

STATEMENT OF FAITH¹

OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible is the Word of God, written by men, divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16; 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Psa. 119:11; Rom. 3:1-2); that it has God for its author, salvation for its end (2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:16; John 5:38-39), and truth without any mixture of error for its matter (Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 3:4); that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us (Rom. 2:12; John 12:47-48; 1 Cor. 4:3-4; Luke 10:10-16; 12:47-48); and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union (Phil. 3:16; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Pet. 4:11), and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3:5; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 119:59-60; Phil. 1:9-11).

OF THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth (John 4:24; Psa. 147:5; 83:18; Heb. 3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:10); inexpressibly glorious in holiness (Exod. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:6-8), and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love (Mark 12:30; Rev. 4:11; Matt. 10:37; Jer. 2:12-13); that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 1 John 5:7); equal in every divine perfection (John 10:30; 5:17; 14:23; 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6), and executing distinct and harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Eph. 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5; comp. 2, 7).

OF THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker (Gen. 1:27, 31; Eccl. 7:29; Acts 16:26; Gen. 2:16); but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state (Gen. 3:6-24; Rom. 5:12); in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners (Rom. 5:19; John 3:6; Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:15-19; 8:7), not by constraint, but choice (Isa. 53:6; Gen. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-18); being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin (Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18, 32; 2:1-16; Gal. 3:10; Matt. 20:15), without defense or excuse (Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:20; 3:19; Gal. 3:22).

OF THE WAY OF SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (Eph. 2:5; Matt. 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; Acts 15:11), through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God (John 3:16; 1:1-14; Heb. 4:14; 12:24); who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin (Phil. 2:6-7; Heb. 2:9, 14; 2 Cor. 5:21); honored the divine law by his personal obedience (Isa. 42:21; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 3:21), and by his death made a full atonement for our sins (Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 4:25; 3:21-26; 1 John 4:10; 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:1-3; Heb. 9:13-15); that having risen from the death, he is now enthroned in heaven (Heb. 1:8, 3; 8:1; Col. 3:1-4); and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior (Heb. 7:25; Col. 2:9; Heb. 2:18; 7:26; Psa. 89:19; Psa. 14).

¹The core of this statement is taken from the Baptist Confession of 1853 by John Newton Brown, commonly known as the New Hampshire Baptist Confession.

OF JUSTIFICATION

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ (John 1:16; Eph. 3:8) secures to such as believe in him is Justification (Acts 13:39; Isa. 3:11-12; Rom. 8:1); that Justification includes the pardon of sin (Rom. 5:9; Zech. 13:1; Matt. 9:6; Acts 10:43), and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness (Rom. 5:17; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom. 5:21); that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood (Rom. 4:4-5; 5:21; 6:28; Phil. 3:7-9); by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God (Rom. 5:19; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12); that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity (Rom. 5:1-3, 11; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8).

OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel (Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Luke 14:17); that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith (Rom. 16:26; Mark 1:15; Rom. 1:15-17); and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; Rom. 9:32; Prov. 1:24; Acts 13:46); which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation (John 3:19; Matt. 11:20; Luke 19:27; 2 Thess. 1:8).

OF GRACE IN REGENERATION

We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be born again (John 3:3, 6-7; 1 Cor. 1:14; Rev. 8:7-9; 21:27); that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind (2 Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:28-29; 5:5; 1 John 4:7); that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life. (John 3:8; 1:13; James 1:16-18; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 2:13).

OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God (Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:8; 1 John 5:1); whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ (John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31), we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy (Luke 18:13; 15:18-21; James 4:7-10; 2 Cor. 7:11; Rom. 10:12-13; Psa. 51); at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior (Rom. 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 4:14; Psa. 2:6; Heb. 1:8; 8:25; 2 Tim. 1:12).

OF SANCTIFICATION

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness (1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; 13:9; Eph. 1:4); that it is a progressive work (Prov. 4:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Phil. 3:12-16); that it is begun in regeneration (John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14); and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means--especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer (Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18; 4:30).

OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end (John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:9; 5:18); that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors

(1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9); that a special Providence watches over their welfare (Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Psa. 121:3; 91:11-12); and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 24-25; Heb. 1:14; 2 Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; 1 John 4:4).

OF THE HARMONY OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government (Rom. 3:31; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20; 4:15); that it is holy, just, and good (Rom. 7:12, 7, 14, 22; Gal. 3:21; Psa. 119); and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin (Rom. 8:7-8; Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; John 6:44; 5:44); to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church (Rom. 8:2, 4; 10:4; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; Jude 20-21; Heb. 12:14; Matt. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 12:28).

