

**Articles of Faith**

**for**

*Grace Baptist Church*

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## ARTICLES OF FAITH

Due to the various different religious organizations which profess to take the Bible as their guide as we (hereinafter to be recognized as Grace Baptist Church of Rural Hall, NC) do, yet differ with us in doctrine, faith, and practice, we feel constrained to set forth a distinctive declaration of what we believe; not as a substitute for the Holy Scriptures, but as exponents of what are conceived to be the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God. These things are most assuredly believed among us.

### I. THE ONLY TRUE AND LIVING GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one living and true God (**Deut. 6:4; Isa 43:10-11**) an infinite (**Ps 139:7-12; 147:5**) intelligent (**Acts 15:18**) sovereign (**Ps 115:3**) Spirit (**John 4:24**), Whose name is JEHOVAH (**Ps 83:18**), the Creator (**Gen 1:1**) and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth (**Dan 4:35; I Chron 29:11-12**) inexpressible glorious in holiness (**Ex 15:11; Isa 6:3; I Peter 1:15-16**); **Rev 4:6-8**), and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love (**Jer 2:12-13; Matt 10:37; Mark 12:30; Rev 4:11**), that in the unity of the Godhead there are three Divine Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (**Matt 28:19; John 15:26; I Cor 12:4-6; II Cor 13:14; I John 5:7**), equal in every Divine perfection (**John 5:17; 10:30; 14:23; 17:5; I Cor 2:10-11; Phil 2:5-6**), and execution distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (**Eph 2:18; II Cor 13:14; Rev 1:4-5**).

### II. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by holy men of God divinely inspired (**II Sam 23:2; Acts 1:16; Rom 3:1-2; II Peter 1:21**), and is the perfect treasure of heavenly instruction (**Ps 19:7**); that it has God for its Author (**II Tim 3:16-17; I Thess 2:13**), salvation of the elect for its end (**John 5:38-39 II Tim 3:15; Acts 11:14; Rom 1:16; 10:8-10; I Peter 1:10-12**), and truth without any mixture of error for its matter (**Prov 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rom 3:4; Rev 22:18-19**), that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us (**John 12:47-48; Rom 2:12; James 2:12**), and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (**Acts 17:11; II Cor 13:5; I Thess 5:21; I John 4:1**).

### III. THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

We believe the Genesis account of creation is to be accepted literally and not figuratively or allegorically; that God created man in His own image (**Gen 1:26-27; 2:7**), and not by the process of evolution from lower species. That all animals and vegetable life was likewise directly created by God from nothing by the Word of His power in six literal days (**Gen 1:20-25; John 1:1-3; John 1:1-3; Rom 1:18-20; Col 1:16; Heb 11:3**), and placed under God -inviolable law that they should bring forth only after their own kind (**Gen 1:21-24**).

### IV. THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN

We believe that the Devil or Satan is a personal evil spirit (**I Cor 2:12; Eph 2:2**), formerly a holy angel (**Exek 28:11-19**), from which estate he by transgression fell (**Is 12:27; I Tim 3:6**), drawing a host of angels he being their leader (**Job 4:18; Matt 25:41; Rev 12:3-9**), being the prince of the power of the darkness of this world (**John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11**), that he is the enemy of God (**Zech 3:1-2; Matt 13:39**), the tempter (**Gen 3:1-6; Matt 4:3**), and accuser of the saints (**Job 2:1-7; Rev 12:10**). the possessor of the power of death (**Heb 2:14-15**), as allowed by God, author of all evil and of all false religions (**John 8:44; II Cor 4:3-4 11:13-15**), the chief power back of the present apostasy (**II Thess 2:7; I Tim 4:1**), and that he is destined to final defeat and eternal destruction in the lake of fire (**Rev 20:10**).

## V. THE FALL AND DEPRAVITY OF MAN

We believe that man was originally created upright (**Ecc 7:29**) and finitely very good (**Gen 1:27, 31**), however by voluntary transgression he fell from his happy and holy estate (**Gen 3:6-24**) in consequence of which disobedience certain and constant impending death was then and there inflicted (**Gen 2:16-17; Rom 5:12**); and he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming subject to the power of the Devil; that sin of Adam was imputed to his entire race (**Rom 5:18-19; I Cor 15:22**), and that the corrupt and totally depraved nature has been transmitted to all his posterity by the ordinary generation (**Gen 8:21; Job 14:4; Ps 51:5**), and hence every descendant of Adam is by nature a child of wrath (**Eph 2:1-3**) totally destitute of spiritual life (**John 5:24; Col 2:13**), at enmity with God (**Rom 5:7**), wholly inclined to evil (**Job 15:16; Jer 13:23; 17:9**), and without strength (**Rom 5:6**) or hope (**Eph 2:12**) unless redeemed by Christ (**Matt 1:21**), and made alive by God the Holy Spirit (**John 3:3; 5; 6:63; II Cor 3:6**).

