

## WHY A STATEMENT OF FAITH? ❁

Since the Christian church began 2,000 years ago, believers of all ages have found it necessary to provide confessions of their common faith. Among the first confessions were the Apostles' Creed, which articulates Christianity's most basic tenets, and the Nicene Creed, which expresses the doctrine of the Trinity.

Many, if not most, of the confessions and creeds written by the church throughout history originate from a crisis of belief, an attack on the sound teachings of Jesus and the apostles from the Bible. These documents became tools not only for teaching believers, but also for declaring to the world the faith of Christianity.

These needs have not changed. Believers still have the charge to "guard the good deposit entrusted to [us]" (2 Timothy 1:14) by passing on the truth of the gospel to the next generation of Christians. The world still needs clear confessions of the hope we have in Christ.

Our statement of faith is a declaration to the world, an instrument for our instruction, and a source of our unity. We offer it to you in hopes that you will find hope and joy in the good news of Jesus Christ.



## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> 2 Timothy 3:12-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 119; Psalm 19:7-11.
- <sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4
- <sup>3</sup> Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2
- <sup>4</sup> Matthew 22:37-38; Romans 11:33-36; Revelation 5:9-14
- <sup>5</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:6
- <sup>6</sup> John 1:1-5, 14; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 John 1:3
- <sup>7</sup> Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 1:35
- <sup>8</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22
- <sup>9</sup> John 14:11; John 20:30; Acts 2:22
- <sup>10</sup> Romans 3:25; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 10:19-22, 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 1:7
- <sup>11</sup> Matthew 28; Acts 2:22-36; Romans 1:4, 4:23-25; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8
- <sup>12</sup> Ephesians 1:19-22
- <sup>13</sup> Matthew 24:29-31; Acts 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-5:11; Titus 2:11-14; James 5:7-9; Revelation 19:20
- <sup>14</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:19; John 17:3, 22; 1 Peter 1:8; Philippians 1:25-26
- <sup>15</sup> Romans 8:9-10
- <sup>16</sup> Ezekiel 36:27; John 14:15-16, 14:26; Romans 8:1-17; Ephesians 3:16&20, 5:18-20; 1 John 3:21-24
- <sup>17</sup> Ephesians 4:4-6; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
- <sup>18</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:4; 1 Peter 4:10
- <sup>19</sup> Genesis 1:26-27, 9:5-6
- <sup>20</sup> Romans 3:23; 5:12-21; Ephesians 2:1-3
- <sup>21</sup> Hebrews 9:27; 2 Peter 3:7
- <sup>22</sup> John 17:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20
- <sup>23</sup> John 3:16; Acts 4:12; Romans 10:9-10
- <sup>24</sup> Ephesians 2:8-9;
- <sup>25</sup> Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 3:3; Philippians 2:13
- <sup>26</sup> Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 2:12-13; Titus 2:11-14
- <sup>27</sup> Romans 8:30; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58
- <sup>28</sup> John 6:37; Romans 8:38-39
- <sup>29</sup> Philippians 1:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Peter 1:5
- <sup>30</sup> Matthew 10:22; John 8:31-32; Hebrews 3:14; 1 John 2:19
- <sup>31</sup> Matthew 16:18-19; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 12:27; Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:19-22
- <sup>32</sup> Acts 2:41-47; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:9-10
- <sup>33</sup> Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5; 2 Corinthians 2:6
- <sup>34</sup> Acts 6:1-7; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-15; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5
- <sup>35</sup> Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12
- <sup>36</sup> Matthew 28:18-29; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:4-6
- <sup>37</sup> Acts 2:41, 8:12, 10:48
- <sup>38</sup> Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:41-42, 20:7; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:23-29



**MONT BELVIEU  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

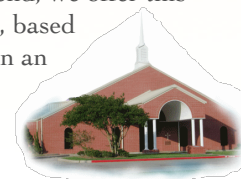
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# WHAT WE BELIEVE



## STATEMENT OF FAITH ❁

Paul emphasized the importance of guarding the beliefs of the church. "Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 1:13). Toward that end, we offer this statement of our shared faith, based on God's unchanging word, in an attempt to provide a clear witness to the world.



