

### **The Scriptures**

We believe that the Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testaments are God's special revelation for us today. We believe that the Bible in the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek manuscripts was God-breathed (God-spoken), and the product of men borne along (controlled) by the Holy Spirit. As a result every word written and every thought therein, was exactly what God desired and determined, without error and infallible. Any copy or translation is, therefore, God's Word where it faithfully conveys the words and meanings of those original writings, and we believe this to be true of most copies and translations. We believe that God's Word alone is sufficient for our faith. Those parts of God's Word written to New Testament Grace believers are alone authoritative for our practice. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 Corinthians 2:9-13; Mark 12:36; Titus 1:9;

### **God**

We believe there is one living and true God, in essence and nature: eternal, intelligent, personal, spirit, immutable, infinite; in attributes: all-knowing, all-powerful, good, holy, love, righteous and truth. God alone is worthy of worship and alone the Creator, Sustainer, Savior, and Ruler of all things. God is one in essence and attributes and therefore one in nature yet three in person: the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. These three are not three separate Gods but one God. These three are not different modes of God but three distinct persons, eternal and equally sharing all that is true of their singular essence and attributes.

Deuteronomy 6:4; John 4:24; Matthew 28:19; Revelation 4:11; Isaiah 40:28; John 4:24; Malachi 3:6; Isaiah 40:12-14; Jeremiah 32:17; Mark 10:18; Habakkuk 1:13; 1 John 4:8; Psalm 25:18; John 14:6

### **God the Father**

We believe that the Father is a person of the Godhead, coequal with the Son and Holy Spirit. He is the source of all things and in council with the Son and Spirit, is the originator of the present decree. The Father's relationship to the Son is one of equality. Today the Father forgives sins, indwells the New Testament believer, begets those who believe in the Son's death for sins and His resurrection, imputes believers to be in Christ. He is the Father only of those who believe this good news. It is to the Father that we address our intercession, supplication and requests.

John 5:18; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; 2 Peter 3:9; Ephesians 4:32; 1 John 3:9; John 14:13

### **God the Son**

We believe that God the Son is a person of the Godhead, co-eternal and coequal with the Father and Holy Spirit. He is eternally the Son, a title indicating equality with the Father. As God, He is His own source, He is not derived from the Father. He is the Creator of all things. He appeared to men throughout the Old Testament. He laid aside His glory, but not His deity and became a man, born of a virgin, thereby completely possessing His divine nature and His human nature. The virgin birth assured that He was not tainted by sin passed down from Adam. He is the God-man. He lived a sinless life. He willingly gave Himself to die for the sins of all men as a perfect substitute. He arose bodily from the grave and ascended into heaven, where He is seated at the right hand of the Father. He now intercedes for us as our High Priest. He will return in the clouds for His Church and later to the earth to inaugurate His kingdom.

John 1:1; Hebrews 1:5; Colossians 1:15-16; Matthew 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Hebrews 4:14; 7:24, 25 John 14:3; Matthew 25:31

### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with the Father and Son and sharing in the same essence and attributes. The Spirit was an equal participant in the counsel of the Godhead. The Spirit was an agent in the creation of the universe. The Spirit brought about the supernatural conception resulting in the Virgin Birth of Jesus. The Spirit came upon Christ at the beginning of His earthly ministry anointing Him as Israel's King. The Spirit was sent by the Father and Son following Christ's ascension. The Spirit began to indwell believers at that point and to carry out the two works of regeneration and baptism necessary for our salvation. He seals, grieves, fills, teaches, gifts, produces fruit in believers today and convinces the world to bring people to saving faith in Christ. He will depart with the Church at the Rapture and will later be poured out on all flesh at the beginning of the Millennial kingdom.

