

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Article 1. Doctrine of God

We believe that there is but one living, true, and eternal God, the Father; of whom are all things, from everlasting to everlasting, glorious and unchangeable in all His attributes.

We believe that God is the only proper object of worship. The mode of His existence, however, is a subject far beyond the understanding of mankind. There is nothing in all creation that can adequately represent Him. He is the source of all existence, and the Scriptures teach that He is Spirit, present everywhere, all knowing, all powerful, independent, good, wise, holy, just, merciful, redeemer, Saviour, sanctifier, the judge of mankind and all other attributes ascribed to Him in the Scripture.

Article 2. Doctrine of Christ

We believe that there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, who was truly God and truly man, whom God freely sent into this world, because of the great love wherewith He loved the world; and Christ as freely gave himself a ransom for all, tasting death for every man; who was buried and rose again the third day, and ascended into Heaven from whence we look for him the second time, in the clouds of Heaven, at the last day to judge both the living and the dead.

We believe that the Scriptures ascribe to Christ all the attributes of God.

Article 3. Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

We believe that there is one Holy Spirit, the precious gift of the Father through his dear Son, who is the divine presence in our lives, who regenerates and sanctifies us, and whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and in whom we find our strength and help.

We believe that the Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Spirit all the attributes of God.

Article 4. Doctrine of the Trinity

We believe that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one God, without beginning or end, who is indivisible in His nature or being.

Article 5. Doctrine of Creation and Divine Government

We believe that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, visible and invisible; and that God is continually working through His creation to sustain it and to nurture His creatures.

We believe that all things are foreseen in the wisdom of God, so that God knows whatsoever can or cannot come to pass upon all supposed conditions. All events are present with God from everlasting to everlasting; but His knowledge of them does not in any sense cause them, nor does He decree all events which He knows will occur.

Article 6. Doctrine of Man

We believe that in the beginning God created man in His own image and placed him in a state of glory without the least mixture of misery, from which he voluntarily by transgression fell, and by that means, brought on himself a miserable and mortal state subject to death. Unbelief is the reason why men are condemned in the sight of the just and righteous God.

We believe that the human will is always active and may rebel or respond to the call of Christ in His redemptive offer, that through the grace of God mankind may be saved.

Article 7. Doctrine of the Church

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ, all Christians everywhere.

We believe that the local church is an organized body of believers in Christ who statedly assemble to worship God and who sustain the ordinances of the Gospel. The local church does not exist in isolation; rather, those churches who believe and practice the Original Free Will Baptist faith and order join together to form a denominational church. Neither the local church nor the denominational church exists independent of the other.

Article 8. Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures

We believe these are the Old and the New Testaments, that they were written by holy men, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and are God's revealed word to man. We believe that they are a sufficient and infallibly true rule and guide to salvation and all Christian worship and service.

Article 9. Doctrine of Salvation

We believe that salvation is the restoration of man to his right relationship with God.

General Provision: We believe in the doctrine of General provision made of God in Christ, for the benefit of all mankind who repents and believes the Gospel.

We believe that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance and the knowledge of the truth, that they might be saved; for which end Christ hath commanded the Gospel to be preached among all nations and to every creature.

We believe that sinners are drawn to God the Father by the Holy Spirit through Christ His Son, and that the Holy Spirit offers His divine aid to all human family so that they all might be saved, if they accept His divine teaching; and if any fail of eternal life, the fault is completely his own.

Faith: We believe that faith is the response of any individual in total trust and commitment to God's provision in Christ. The power to believe is the gift of God, but believing is an act of the individual which is required as a condition of salvation. "Faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone."

Repentance: We believe that the repentance which the Gospel requires includes a deep conviction, a penitential sorrow, and open confession, a decided hatred and an entire forsaking of all sin. This repentance God had enjoined on all men; and without it in this life the sinner will perish eternally.

Regeneration: We believe that regeneration is an instantaneous renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit, whereby the penitent sinner receives new life and becomes a child of God. (This is called in Scripture being "born again," "born of the Spirit," being "quickened," passing "from death unto life," and "partaking of the divine nature.")

Justification: We believe that justification means that persons who accept by faith the atonement of Christ are pardoned and absolved from the guilt of sin and restored to divine favor where once they stood guilty before God.

Sanctification: We believe that sanctification is the setting apart of the believer for continuing growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, for service to God and man.

Article 10. Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that those who abide in Christ have the assurance of salvation. The Christian, however, retains his freedom of choice. Therefore, he should watch and pray since it is possible for him to turn away from God and be eternally lost, which is called making shipwreck of faith.

