18:22; Lev 20:13; Rom 1:26-27; 1Cor 6:9-11

5) Gen 3:6-8, 16-19; Gen 6:5; Rom 3:10-19, 23; Rom 5:12,17; Rom 7:9; 1Cor 15:22; Eph 2:3

4. We believe (1) that when the time was right, the eternal Son of God took on human nature, and was made like us in every way, yet without sin; (2) that, after being conceived by the Holy Spirit, He was born of the virgin Mary, was named Jesus (meaning 'God saves'), and from conception was and always will be fully God and fully man in one person; and (3) that He is, therefore, the perfect and only mediator between God and people.

- 1) Jn 1:14; Gal 4:4; Phil 2:5-8; Heb 2:14; Heb 4:15
- 2) Lk 1:31, 35; Mt 1:21; Rom 1:3-4; 1Cor 15:47-48; Col 1:19; Col 2:9
- 3) Eph 2:18; 1Tim 2:5; Heb 9:15; Heb 12:24; 1Jn 2:1

5. We believe (1) that the Lord Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, was perfectly obedient to His Father in every way, and ushered in the promised Kingdom of God in all His words and deeds; (2) that, for the joy set before Him, He offered up Himself as the perfect substitutionary and atoning sacrifice for sinners, (3) triumphing over sin, death, and all the forces of evil, and purchasing for Himself a people out of every tribe, language, and nation; (4) that on the cross the Son of God received in His person the due penalty of God's wrath against our sin, and (5) that His shed blood is the sole basis for our salvation and the greatest revelation of the glory of the grace of our God.

- 1) Isa 53:7-9; 2Cor 5:21; 1Pet 2:22; Heb 4:15; 1Jn 3:5
- 2) Isa 53:5-12; Rom 3:23-25; 2Cor 5:21; Heb 9:14; Heb 12:2; 1Pet 3:18; 1Jn 2:2
- 3) Jn 12:31; 1Cor 15:54-57; Heb 2:14; Heb 9:26; Eph 1:11-14; Col 2:14; 2Tim 1:10; 1 Jn 3:8; Rev 5:9; Rev 7:9
- 4) Isa 53:5-6; Mt 27:45-46; 2Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; Rom 5:9; Heb 9:14, 22; 1Jn 4:10
- 5) Rom 8:32; Eph 1:5-7; Col 1:14, 20; Heb 9:22; Rev 5:9

6. We believe (1) that the Lord Jesus was crucified, buried, and on the third day was resurrected bodily from the dead and glorified as the first-fruits of God's new creation; (2) that he ascended into heaven, where He is seated at the right hand of the Father as ruler over all things; (3) that He presently intercedes as High Priest and Advocate for all who draw near to God through Him; and (4) that He will return personally, visibly, and gloriously to judge the living and the dead.

- 1) Acts 2:32; Lk 24:39; Jn 20:27; 1Cor 15:17, 23
- 2) 1Cor 15:20; Acts 1:9-11; Eph 1:20-22; 1Tim 3:16; 1Pet 3:22
- 3) Jn 14:16; 1Jn 2:1; Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25
- 4) Mt 24:29-30; Lk 17:24; Acts 1:10-11; 1Thes 4:16; 1Jn 2:28; 2Tim 4:1; 1Pet 4:5; Rev 1:7

7. We believe (1) that the Holy Spirit is the Lord, the giver of life, who formed the world, empowered certain individuals for God's purposes, and who speaks in the Holy Scriptures; (2) that God anointed Jesus Christ with the Spirit for his ministry and that the Spirit was given to the Church at Pentecost to indwell, lead, and unite believers, gifting each of them for various works of service; (3) that the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ, gives understanding of the Word, convicts people of their sin, unites believers to Jesus, and forms the character of Christ within them; and (4) that the Spirit pours the love of God into our hearts, enables prayer and witness, and seals the believer for the day of the redemption of their bodies.

- 1) Rom 8:2; 2Cor 3:6, 17-18; Jn 6:63; Gen 1:2; Job 33:4; Psalm 33:6; Ex 35:30-31; Num 24:2; 1Sam 10:10; 2Sam 23:2; Acts 1:16; Heb 3:7; 2Tim 3:16
- 2) Isa 61:1; Mt 3:16; Lk 4:18; Acts 10:38; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:4; Rom 8:11, 14; Eph 4:3-4, 11, 12; Rom 12:4-7; 1Cor 12:7-11
- 3) Jn 16:8, 13-14; 1Cor 2:9-16; Eph 1:17-18; 2Cor 3:18; Gal 4:19; Gal 5:2-23
- 4) Rom 5:5; Rom 8:26-27; Eph 6:18; Acts 1:8; 2Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; Eph 4:30

8. We believe (1) that through the call of God in the Gospel message, all who receive Christ Jesus as Saviour and Lord are born again by the Holy Spirit, becoming a new creation in Christ; (2) that through faith in Him, sinners have the forgiveness of sins and are declared righteous on the grounds of His shed blood; (3) that repentance is a condition of this salvation and the first sign of that holiness without which no one will see the Lord; (4) that by virtue of their union with Christ, believers share in all the benefits of grace that are in Him, including the adoption as sons and the gift of the Holy Spirit; and (5) that all who turn from their sin, trusting Christ, may have the assurance that they will be kept and accepted by Him.

