

What We Believe

The doctrinal outlook of the church is reflected in the following statements:

- A. The Scriptures.** The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain, and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience. They are without error in the original manuscripts.
- B. God.** There is but one God, the Maker, Preserver, and Ruler of all things, having in and of Himself, all perfections, and being infinite in them all; and to him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.
- C. The Trinity.** God is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.
- D. Providence.** God from eternity decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and all events; yet so as not in any way to be the author or approver of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures.
- E. Election.** Election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life – not because of foreseen merit in them, but of His mere mercy in Christ – in consequence of which choice they are called, justified, and glorified.
- F. The Fall of Man.** God originally created Man in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his descendants inherit a nature corrupt and completely opposed to God and his law, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.
- G. The Mediator.** Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law and suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He remains to make intercession for his people. He is the only Mediator, Prophet, Priest, King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.
- H. Regeneration.** Regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who awakens those spiritually dead in trespasses and sins opening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they turn from sin, believe the Gospel, and love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone.
- I. Faith.** Saving faith is the belief in all that is revealed in God's Word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Christ alone for justification and eternal life. This faith is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness.
- J. Justification.** Justification is God's gracious and full pardon of sinners who repent and believe in Christ. This justification is possible because of the satisfaction that Christ has made through His obedient life, death for sins, and

- resurrection. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.
- K. Sanctification.** Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified by God's word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of Divine strength, which all saints seek to obtain, pressing after a life of loving obedience to all Christ's commands.
 - L. Perseverance of the Saints.** Those whom God has saved and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but will certainly persevere to the end; and though they may fall through neglect and temptation, into sin, by which they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the Church, and temporary judgments on themselves, yet they will be restored again to repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.
 - M. The Church.** The Lord Jesus is the head of the Church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular societies or churches; and to each of these churches He has given needful authority for administering the order, discipline, and worship that He has appointed. The regular officers of a Church are Pastors and Deacons.
 - N. Baptism.** Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in water in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of the washing away of sins, and of giving himself up to God, to live and walk in newness of life.
 - O. The Lord's Supper.** The Lord's supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and wine, and to be observed by His churches till the end of the world. It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate His death, to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge, and renewal of their communion with Him, and of their church fellowship.
 - P. Gender, Marriage, and Family.** God has created humans uniquely male and female and in doing so He communicated His image in harmonious interpersonal relationships, with equality of personhood and importance and a distinction in role and authority. God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in a covenant commitment for a lifetime and is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman intimate companionship, biblical sexual expression, and the means for procreation of the human race. 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. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage for marriage. They are to lead their children towards faith in Christ and through consistent lifestyle example and

loving discipline, lead them to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents in the Lord.

Q. 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 men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

(The above doctrinal statements are largely taken from the Abstract of Principles of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and from the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000)