

Living Word Bible Church Articles of Faith

Table of Contents

	Page(s)
HOLY SCRIPTURES	1
GOD.....	2-3
GOD THE FATHER	3
GOD THE SON.....	4
GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT	5
MAN.....	6
SALVATION, ELECTION AND ASSURANCE.....	7-8
SANCTIFICATION	9
THE CHURCH.....	10
THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH.....	11
BAPTISM.....	11
THE LORD’S SUPPER	12
ANGELS	13
DEATH.....	13
THE AGE TO COME	14

+HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe in the verbal* and plenary** inspiration of the Scriptures with the result that they are the inerrant, authoritative, living, and eternal¹ word of God as represented in the original manuscripts.² The Bible consists of 66 books written by men through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.³ God's word is truth⁴ and is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.⁵ The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture: to which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of men.⁶ The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, depends not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God.⁷ While there are many arguments by which the Bible abundantly evidences itself to be the Word of God (such as the heavenliness of its content, the power of its teaching, the majesty of its style, the harmony and agreement of its various parts, the scope of the whole, the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, and many other incomparable excellencies, and entire perfections thereof), yet our full persuasion and assurance of its infallible truth, and divine authority, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.⁸ The truth of God's word is revealed by the inward illumination of the Holy Spirit,⁹ not man's intellect,¹⁰ and yet every believer must be diligent to present himself as a workman who handles the word of truth accurately.¹¹ The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is only one), the interpretation must always be in harmony with those other places in the Bible that speak more clearly.¹² The supreme judge, by which all controversies of faith are to be determined, and all confessions, opinions, and doctrines of men are to be examined, can be no other but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit. Into these Scriptures our faith is finally resolved.¹³

* Each word (every jot and tittle)

** Full and complete (in its entirety)

¹ Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33; Psalm 119:89; Isaiah 40:8

² Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; John 14:26; 16:12-13; Hebrews 4:12; Proverbs 30:5-6

³ 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; John 14:26; 16:12-13

⁴ John 17:17; 2 Timothy 2:15; Isaiah 45:19

⁵ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Isaiah 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Ephesians 2:20

⁶ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Galatians 1:8-9

⁷ 2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 John 5:9

⁸ John 16:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; 1 John 2:20, 27

⁹ 1 Corinthians 2:10-14

¹⁰ Luke 10:21; Matthew 11:25-26

¹¹ 2 Timothy 2:15

¹² 2 Peter 1:20-21; Acts 15:15-16

¹³ Matthew 22:29, 31; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 28:23

+This article is based largely upon the corresponding article in the London Baptist Confession of 1689.

+GOD

The Lord our God is the only living and true God;¹ whose subsistence is in and of himself,² infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself;³ a most pure spirit,⁴ invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who alone possesses immortality, dwelling in the light unto which no man can approach;⁵ who is immutable (unchangeable),⁶ immense (filling and transcending all space),⁷ eternal (transcending time),⁸ incomprehensible, almighty,⁹ in every way infinite, most holy,¹⁰ most wise, most free, most absolute; working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will¹¹ for His own glory;¹² most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of those who diligently seek him,¹³ and also most just and terrible in His judgments,¹⁴ hating all sin,¹⁵ and who will by no means clear the guilty.¹⁶

God, having all life,¹⁷ glory,¹⁸ goodness,¹⁹ and blessedness, in and of Himself, is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creature which He has made, nor deriving any glory from them,²⁰ but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them. He is the only fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things,²¹ and He has sovereign dominion over all creatures, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever He pleases.²² In God's sight all things are open and manifest,²³ His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent of the creature, so that nothing is to Him contingent or uncertain.²⁴ He is most holy in all His counsels, in all His works,²⁵ and in all His commands. To Him is due from angels and men, whatever worship,²⁶ service, or obedience, as creatures they owe to the Creator, and whatever else He is pleased to require of them.