- 1) Jn 1:12-13; Jn 3:3, 18; 2Cor 5:17; Jam 1:18; 1Pet 1:23-25
- 2) Lk 18:14; Rom 3:26; Rom 4:5; Rom 5:1-2; Eph 2:13; Phil 3:8
- 3) Lk 19:8-10; Acts 2:38; Mk 1:15; Acts 17:30; 2Cor 7:10-11; 1Jn 1:8-9; Heb 12:14
- 4) Jn 1:16; Eph 1:3, 5; Rom 8:14-17; Gal 4:4-6; Phil 1:19
- 5) Jn 10:27-29; Phil 1:6; 2Thes 3:3

9. We believe (1) that the Church is the whole company of those who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, reconciled to the Father, and thereby to each other; (2) that this Church is the people of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit, through whom God's purpose in history is made known; (3) that the local church, as a manifestation of the universal Church, is a community of believers in a particular place where God's Word is preached and practiced, the two ordinances are observed, and church discipline is exercised; (4) that in the local church both men and women are called to serve equally, and male headship should be evidenced; and (5) that each local church is ruled by Jesus Christ, governed by its members, led by its shepherds, and served by its deacons.

- 1) Mt 16:18; Eph 1:22-23; Eph 5:23; Col 1:18; Heb 12:23
- 2) 1Cor 3:16; Eph 1:23; Eph 3:9-10; 1Pet 2:9-10
- 3) Acts 20:28; 1Cor 1:2; Eph 2:18-21; 1Tim 3:15; 2Tim 4:1-5; 1Pet 2:5, 9-10; Mt 28:19-20; 1Cor 11:23-32; Rom 6:1-4; Mt 18:15-20; Gal 6:1-5; Tit 3:10
- 4) Acts 2:17-18; 1Cor 11:5; 1Cor 14:34; 1Tim 2:8-15; 1Pet 3:7; 1Pet 4:10-11
- 5) Acts 6:1-7; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:3-4, 22-28; Acts 20:28; Mt 18:17; Eph 5:23; Phil 1:1; Col 1:18; 1Cor 5:1-13; Tit 1:5-9; 1Tim 3:1-13; 1Pet 5:1-3

10. We believe (1) that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed two ordinances – Baptism and the Lord's Supper – to be observed as acts of obedience and as witnesses to the primary facts of the Christian faith; (2) that Baptism is the immersion of a professing believer in water as a confession of identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection; and (3) that the Lord's Supper is the partaking of the bread and the cup, signifying our participation in the Saviour's body and shed blood in remembrance of His death until He comes.

- 1) Mt 28:19-20; Mt 3:16; Rom 6:1-4; Gal 3:27; Lk 22:14-20; Acts 2:41-42; 1Cor 10:16; 1Cor 11:23-32
- 2) Acts 2:38; Rom 6:3-5; Col 2:12; Gal 3:27
- 3) Mk 14:22-28; 1Cor 10:16; 1Cor 11:23-26

11. We believe (1) that the mission of the Church is to make disciples of all people groups in all places through the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to plant and establish local churches to obey all that Jesus taught the Apostles; (2) that in loving our neighbour as ourselves, compassionately, practically and wisely, we image the love of God to all; and (3) that we should do all this according to the Scriptures, under the shadow of the Cross and in the power of the resurrection.

- 1) Ps 22:27; Ps 67:1-7; Mt 16:8; Mt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 14:22; Eph 4:11-16; Tit 1:5
- 2) Lev 17:18; Lk 10:25-27; Jn 13:35; 2Cor 5:14; Gal 6:9-10
- 3) Mk 8:34-35; Rom 1:4; 1Cor 1:18-23; Eph 1:19-20; Phil 3:10; Jam 2:8

12. We believe (1) in the bodily resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous; (2) that all people will appear before God's judgement seat to receive their due for the things done while in the body; (3) that those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will enter into eternal life, but the unrighteous into eternal condemnation; and (4) that according to God's promise we look forward to a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells, when we will forever be with the Lord, and He with us: *Come Lord Jesus, come! Amen.*

1) Job 19:25-27; Ps 16:10; Isa 26:19; Dan 12:2; Jn 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Rom 6:5; 1Thes 4:16-17

2) Jn 5:22, 27-29; Mt 16:27; Rom 2:6; 2Cor 5:10; Heb 9:27

3) Mt 7:21-23; Mt 13:49-50; Mk 9:45-49; Mk 25:31-46; Rev 13:8; Rev 20:11-15; Rev 21:27

4) 1Thes 4:17; 2Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1; Rev 22:20