Acts 5:3, 4; Ephesians 4:30; Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Luke 1:35; Luke 4:21-22; John 16:7; 14:16-17; 2 Timothy 1:14; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; 5:18; 1 John 2:27; 1 Corinthians 12:7; Galatians 5:22-23; John 16:8-10; 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7; Joel 2:28-29

### **Man**

Man is a created, finite, tri-part being. God created Adam in Eden and all humanity has since been completely propagated from Adam and Eve [Christ excepted, see above]. Eve was formed from a portion of Adam. Man is comprised

## **First Baptist Church Doctrinal Statement**      **3**

of a spirit-his sphere of rationale, a soul-his sphere of senses and emotions, a body-his sphere of physical experience. When Adam chose Eve over God and ate of the fruit he bent his whole human nature: spirit, soul and body. This has been passed down through generation and is called the sin *nature* or flesh. As a result mankind is born a sinner by nature, choice, and practice before God. Adam's act also brought about both spiritual and physical death to the human race. Spiritual death is separation from God. Physical death is separation of the spirit and soul from the body. Man is completely incapable of saving himself. Apart from salvation, man is already judged and will therefore, spend eternity separated from God in the Lake of fire.

Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Romans 5:12, 18; 7:17; Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:10-19; Ephesians 4:18; James 2:26; John 3:17-18; Revelation 20:14-15

### **Salvation**

Salvation was made possible by Christ's work on the cross in which He became a propitiation [or satisfaction] for our sins and sin natures, accomplished reconciliation [made peace] and redemption [payment and release] for sins. This work does not automatically save but must be applied to each individual by the Persons of the Godhead in time.

Salvation is by grace through faith alone in the finished work of Christ: His death for our sins; His burial; His literal resurrection from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures. The promise of salvation is the forgiveness of sins and gift of eternal life. When an individual believes in Jesus Christ and what He has done for him and that he will be saved by just believing this, God saves him. This salvation is provided to the believer by the baptism of the Spirit and regeneration. The baptism of the Spirit places the believer into the persons of the Godhead by means of imputation. Regeneration places the persons of the Godhead into the individual believer. The believer in Christ is imputed to have died and been raised with Christ, to be seated in Christ at the Father's right hand and to be God's kind of righteousness. By regeneration the indwelling Son provides the believer with a new mind and eternal life. The Father gives the believer His seed constituting a new nature for one born from God. The Spirit is the divine teacher and agent to implement salvation in practice. The believer should then go on being saved by grace, commonly known as growth. All believers will have their salvation brought to its completion at the Rapture and this also by God's grace. Today, all those who do not believe the gospel will not experience this salvation and will be cast into the lake of fire at the Great White Throne.

1 John 4:10; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:13; 1 Peter 2:22-24; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 10:43; 13:48; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 6:11; Ephesians

## **First Baptist Church Doctrinal Statement 4**

2:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 1 John 5:11; 3:9; 5:1; Galatians 5:25; Romans 6:14; 1 Peter 1:13; Romans 8:23; John 3:18, 36.

### **The Church**

The Church is an assembly of people, who have been regenerated [born anew]. These people have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ, forming the body of Christ. The Spirit began forming this body on the Day of Pentecost. The Body of Christ will be caught up to Christ in the Rapture when God has completed His present work with the Church on earth. Therefore, the Church consists only of believers in this present dispensation [from Pentecost to the Rapture]. The local Church is a local expression of the Body of Christ. It is a local assembly of believers gathered to minister their individual spiritual gifts for the benefit of that whole local assembly. The assembly also gathers to share in the Lord's Table, remembering the unity provided in the Body of Christ and through the New Covenant. The local assembly has only two God-ordained offices: Bishop or Overseer and Deacon. The office of Bishop is that occupied by one gifted as a Pastor-teacher, who leads the sheep by teaching and example and oversees the assembly's spiritual welfare [need of spiritual food and protection from false teachers and teaching]. The office of Deacon is to be occupied by those believers who are spiritually mature and characterized as filled by the Spirit. The Deacons are to oversee the physical needs of the assembly, overseeing the material possessions of the assembly and distributing those possessions for the meeting of needs in accord with the principles of God's Word.