## VI. THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD

We believe that election is the eternal (**Eph 1:4**), personal (**John 15:16; Acts 9:15**) unconditional (**II Tim 1:9**) purpose of God, according to which He graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves lost sinners (**Rom 11:5-6; Eph 1:3-14; I Peter 1:1-2; I John 4:19**), that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end (**Acts 13:48; Rom 8:28-31; II Thess 2:13-14**); that in the most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable (**Jer 31:3; Matt 20:15; Rom 9:22-24; 11:32-36; Eph 1:11**); that it utterly excludes boasting (**Eph 2:8-9**) and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of His free mercy (**I Cor 1:25-31; 4:7**); that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree (**I Cor 9:22; II Tim 2:10**); that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel (**I Thess 1:4-10; Rom 1:16**); that it is the foundation of Christian assurance (**Isa 42:16; Rom 8:28-31; 11:29**); and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demand and deserves the utmost diligence (**Phil 3:12; Heb 6:11; II Peter 1:10-11**).

## VII. THE WAY OF SALVATION

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit (**Luke 1:35**) in a miraculous manner, born of the virgin Mary (**Isa 7:14; Matt 1:18-25**), without human father (**Gal 4:4**); that He by the appointment of the Father freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin (**John 3:16; Heb 2:14; 4:15; 7:26; I Peter 2:22**), honored the Divine law by perfect obedience (**Isa 42:21; Matt 5:17; Rom 3:21; Gal 4:4-5**), and by His vicarious death made full atonement for all of the sins of all of the elect of all time (**Isa 53:1-12; Matt 20:28; John 10:11; Rom 4:25; I Cor 15:1-3; Heb 9:12-14; 26; I Peter 3:18**); that having risen from the dead He is now with the Father, at His right hand in heaven (**Heb 1:3,8; Col 3:1-4; Rom 8:34; I Peter 3:22**); and uniting in His wonderful Person the most tender sympathies with Divine perfections. He is in every way qualified to be suitable, a compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior (**Ps 89:19; Col 2:9; Heb 2:18; 7:25-26**); that the full benefit of which is received by faith alone (**Rom 3:20-28**) and that no repentance, no faith, no feeling, no resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to rules and regulations of any church, no Baptist, nor any other such thing can in the least way add to the value of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (**Titus 3:5**).

## VIII. THE GRACE OF REGENERATION

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again (**John 3:3; 6-7; I Cor 2:14; II Cor 5:17; Titus 3:5**); that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind (**Jer 24:7**;

Gal 5:6; I John 4:7) that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the irresistible power of the Holy Spirit in connect with the gospel (Ps 110:3; 119:50; John 6:37; 17:20; I Cor 4:14; James 1: 16; I Peter 1:23-25); and that its proper evidence appears in holy fruits of repentance (Acts 5:31; II Tim 2:24-25), faith (John 6:29; Acts 18:17; Phil 1:29; Col 2:12; I Peter 1:21) and newness of life, which endures until the end (Job 17:9; Rom 6:4; I Cor 6:9-11; I Peter 4:1-4).

## IX. THE PERSERVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end (Job 17:9; Matt 10:22; John 8:31; Rev 2:10); that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors (Matt 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; 13:18; I John 2:19); that a special providence watches over their welfare (Ps 90:1-10; 91:11-12; 121:3; Jer 32:40; Matt 6:30-33; Rom 8:28), and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (II Kings 6:16; Phil 1:6; 2:12-13; Heb 1:4; 13:5; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 4:4; Jude 24-25).

## X. THE HARMONY OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

We believe the moral law (the Ten Commandments) of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government (Ps 19:7; Matt 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom 3:20; 31; 4:1-5), that it is holy, just, and good (Ps 119; Rom 7:7, 12, 14, 22; Gal 3:21); and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen mankind to fulfill the laws precepts, arises entirely from man's own rebellion and their love of sin (Josh 24:19; Jer 13:23; John 5:44; 6:44; Rom 8:7-8). To deliver the elect 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 New Testament church (Matt 16:17-18; Rom 8:2, 4; 10:4; I Cor 12:28; I Tim 1:5; Heb 8:10; 12:14; Jude 20-21). The law is the schoolmaster which God the Holy Spirit utilizes to manifest to the lost their sinful condition, and then He uses the gospel to reveal the righteousness of Another, the Lord Jesus Christ, and by His irresistible power draws in love the quickened child to salvation through the instantaneous and inseparable graces given by God of repentance toward God and faith in His only begotten Son Jesus Christ the righteous.

