

STATEMENT OF FAITH



THE BIBLE

We believe that the final authority is the Bible, the supreme standard by which all human creeds and confessions will be assessed. The Bible is made up of 66 books, the Old and New Testament alone. We believe that every word was inspired by God through human authors, so that the Bible as originally given is in its entirety the Word of God without error and fully reliable. The Bible is not the word of God subjectively alone, but objectively as well. We believe that the Jesus of history is the Christ of faith, and that the historical Jesus is the same Jesus of the Bible. The Bible is clearly understandable in its main teaching, and is to be not simply the nominal rule of the church, but the actual message of our lips and the practice of our lives

GOD

We believe that there is one and only living and true God. We believe God has revealed himself in the Bible. God is the Almighty Creator, Savior and Judge who sustains and governs all things according to his sovereign will for his own glory. God is infinitely holy, utterly loving, all-powerful, all-knowing and worthy of all praise and worship. God is an intelligent, spiritual and personal Being. We believe God exists eternally in three distinct but equal persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

HUMANS

We believe that God created men and women in His image. Therefore all people have inherent and equal dignity and worth. We were created in holiness under the law of our Maker, with a responsibility to creation and a desire and duty to relate to God in loving obedience for God's glory and our good. As a result of the fall, however, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted and all men and women are without spiritual life, guilty sinners and hostile to God. Everyone is therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse and needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God in order to know and please him.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught with authority and all his words are true. Out of His great love Christ died on the cross in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by His blood. He rose from the dead and in His resurrection body ascended into heaven where He is exalted as Lord of all. He intercedes for His people in the presence of the Father.

SALVATION

We believe that God is sovereign in salvation, and this salvation is worked out in a way consistent with free choice. Salvation involves the redemption of the whole person, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. Salvation is by faith alone, by the work of Christ alone, by grace alone, and to the glory of God alone.

- We believe that **regeneration**, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart affected by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.
- We believe that **justification** is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.
- We believe that **sanctification** is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness. It is a progressive work begun in regeneration and 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, watchfulness, mutual encouragement, corporate worship, praise, and prayer.
- We believe that **glorification** is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed. We believe that all and only those who are real believers endure faithfully unto the end; this persevering relationship to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes their profession from superficial professions of faith. God in His providence watches over their welfare and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. The Holy Spirit has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ and to apply His work of salvation. He convicts sinners, imparts spiritual life and gives a true understanding of the Scriptures. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He indwells all believers, brings assurance of salvation and produces increasing likeness to Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism and service.

THE CHURCH

We believe that the universal church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, the administering of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for pastoral care and discipline, and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between gospel churches by mutual love, care and encouragement.

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian Baptism is the Baptism of a believer upon their profession of faith, by immersion, into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit; to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful sign, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. Baptism is a symbol of union with Christ and entry to his church but does not impart spiritual life.

The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice offered once for all; all its blessings are received by faith.

THE FUTURE

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. The wicked will be sent to eternal punishment and the righteous will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God in the new creation. God will make all things new and will be glorified forever.

AFFILIATIONS

Hope Fellowship is affiliated with The Greater Boston Baptist Association, The Baptist Convention of New England, and The Southern Baptist Convention.