Article 11. Doctrine of Individual Accountability

We believe that all persons are accountable to God, except those incapable of responding to God's call.

Article 12. Doctrine of Christian Service

We believe that it is the Christian's duty to be tender and affectionate one to another, to study the happiness of the people of God in general, to so justly by all people, and to be singly engaged to promote the honor and glory of God.

Article 13. Doctrine of the Lord's Day

We believe in the sanctity of the first day of the week, or Lord's day, and that it ought to be observed in the corporate and private worship of God, and that on it we should abstain from our worldly concerns except in cases of necessity or mercy.

Article 14. Doctrine of Worship

We believe that worship is the adoration of God and is duly required of all His children through praise, prayer, and the reading and preaching of His Word. Every Christian may worship God privately; however, this should never replace the corporate worship of the church.

We believe that in addition to the ordinances of the Gospel, there are other rites of worship which are valid for use by the local church. Some of these rites are: laying on of hands, anointing the sick with oil, fasting, singing praise to God, corporate affirmation of faith, and corporate prayer.

Article 15. Doctrine of Christian Stewardship

We believe that good works are the fruits of saving faith and include being good stewards of all God's blessings. Christians are to be responsible in the use of their time and talents. Furthermore, Christians are required to be faithful in the use of their finances for the expense of the program of Christ in the world.

The Old and New Testaments teach tithing as God's financial plan for the support of His work.

Article 16. Doctrine of the Ordinances of the Gospel

1. **Christian Baptism:** We believe that this is the immersion of believers in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in which are represented the burial and resurrection of Christ, the death of Christians to the world, the washing of their souls from the pollution of sin, their rising to newness of life, their commitment to serve God, and their resurrection at the last day.
2. **The Lord's Supper:** We believe that this is a commemoration of the death of Christ for our sins, in the use of **bread** which He made the emblem of His broken body, and the **cup**, the emblem of His shed blood; and by it the believer expresses his love for Christ, his faith and hope in Him, and pledges to Him perpetual fidelity.

- 3. Washing the Saints' Feet:** We believe that this is a sacred ordinance, which teaches humility, the necessity of the servanthood of every believer, and reminds the believer of the necessity of a daily cleansing from all sin. It was instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ as an "example" on the night of His Last Supper and betrayal.

It is the duty and happy prerogative of every believer to observe these sacred ordinances. We believe that no man has a right to forbid these tokens to the least of His disciples.

Article 17. The Doctrine of Death

We believe that Adam, while in the Garden of Eden in a state of innocence and in the image of God, was commanded by God not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and if he did he would surely die. As a result, Adam was liable or subject to death, but not under the result or penalty of it. However, when he disobeyed and rebelled against the command of God, he passed under the result and penalty of death; and as Adam represented all the human race, death passed upon all men.

We believe that there is much mystery associated with the act or fact of dying; therefore, no living person can completely understand it. However, the Bible assures that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, changed death from the destroying scourge to the doorway to heaven to all who exercise saving faith in Him.

Article 18. The Doctrine of Immortality

We believe that the soul does not die with the body, but immediately after death enters into a conscious state of happiness or misery, according to the individual's relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Article 19. The Doctrine of the Resurrection

We believe in the resurrection of the bodies of all people, each in its own order; the Christian to eternal life and the non-Christian to eternal damnation.

Article 20. Doctrine of Last Things

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father. He will come again to glorify His saints, to judge the world, and to consummate His Eternal Kingdom.

Article 21. Doctrine of Angels

We believe that angels are created spiritual beings (and are not spirits of the dead, nor are they glorified human beings). Angels are ministering spirits and messengers of God. Angels convey the instructions of God to men, announce special events; protect the faithful, both individually and collectively, and execute punishment on the adversaries of the work of God.

Article 22. Doctrine of Satan

We believe that Satan is a created spirit being. Names applied to Satan in the Bible are: Lucifer, Belial, Beelzebub, the Devil, the Evil one, the Accuser, the enemy, the tempter, the Prince of Demons, the prince of the power of the air and the Ruler of this world.

In the New Testament Satan appears as a distinctive personality. He incites people to shut their ears to God's message. He maliciously hinders Christian endeavor and is essentially a power of darkness, the enemy of the Light and of God, though he sometimes disguises himself as an angel of light.

Though Satan is all of the above, man is a free moral agent and is responsible for his own sins and is responsible for his acceptance or rejection of Christ, who gives victory over all evil.