## XI. THE BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to those who believe in Him is salvation; that it includes all the Divine redemptive acts of God on behalf of the elect, such as the effectual calling and irresistibly calling the elect to obtain the salvation which Christ purchased for them by His atonement (John 10:26-28); justification, which is the Divine act of God whereby He purchased by the precious shed blood of Christ (Rom 5:9), and by His mighty power, the freedom of the believer from the dominion and penalty of sin (Rom 3:24; 4:25; 5:1; 8:1; 30; Acts 13:39; Titus 3:7) that grace, the Divine disposition of God wherein He saved, not upon any merit of their own (Eph 2:5, 8-10), but wholly by the work and merit of Christ (John 3:16; I Peter 2:24, 3:18; Rev 7:13-15) PROPITIATION: the Divine act of God in offering Christ as the sinner's substitute (Isa 53:4-6, 11-12) IMPUTATION: the Divine act of God whereby He imputes or counts to the believer the righteousness and excellencies of Jesus Christ to the believer (Rom 4:1-13; II Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13) FORGIVENESS: the Divine act of God by which He remits the sins of a believer (Acts 13:38; Eph 1:7; Col 2:13; Titus 2:14) SANCTIFICATION: the Divine act of God whereby He imparts His holiness to the new man in Christ (Eph 4:24; II Peter 1:4; I John 3:7) and thereby sets apart the entire man to the service of God (Rom 6:1-23; II Cor 7:1; I Thess 4:3-4, 5:22 II Tim 2:19-22) GLORIFICATION: the Divine act of God whereby that element or part of man which is mortal will be changed into a state and condition of immortality (Rom 8:1 1; I Cor 15:35-

57; Phil 3:20-21; Col 3:4; I John 3:1-2).

## **XII. THE WORK OF MISSIONS**

We believe that Jesus Christ gave the New Testament church, as an institution, a worldwide and an age-lasting commission (**Matthew 28:19-20**) to make disciples of all nations. That the gospel is to be preached to every creature (**Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8**); that all men everywhere are responsible to repent and believe the gospel (**Mark 1:15; Acts 17:30**); and that no accountable person will be saved without hearing and receiving the gospel (**Mark 16:16; John 3:18, 36; Rom 1:23**). That the heathen without the gospel are lost and will be judged by the light of nature and conscience as God is revealed in His creation so that they are without excuse (**Ps 19:1-4; Rom 1:17-20 2:11-15**). That it is the duty of every New Testament Baptist Church to support missionaries who are sent out by the authority of a local church, who meet the Bible qualification of a God called missionary (**I Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9**). Such men should furnish a doctrinal statement, and a disclosure of how mission funds are used, as the Spirit of God and the majority votes of the whole congregation direct them. Such men will be asked to answer a questioner furnished by Grace Baptist Church. Each missionary shall be considered individually and supported as the body sees appropriate.

## **XIII. REPENTANCE AND FAITH**

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regeneration Spirit of God, using the communicated gospel of Christ according to the scriptures (**Acts 11:16-18; I Cor 12:3, 9; Gal 5:22; I John 5:1; Rom 1:16; I Cor 4:15; James 1:8**); whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness (**Ps 116:3-5; Isa 6:5**), and of the way of salvation by Christ Jesus alone and that contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy are the only way of salvation (**Luke 18:13; II Cor 7:11**); at the same time heartily receiving and relying on Him alone as the only and all sufficient Savior (**Acts 3:22-23; Rom 10:9-11; II Tim 1:12; Heb 7:25**).

## **XIV. THE LORD'S DAY**

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day (**Acts 20:7; I Cor 16:1-2; Rev 1:10**) that it is to be kept as a day of rest and religious purposes. That we should refrain from all unnecessary secular labor and use all the means of grace both private and public, by which we may be drawn closer to God. That we should provoke others to love and good works (**Heb 10:25**) and prepare ourselves for the battle while in the world as we look forward to the rest which remains for the people of God (**Heb 4:3-11**).