Regarding spiritual gifts, we believe the ministry of gifts are necessary for all believers. Some of the gifts ceased with the completion of God's Word. Those gifts which are still active are administration, evangelist, exhortation, faith, giving, helps, mercy, ministry, organization, pastor-teacher, and teacher. Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4; Romans 12:3-6; Acts 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 11:20-30; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; ; 1 Corinthians 13:8-10

### **Spirit Beings**

God has created a host of beings whose essence is only spirit. These beings are greater in power and mind than men but finite and incomparable to God. There are three divisions of these beings: cherubs - or covering ones, seraphs - or burning ones, angels - or messengers. Prior to man's creation, one Cherub named Lucifer convinced a third of the angels to rebel with him and attempted to move his throne above God's throne. These failed and are now known as Satan [the devil] and his demons or his angels. Those angels, cherubs and seraphs who did not follow Satan are holy and continue to serve God and will do so into eternity. Satan and his angels oppose God and His saints. They were judged at

## **First Baptist Church Doctrinal Statement** 5

the cross and will be cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity at the end of the Millennial kingdom.

Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 2:9; Ezekiel 10:8-14; Isaiah 6:2-3; Acts 12:7; Ezekiel 28:7; Ephesians 6:12; John 12:31; Matthew 25:41

### **Future Events**

The next prophetic event is the snatching away of Christ's church. All believers of this present dispensation will be raised from the dead or physically changed and then caught up face to face with Christ. Each individual's works of service will be judged and the believers awarded crowns. Christ will then present to Himself and the Father a spotless perfect Church who will become His bride. When the Church is removed, the Holy Spirit will also depart. Soon after this the Tribulation or Daniel's 70th week begins. God will pour out and complete His wrath upon mankind during these seven years. Christ will personally return to the earth and defeat the armies of the earth. The kingdoms of the earth then become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

Satan will be bound and the saints of the Old Testament and Daniel's 70th week will be raised to join the believing survivors of the Tribulation in Christ's kingdom. Christ will rule for 1,000 years over the earth from the New Jerusalem. At the end of 1,000 years, Satan will be released for a short time and will amass all the unbelieving people for a final rebellion against God. God will devour these people by fire and cast Satan into the lake of fire. The present heavens and earth will be destroyed. All the unsaved dead will be raised to stand in judgment before Christ on a great white throne. All these will be cast into the lake of fire because their names were not found written in the book of life. They will experience eternal conscious torment. God will then create new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness will settle down.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; Ephesians 5:27, 30-32; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Daniel 9:27; Revelation 6:17; 15:1; 19:11-16; 11:15; 20:1-15; Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13

### **The Spiritual Life**

We believe that the believer's spiritual life is lived by God's grace and the work of the Holy Spirit. The believer grows by grace. The believer does not live by law. The believer has three distinct spiritual enemies: the flesh [*sin nature*], Satan, the world. Each enemy has its own distinct lusts which become the basis for temptation. God has provided the believer the means of victory over each enemy. The believer is to reckon himself dead to the sin nature but alive to God in Christ. The believer is to put on the whole armor of God to resist Satan. The believer is

## **First Baptist Church Doctrinal Statement      6**

to refuse to love the world system. The spiritual believer reflects the glory of his Savior through the various ministries of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 6:14; 2 Peter 3:18; Ephesians 1:7; Galatians 5:17, 19-21; Ephesians 6:10-11; Titus 2:11-12; Romans 6:11; Galatians 6:1; 2 Corinthians 3:18

### **Dispensations**

We believe that God has given different rules by which He governs all or some of mankind throughout history. Each dispensation involves a specific rule or principle by which the daily lifestyles of a group of people is governed. None of the dispensations are means of initial salvation. While seven dispensations can be observed in Scripture, three are specifically identified: Law [from Sinai to Pentecost]; Grace [from Pentecost to the Rapture of the Church]; [See the section of Future Events] Fulness of times [from Christ's Second coming for 1,000 years]. The present dispensation or principle is Grace and it governs the daily lives of those people who make up the Church. This present dispensation or governing principle also involves faith. Distinguishing the various dispensations aids the believer in knowing what Scriptures govern his daily life.

Ephesians 3:2; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:10; 1 Timothy 1:4; Titus 1:9-2:1