OF A GOSPEL CHURCH

We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers (1 Cor. 1:1-13; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1; 11:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; 14:23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3:5), associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel (Acts 2:41-42; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 5:12-13); observing the ordinances of Christ (1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 11:23; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:6; 2 Cor. 2:7; 1 Cor. 4:17); governed by his laws (Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess. 4:2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6:2; all the Epistles), and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his Word (Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 12:14); that its only scriptural officers are Bishops, or Pastors, and Deacons (Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1), whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer (Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 16:32-34; 18:8), into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Gal. 3:27-28); to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Acts 22:16); that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts and Epistles), in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20); preceded always by solemn self-examination (1 Cor. 11:28; 5:1, 8; 10:3-32; 11:17-32; John 6:26-71).

OF THE LORD'S DAY

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day (Acts 20:7; Gen. 2:3; Col. 2:16-17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19; 1 Cor. 16:1-2); and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes (Exod. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; Psa. 118:24), by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private (Psa. 119:15) and public (Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 11:26; 13:44; Lev. 19:30; Exod. 46:3; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2, 3; Psa. 26:8; 87:3).

OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society (Rom. 13:1-7; Deut. 16:18; 1 Sam. 23:3; Exod. 18:23; Jer. 30:21); and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed (Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:1-8); except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 5:29; Matt. 10:28; Dan. 3:15-18; 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20) who is

the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth (Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4; Rev. 19:16; Psa. 72:11; Psa. 2; Rom. 14:9-13).

OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Mal. 3:18; Prov. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Gen. 18:23; Jer. 15:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 6:16); that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem (Rom. 1:17; 7:6; 1 John 2:29; 3:7; Rom. 6:18, 22; 1 Cor. 11:32; Prov. 11:31; 1 Pet. 4:17-18); while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse (1 John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; John 3:36; Isa. 57:21; Psa. 10:4; Isa 55:6-7); and this distinction holds among men both in and after death (Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Prov. 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; 9:23-26; John 12:25-26; Eccl. 3:17; Matt. 7:13-14).

OF THE WORLD TO COME

We believe that the end of the world is approaching (1 Pet. 4:7; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; 13:39-40; 2 Pet. 3:3-13); that at the Last Day Christ will descend from heaven (Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-11), and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution (Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:12-59; Luke 14:14; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; 6:40; 11:25-26; 2 Tim. 1:10; Acts 10:42); that a solemn separation will then take place (Matt. 13:49, 37-43; 24:30-31; 25:31-33); that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy (Matt. 25:35-41; Rev. 22:11; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Pet. 2:9; Jude 7; Phil. 3:19; Rom. 6:32; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Cor. 4:18); and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness (Rom. 3:5-6; 2 Thess. 1:6-12; Heb. 6:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev. 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 4:17).

ON HUMAN SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. He has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage. The only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. Marriage is a picture of Christ and his church. Any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgenderism, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography (as well as any other aberrant sexual practices) are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the sovereignty of God within the life of a person. (Gen 2:22-25; 18:20; 19:5-7,13; 26:8-9; Ex 20:14; Lev 18:1-30; Mt 19:4-6; Eph 5:22-23; Rom 1:24-32; 7:2; 1 Cor. 5:1,13; 6:9-18; 7:10; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4; Jude 7).

ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

We believe that men and women are created in God's image and are spiritually equal in position before God. However, God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastor and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12). We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication and desertion. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of Service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Cor 7:12-15; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6). We believe children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through

consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

ON MIRACULOUS GIFTS

We believe that the Holy Spirit empowers believers within the church with spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:4–13). The Holy Spirit does not give these gifts to glorify himself or the gifts themselves, but to glorify Christ (Jn 16:13–15). We also believe that some of these gifts were miraculous in nature including the gifts of tongues, healing, prophecy, and working miracles. These gifts were given to the church in the Apostolic Era as miraculous signs to authenticate the ministry of the Apostles (Heb 2:3–4; 2 Cor 12:12). We believe, therefore, that at the end of the Apostolic Era these miraculous gifts ceased. We reject the idea that speaking in tongues is a common or necessary sign of being indwelt or filled by the Spirit. We believe that every believer receives the indwelling Spirit at the moment of conversion (1 Cor 12:27–30; Eph 5:18; Rom 8:9).

CONCLUSION

These articles of faith do not exhaust the content of our creed, which is the whole Word of God nor are they intended as a limit to the Word of God. We do believe that in so far as these articles extend they are a true presentation of sound doctrine as taught in the Scriptures, and therefore binding upon us as Christian believers.