## **XV. THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH**

We believe that a New Testament church is a local, visible, congregation of scripturally baptized believers (**Matt 28:19; Acts 2:41, 47; I Cor 12:12**), associated by grace in the faith and fellowship of the gospel (**Acts 2:42; I Cor 5:12-13; II Cor 8:5**); observing the ordinances instituted by Christ, her only head (**Eph 1:20-23; 5:23**); governed by His laws alone (**Gal 6:2; James 4:12**); that such an assembly is the body of Christ in its locality (**I Cor 12:27**), with which all regenerated should affiliate, thru this is the only kind of true church in the world, that her officers of ordination are pastors (**Eph 4:11**) and deacons (**Phil 1:1; I Tim 3:8-13**); that each assembly has the absolute right to self-government as led by the Holy Spirit, free from any interference whatsoever from any organization, group, association, or individual; that it is scriptural for assemblies to cooperate with each other for the furtherance of the gospel and the doctrines of the Word of God (**Acts 15:1-31; II Cor 8:23-24; 11:8-9**); but that each church is the sole human judge of the measure



and method of her cooperation; that only sound New Testament churches today preserve the essential apostolic faith and practice; that Christ's promise to build His church has been fulfilled in only these kind of churches, the first of which He organized during His earthly ministry in Jerusalem (**John 1; Matt 16:18**) and gave to her and to others that should descend from her the Great Commission; that these true churches on earth alone possess Divine authority (**Matt 28:18**); therefore we brand as unscriptural: open communion, alien baptism, pulpit affiliation with heretical ministry, mission boards, ecumenicalism, unionism, modernism, modern conventions, associations, one-church dictatorship, preacher-dictatorship and all kindred evils arising from these practices.

## **XVI. THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM**

We believe that Bible baptism is the emersion in water (**Matt 3:1-17; John 4:1-2; Col 2:12**) of a penitent believer (**Acts 8:36-39**) by the Divine authority of a true New Testament Baptist Church (**Matt 28:18-20**), in the name of the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. That baptism is not in order to obtain remission of sins, but to declare that the believer has already been saved by the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (**Rom. 6:1-11**), and to picture in a most solemn emblem his death to sin and resurrection to walk in newness of life. That baptism is a prerequisite to membership in the Lord's church, therefore to participation in the Lord's Supper (**Acts 2:41-42**); that the ceremonial washing of sins is only pictorial (**Acts 22:16; I Peter 3:20-21**); therefore, the authority of a true New Testament Church must administer all valid baptism.

## **XVII. THE LORD'S SUPPER**

We believe that the Lord's Supper is not a sacrament, but a solemn symbolic ordinance placed in the church by our Lord Jesus Christ (**Matt 26:26-30**), in which the members of one church observing the ordinance (**I Cor 11:18, 20, 22-23**), by the use of unleavened bread and wine, commune not with one another, but with the Lord (**II Cor 10:16**). That it shows forth not only their love for one another, but also more importantly their Lord's death till He comes (**I Cor 11:24-26**). The unleavened bread points to the sinless body of our Lord, and the wine to His precious sinless blood. We believe that unity is essential to the Scriptural observance of the Lord's Supper (**I Cor 11:18-34**).

## **XVIII. THE BRIDE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**

We believe that the honored and eternal wife of the Lord Jesus Christ will be His church (**Eph 5:22-32; II Cor. 11:1-2**). These are faithful (**I Cor. 4:2**) and striving lawfully as a member of and under the authority of one of the Lord's true churches (**II Tim. 2:5**). These are the only ones who shall be at home in the New Jerusalem, which our Lord has gone to prepare for His bride.

## **XIX. CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment and arrangement, for the best interest and good order of human society. (**Gen. 9:1-7; Ex 18:23; Deut. 16: 18; II Sam 23:3; Rom. 13:1-7**) That magistrates are to be prayed for (**I Tim 2:1-3**) conscientiously honored, and obeyed (**Matt 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13**); except in matters opposed to the Word of our God (**Acts 4:18-20; 5:19**).

## **XX. MARRIAGE**

We believe that marriage is of Divine origin and that the first ceremony God performs is in the Garden of Eden (**Gen 2:20-25**). This holy and blessed union should not be entered into without due prayer, consideration, and obedience to the Word of God. The child of God shouldn't

be unequally yoked with an unbeliever (**II Cor 6:14**), and that God's Word shows this blessed union is to be between one man and one woman for life. The events of today, as the living together without marriage, homosexual lifestyle, and all such like are in total opposition to the Holy Inspired Bible, and not to be accepted into the membership of Grace Baptist Church. We believe that the marriage bed is holy and honorable in all things, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge (**Heb 13:4**).

