

ARTICLES OF FAITH Rochester Hills Baptist Church

I THE SCRIPTURES

WE BELIEVE that the holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; (1) that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; (2) that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; (3) and therefore is and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried. The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only translation used by the church. II Tim. 3:16,17; Prov. 30:5,6; Rom. 2:12

II THE TRUE GOD

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach 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, inexpressibly glorious in holiness (1) and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love; and (2) that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. John 4:24; Exo. 15:11; Mark 12:30; Matt. 28:19

III THE FALL OF MAN

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that man was created in holiness under the law of his Maker (1) but, by voluntary transgression, fell from that holy and happy state; (2) in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, (3) not by constraint - by choice, being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law, of God, positively inclined to evil, and therefore under just condemnation (4) without defense or excuse. Gen. 1:27; Gen. 3:6-24; Rom. 5:19

IV THE WAY OF SALVATION

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (1) through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, (2) Who, according to the will of the Father, became man, yet without sin, (3) honored the divine law by His personal obedience and by His death and shed blood made a full atonement for our sins; (4) that having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person, the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection; and that He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all sufficient Savior. Eph. 2:5; John 3:16; Phil. 2:6,7; Isa. 53:4,5

V JUSTIFICATION

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; (2) that justification includes the pardon of sin (3) and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in Christ, by means of which faith His perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us by God; (4) and 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. John 1:16; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:9; Rom. 5:19

VI THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; (1) that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith; (2) and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own determined depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; (3) which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation. Isa. 55:1; Acts 17:30; John 5:40

VII REGENERATION

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that in order to be saved, men must be regenerated or born again; (1) that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; (2) that it is effected in a manner brought about by the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth (3) so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; (4) and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith and newness of life. John 3:3; II Cor. 5:17; John 3:8; I Peter 1:22-25

VIII REPENTANCE AND FAITH

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that repentance and faith are sacred duties and also inseparable graces, wrought in the soul by the regenerating Spirit of God; (1) whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, (2) we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy, at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on Him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior. Mark 1:15; John 16:8; Rom. 10:9-10

IX GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners;

(1) that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; (2) that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness; (3) that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility; (4) that it may be ascertained by its effect in all who truly accept Christ; (5) that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence. II Tim. 1:8,9; II Thess. 2:13,14; I Cor. 4:7; II Tim. 2:10; I Thess. 4:10

X SANCTIFICATION

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of His holiness; (1) that it is a progressive work; (2) that it is begun in regeneration; that it is carried on in the hearts of the 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, prayer, and in the practice of all godly exercise and duties. I Thess. 4:3; Prov. 4:18; Phil. 1:12,13

XI PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that such as are truly regenerated, being born of the Spirit, will not utterly fall away and perish, but will endure unto the end: (1) that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; (2) that a special providence watches over their welfare: (3) and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. John 6:37; John 10:27-29; I John 5:12,13

XII THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; (1) that it is holy, just and good; (2) and that inability, which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen man to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from his sinful nature; (3) and that to deliver him from which and to restore him 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. 3:31; Rom. 7:12; Rom. 8:7,8; Rom. 8:2,4

XIII A GOSPEL CHURCH

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that a visible Church of Christ is a company of baptized believers, (1) associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, (2) observing the ordinances of Christ, (3) governed by His laws, (4) and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His

Word; and (5) that its only Scriptural officers are bishops or pastors and deacons, (6) whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. Acts 2:41,42; II Cor. 8:5; I Cor. 11:2; Matt. 28:20; I Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:1

XIV CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer in Christ. (1) into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, (2) to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem his faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in his death to sin and resurrection to a new life; and (3) that it is prerequisite to the privilege of a church relation and to the Lord's Supper. Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 18:19; Rom. 6:4; Acts 2:41,42

XV THE LORD'S SUPPER

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that the Lord's Supper is a provision of bread and wine representing Christ's body and blood, partaken of by the members of the church assembled for that purpose, (1) in commemoration of the death of their Lord, (2) showing their faith and participation in the merits of His sacrifice, their dependence on Him for spiritual life and nourishment, (3) and their hope of life eternal through His resurrection from the dead. Its observance is to be preceded by faithful self-examination. Luke 22:19,20; I Cor. 11:26; John 6:35,54,56; I Cor. 11:28

XVI THE LORD'S DAY

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day (1) and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes; (2) that we abstain from all secular labor, except works of mercy and necessity, (3) by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public (4) and by preparation for that rest that remains for the people of God. Acts 20:7; Exo. 20:8; Isa. 58:13; Heb. 10:24,25

XVII CIVIL GOVERNMENT

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of human society; (1) and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, (2) except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, (3) Who is the only Lord of the conscience and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Rom. 13:1-7; Matt. 22:21; Acts 5:29; Matt. 23:10

WE BELIEVE that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state.

Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

XVIII RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; (1) that only such as are regenerated, being justified through faith in Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of God, are truly righteous in his esteem (2) while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are, in His sight, wicked and under the curse; (3) and that this distinction holds among men, both in and after death. Mal. 3:18; Rom. 1:17; I John 5:19; Prov. 14:32

XIX THE WORLD TO COME

WE BELIEVE the Scriptures teach that the end of the world is approaching; (1) that at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven (2) and raise the dead from the grave for final retribution; (3) that a solemn separation will then take place; (4) that the wicked will be adjudged to endless sorrow and the righteous to endless joy; (5) and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell on principles of righteousness. I Peter 4:7; Acts 1:11; Acts 24:15; Matt. 13:49; Matt. 25:35-41; II Thess. 1:6-12

XX HUMAN SEXUALITY

WE BELIEVE that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

WE BELIEVE that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; I Cor. 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23)

XXI FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

WE BELIEVE that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that 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 (pastors 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. 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; I Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; I Pet. 3:1-7)

XXII DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

WE BELIEVE that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Although divorced and remarried 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 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

XXIII ABORTION

WE BELIEVE that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

XXIV LOVE

WE BELIEVE that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers and those who oppose us. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as

a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)

XXV LAWSUITS BETWEEN BELIEVERS

WE BELIEVE that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)

XXVI MISSIONS

WE BELIEVE that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)

XXVII AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