¹ 1 Corinthians 8:4, 6; Deuteronomy 6:4

² Jeremiah 10:10; Isaiah 48:12

³ Exodus 3:14

⁴ John 4:24

⁵ 1 Timothy 1:17; Deuteronomy 4:15, 16

⁶ Malachi 3:6

⁷ 1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:23-24

⁸ Psalms 90:2

⁹ Genesis 17:1

¹⁰ Isaiah 6:3

¹¹ Psalms 115:3; Isaiah 46:10

¹² Proverbs 16:4; Romans 11:36

¹³ Exodus 34:6, 7; Hebrews 11:6

¹⁴ Nehemiah 9:32, 33

¹⁵ Psalms 5:5, 6

¹⁶ Exodus 34:7; Nahum 1:2, 3; John 3:18-19; John 3:18-19, 36

¹⁷ John 5:26

¹⁸ Psalms 148:13

¹⁹ Psalms 119:68

²⁰ Job 22:2, 3

²¹ Romans 11:34-36

²² Daniel 4:25, 34, 35

²³ Hebrews 4:13

²⁴ Ezekiel 11:5; Acts 15:18

²⁵ Psalms 145:17

²⁶ Revelation 5:12-14

+GOD (Continued)

In this divine and infinite Being there are three subsistences, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,²⁷ of one substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, yet the essence undivided:²⁸ the Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father;²⁹ the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son;³⁰ all infinite and without beginning, and therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being, but distinguished by several distinctive properties and personal relations. This doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on Him.

²⁷ 1 John 5:7; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

²⁸ Exodus 3:14; John 14:11; 1 Corinthians 8:6

²⁹ John 1:14,18

³⁰ John 15:26; Galatians 4:6

+This article is based entirely upon the corresponding article in the London Baptist Confession of 1689.

GOD THE FATHER

We believe that God the Father is the first person of the Trinity.¹ His prerogatives among the Godhead include authoring the plan of God,² authoring the act of election,³ sending His Son to this world,⁴ and disciplining His children.⁵ We as believers are to glorify Him both now and in eternity.⁶ God the Father will ultimately manifest His rule over all things after the Lord Jesus has abolished all rule, authority, and power and delivered the Kingdom to the Father.⁷

¹ Matthew 28:19

² Psalm 33:10-11

³ Ephesians 1:3-6

⁴ John 5:37; John 3:16-17

⁵ Hebrews 12:7-11

⁶ 1 Corinthians 6:20; Psalm 86:12

⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:24

+GOD THE SON

We believe that Jesus Christ, who is God's only begotten Son,¹ is the second Person of the Trinity.² He is God³ and is coequal,⁴ consubstantial,⁵ and coeternal⁶ with the Father. When the fullness of time was come, God the Son took upon Himself man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof,⁷ yet without sin;⁸ being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and so was made of a woman, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David;⁹ so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion; which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.¹⁰ He came to reveal God,¹¹ redeem men,¹² and rule over God's kingdom.¹³ He was crucified and died in our place and for our sins¹⁴ and arose from the dead bodily on the third day.¹⁵ Our salvation is made sure by His resurrection¹⁶ and He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father¹⁷ where He is ministering as our Prophet,¹⁸ Priest,¹⁹ and King.²⁰ He will return to this earth to receive His church,²¹ which is His body, and will establish His kingdom as its King.²² He is the final Judge of all creation.²³

¹ John 3:16

² Matthew 28:19

³ John 10:30; Philippians 2:5-8; John 1:1-3, 14; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1; Hebrews 1:3

⁴ John 10:30

⁵ Hebrews 1:3; John 14:9

⁶ Isaiah 9:6

⁷ John 1:14; Galatians 4:4

⁸ Romans 8:3; Hebrews 2:14, 16-17; 4:15

⁹ Matthew 1:20-25; Luke 1:27, 31, 35

¹⁰ Romans 9:5; 1 Timothy 2:5

¹¹ Philippians 2:5-8; John 1:1-3, 14

¹² Galatians 4:4-5; Luke 19:10

¹³ Isaiah 9:6; Revelation 20:1-15

¹⁴ Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

¹⁵ Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 20, 23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

¹⁶ Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23

¹⁷ Ephesians 1:20

¹⁸ Acts 3:22; Hebrews 12:25; 2 Corinthians 13:3; John 15:15

¹⁹ Hebrews 5:5-6; 7:24-25

²⁰ Psalm 2:6-7; Acts 13:32-33; Romans 1:3-4; Acts 15:14-16

²¹ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

²² Matthew 25:32-46

²³ Revelation 20:1-15; Matthew 25:32-46; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Peter 3:10