## **XXI. DIVORCE**

We believe that any and all divorce involves sin and is contrary to God's revealed plan, as He created only one man and one woman. Therefore, we despise and oppose divorce in any and all ways possible. Yet God has called us to peace; therefore Moses was inspired due to the hardness, wickedness, deceitfulness, and rebellion of the heart or nature of mankind to give a writing of divorcement (**Matt 19:3-6**). That the Bible gives no less than two Scriptural reasons for God approved breaking of the bond of marriage or divorce. The first is for sexual sin (**Matt 19:8-9**), this is within the marriage. The second is for desertion, if the unbelieving depart; let them depart (**I Cor 7:15**). Divorce is a breaking of the bond between the man and woman, just as much so as death and this leaves the parties free to marry in the Lord (**I Cor 7:39**), when the bond is broken it is truly broken and the parties when released by the civil authorities are free for courtship only in the Lord.

## **XXII. GODLY LIVING**

We believe that all believers should abstain from all appearance of evil (**I Thess 5:22; II Tim 2:19**) that they are to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world (**Titus 2:11-13**) that they are to be careful to maintain good works (**Titus 3:8; Eph 2:10**) they should seek in every possible way to serve Jesus Christ (**II Cor 5:15; I Peter 4:2**) and to walk worthy of their heavenly calling (**Eph 4:1; Phil 3:12-14; Heb 3:1**) that failure to do this will result in chastisement (**Heb 12:5-14**) and that continued disobedience (without death) proves one is a stranger from the saving grace of God (**I John 3:1-10**).

## **XXIII. THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED**

We believe that there is radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (**Gen 18:23; Prov 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Mal 3:8; Acts 10:34-35; I John 3:1-10**) that such as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem (**Prov 11:31; Rom. 1:17; 6:18; I Cor 11:32; I Peter 4:17-18; I John 3:7**) while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse (**Isa 55:6-7; John 3:36; Gal 3:10; I John 5:19**) and this distinction holds among mankind both in and after death (**Prov 10:24; Luke 12:4-5 16:25; John 8:21-24; Rev 22:17**),

## **XXIV. THE RESURRECTIONS**

We believe that there will be a resurrection both of the righteous and the wicked (**Dan 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 2:25; 26:8**), that there will be one thousand years of time intervening between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked (**Rev 20:4-6**) that the dead in Christ shall rise first (**I Cor 15:23; I Thess 4:13-18**) and that at the expiration of the one thousand years the wicked will be raised and judged (**Rev 20:11**).

## **XXV. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST JESUS**

We believe that the second coming of Christ is to be pre-tribulation, pre-millennial, bodily, visible,



and that it will consist of two stages: His pretribulational appearance in the air and His post-tribulation coming to earth; that at His coming in the air all those who sleep in Christ will be raised in glorified bodies and all saints who live and remain on earth will be translated that they should not see death and caught up with them in the air to ever be with the Lord (**I Thess 4:13-18**); that at His coming to earth (**Matt 24:29-31**) He will sit on the throne of His glory for the first time (**Matt 25:31; Rev 3:21**), judging all men then living on the earth (**Isa 11:3-4**). Receiving the righteous into His kingdom and sending the unrighteous into everlasting fire (**Matt 25:31-46**), that the throne of David is His throne (**Isa 9:6-7**); that the two stages of His coming will be separated by a seven years tribulation period (**Dan 9:2-27; Rev 11:1-9**) during which the woes depicted in the book of Revelation will be poured out during the reign of the Antichrist; that during the tribulation period on earth the judgment seat of Christ and the marriage of the Lamb will take place in Heaven (**I Cor 3:10-15; Rev 19:1-9**); after which our Lord Jesus Christ will return with His saints for the battle of Armageddon (**Rev 16:14-16; 19:11-21**) that Satan will be bound for one thousand years while Christ rules on earth. (**Dan 7:18, 27; II Tim 2:12; Rev 20:1-4**).

## XXVI. THE FINAL STATES

We believe that the earth has been redeemed from the curse of sin and shall be fitted as the eternal dwelling place for the saints of God (**Isa 66:17; Matt 5:5; Rom. 8:20-22**); that the fitting of the earth for the eternal home of the redeemed will be by a process of purification by fire (**II Peter 3:7-13**), the finally impenitent and incorrigible wicked will be cast, both souls and resurrected bodies into the lake of fire and brimstone (**Rev 20:1-15; 21:8**) where they shall be punished forever.