# Our Statement of Faith

## THE BIBLE

The Bible is God-breathed, truth without mixture of error, the final authority for faith, and the perfect guidebook for living. Written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Bible is God's Word to all mankind.<sup>1</sup>

## GOD

There is one God<sup>2</sup> who eternally exists as three equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup> God is the Creator of all and infinite in perfection, being altogether powerful, all-knowing, just, merciful, gracious, and loving. For this reason, God deserves all praise, devotion, love, honor, and glory.<sup>4</sup>

## JESUS CHRIST

The glory of God is best seen in the face of Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup> Jesus, Himself eternally God, walked this earth fully human.<sup>6</sup> He was born of a virgin through conception by the Holy Spirit,<sup>7</sup> lived a life of perfect obedience to God the Father,<sup>8</sup> performed miraculous works,<sup>9</sup> died on the cross to pay the penalty for the sins of the world,<sup>10</sup> was raised from the dead in a glorified body,<sup>11</sup> ascended to the place of ultimate authority at the right hand of God the Father,<sup>12</sup> and will personally return in power and glory to judge the world.<sup>13</sup> The purpose of Jesus' coming was to reunite men to God so that they can glorify God by enjoying Him forever.<sup>14</sup>

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit indwells believers as the personal presence of Jesus<sup>15</sup> and gives them the power to live a godly life.<sup>16</sup> At the initial moment of salvation, the Spirit baptizes believers into Christ and seals their salvation.<sup>17</sup> The Holy Spirit also gives gifts to every believer to be used for the common good of the whole Body of Christ.<sup>18</sup>

## HUMANS

All human beings are created with an eternal soul bearing God's image, to be like him in character, and should be treated with dignity.<sup>19</sup> Having God's image, men and women are able to have a relationship with God like no other creature. When the first human freely chose to disobey God (sin), the perfect relationship with God was broken and an inward corruption took place so that all people are now inclined toward disobedience.<sup>20</sup> Apart from a right relationship with God in this life, all humans face an eternal punishment of separation from him.<sup>21</sup>

## SALVATION

The main objective in God's saving of human beings is restoration to a right relationship with Himself for His glory.<sup>22</sup> Personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is absolutely essential for man's salvation.<sup>23</sup> Salvation is entirely an act of God, not granted based on any human merit,<sup>24</sup> whereby humans are born again with a new nature that desires God and godliness.<sup>25</sup> After the new birth God begins to work within a person to make him more like Jesus.<sup>26</sup> When Christ returns He will resurrect and glorify the bodies of His disciples, preparing them for eternity.<sup>27</sup>

God promises that those who come to Him in faith will never be cast out and nothing can separate His people from His love.<sup>28</sup> Because God is faithful to His promises, and because salvation is an act of God's grace, all who are truly saved will continue to the end.<sup>29</sup> This perseverance in the faith distinguishes true believers from those who merely profess to be Christians.<sup>30</sup>

## THE CHURCH

All those who have been saved are spiritually united as the Church. The visible gatherings of believers make up local churches. The local church is the only God-ordained institution to carry on the mission of Jesus as the Body of Christ on this earth, and as such, every Christian is commanded to be a member of a local church.<sup>31</sup> The local church is made up of believers associated by a covenant relationship with God and one another, serving one another and taking the message of Jesus Christ to the world.<sup>32</sup>

Each local church is autonomous under the lordship of Christ, with final earthly authority given to the congregation gathered in His name to seek His will.<sup>33</sup> The Bible specifies that the officers of the church are elders and deacons.<sup>34</sup>

## BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer into water, symbolizing our participation by faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is an outward display of an inward change.<sup>35</sup> Christ commands all believers to be baptized as a sign of giving themselves up to Christ and His Body, the Church, to walk in newness of life in the Spirit.<sup>36</sup> As such, it is a prerequisite to church membership.<sup>37</sup>

In the Lord's Supper believers use the elements of the bread and the cup to commemorate Christ's death for their sins, celebrate His love, and anticipate His return. It is observed as a renewal of our communion with Him and His Body, the Church. As such, every believer should closely examine his relationship with Christ and the Church in light of this intimate reminder of His sacrifice.<sup>38</sup>