+This article is based in part upon the corresponding article in the London Baptist Confession of 1689.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity and is God.¹ He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father and with His Son.² We recognize His sovereign activity in creation,³ the incarnation,⁴ the written revelation,⁵ and the work of salvation.⁶ He was sent at Pentecost to initiate the building of the body of Christ.⁷ His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment;⁸ glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ,⁹ and by His filling,¹⁰ transforming believers into Christ-likeness.¹¹ He baptizes all believers into the body of Christ at the moment of salvation;¹² indwelling,¹³ sanctifying,¹⁴ instructing,¹⁵ and empowering them for service;¹⁶ and sealing them unto the day of redemption.¹⁷ He administers spiritual gifts to the church,¹⁸ not to glorify the gifts or those who are gifted, but to glorify Christ¹⁹ and implement His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the faith.

¹ Genesis 1:2; Acts 5:3-4; Matthew 28:19

² Genesis 1:2; Matthew 28:19; Isaiah 6:9-10 with Acts 28:25-27

³ Genesis 1:2

⁴ Matthew 1:18

⁵ 2 Peter 1:20-21; John 14:16-17, 26

⁶ John 3:5-7

⁷ Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-18

⁸ John 16:7-11

⁹ John 16:14; 1 Corinthians 12:3

¹⁰ Ephesians 5:18

¹¹ 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 3:6

¹² 1 Corinthians 12:13

¹³ John 14:16-17, 26; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Romans 8:9

¹⁴ 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 15:15-16

¹⁵ John 16:13; John 14:26

¹⁶ Acts 1:8; Romans 15:13; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:5

¹⁷ Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 4:30

¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

¹⁹ John 16:14; 1 Corinthians 12:3

MAN

We believe that man was directly and immediately created by God¹ in His image and likeness,² with the intent that he should glorify God,³ enjoy God's fellowship,⁴ and have dominion over the earth and all its creatures.⁵ Originally without sin, man did not have the knowledge of good and evil.⁶ However, through Adam's sin of disobedience,⁷ man lost his innocence,⁸ incurred the penalty of physical and spiritual death,⁹ became children of wrath by nature,¹⁰ and became corrupt.¹¹ Man is thus hopelessly lost apart from salvation,¹² which is the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ.¹³ We believe that apart from God's sovereign and unconditional act of election, man will always freely and willfully choose to reject God.¹⁴ God's sovereign act of election does not contradict nor negate the responsibility of man.¹⁵

¹ Genesis 2:7-25

² Genesis 1:26

³ Matthew 5:16; Psalm 86:12; Colossians 1:16; Philippians 2:10-11; Revelation 4:11

⁴ 1 John 1:3

⁵ Genesis 2:7-25; Genesis 1:26

⁶ Genesis 2:7-25; Genesis 3:6-24

⁷ Genesis 3:6-24

⁸ Romans 3:23; Romans 3:9-18; Romans 5:18

⁹ Romans 5:18; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3

¹⁰ Ephesians 2:1-3

¹¹ Romans 3:23; Romans 3:9-18; Isaiah 64:6; Jeremiah 17:9

¹² Ephesians 2:1-3

¹³ Romans 5:10-12

¹⁴ Romans 3:9-18; John 12:37-49; Romans 8:6-8

¹⁵ Romans 1:18-20

SALVATION, ELECTION AND ASSURANCE

We believe that salvation is wholly of God by grace,¹ through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, by the merit of His shed blood,² not on the basis of human merit, nor by works.³ Salvation is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit⁴ by which we are raised from spiritual death to spiritual life (regeneration)⁵ and made partakers of the divine nature.⁶ Repentance and faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ are essential in it,⁷ and all are invited, warned, and exhorted to such repentance and faith.⁸

We believe that through God's sovereign act of election, every believer has been chosen before the foundation of the world to receive salvation.⁹ God's choice is based entirely on the good pleasure of His will and His mercy, not on any foreseen faith by us nor in any human quality we may possess.¹⁰ All whom the Father has chosen will freely and joyfully come in faith, receive eternal life,¹¹ and be justified and glorified.¹²

On the basis of Christ's substitutionary death, which provided propitiation for our sins,¹³ God declares us righteous (justified) in Christ,¹⁴ having been reconciled to God.¹⁵ All the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are secure in Christ forever.¹⁶

¹ Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9

² Ephesians 1:7; Romans 5:9-10

³ Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5-7

⁴ Titus 3:5-7

⁵ Ephesians 2:1-6

⁶ 2 Peter 1:4

⁷ Acts 2:38; Mark 1:15; John 3:3-18

⁸ Romans 10:11-17, 21; Matthew 22:14; Romans 1:18-32

⁹ Ephesians 1:3-6; 1 Peter 1:1-2; Matthew 22:14; Matthew 24:22, 24, 3; 2 Thessalonians 2:13

¹⁰ Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 9:11-24; Romans 11:5-6; 1 Corinthians 1:27-29

¹¹ Romans 6:23

¹² Ephesians 1:3-6; Romans 8:28-30; Romans 11:29

¹³ 1 John 2:2

¹⁴ Titus 3:5-7; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:21-22

¹⁵ Romans 5:9-10; 2 Corinthians 5:19

¹⁶ John 6:39; John 10:27-30; Romans 8:31-39; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 John 5:18; Jude 1, 24

SALVATION, ELECTION AND ASSURANCE (Continued)

Considering this precious and magnificent promise, all professing believers must be diligent to add to their faith such qualities as moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love in order that they might make certain that God has called and chosen them.¹⁷ Assurance that a person is one of the elect and has eternal life comes from a life that is committed to the objective truths of the Gospel¹⁸ and that is directed and empowered by the Spirit.¹⁹ In light of these truths, the New Testament warns against falling away from the objective content of the Gospel²⁰ and it warns against falling into a lifestyle of sin²¹ - either of which places a person in danger of eternal destruction.²² So then, from the human perspective every professing believer should beware, lest in his proud complacency he fall away from the faith through sin and unbelief.²³ However, from God's sovereign perspective, a person who falls away from the objective content of the Gospel was never really a believer in the first place.²⁴ In the same way, God promises to keep the true believer from falling into a lifestyle of sin.²⁵ From the divine perspective: "the Lord knows those who are His."²⁶ From the human perspective: "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."²⁷

¹⁷ 2 Peter 1:3-10

¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:1-2; Hebrews 3:6, 14; Colossians 1:21-23; 1 John 5:13; Cf. 2:22-23; 4:2-3, 15; 5:1, 5

¹⁹ Romans 8:13; 2 Corinthians 13:5; 1 John 5:13, Cf. 1:6-7; 2:3-6, 9-11, 15-17, 29; 3:6-10, 14-15, 24; 4:7-8, 13, 20; 5:18

²⁰ Hebrews 3:12-14; Galatians 5:1-7

²¹ 1 Corinthians 10:6-12; Hebrews 10:36-39

²² Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Ephesians 5:3-7; 2 John 7-9; 1 John 2:23

²³ 1 Corinthians 10:6-12; Hebrews 3:12-4:1; 2 Peter 3:17; Hebrews 10:26-39

²⁴ 1 John 2:18-19

²⁵ 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 John 5:18; Jude 1, 24; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 1 Corinthians 1:7-9

²⁶ 2 Timothy 2:16-19

²⁷ 2 Timothy 2:16-19

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that upon salvation, every believer is regenerated, declared righteous (justified) and is declared sanctified (set apart for sacred service) by the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ.¹ However, a conflict exists between the new creation in Christ and the sinful nature nature that continues throughout this earthly life.² Sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit works to purify believers³ by bringing new life that leads to good works⁴ and by putting to death the lusts of the flesh.⁵ While sanctification is wholly a work of God,⁶ the believer has a responsibility to yield in reverence, obedience, and fear to the Father's commandment to be holy.⁷ Believers are to put forth effort to work out their salvation⁸ to the glory of God⁹ which is evidence of their salvation.¹⁰ The process of sanctification is completed when we are united with Christ at the end of this earthly life.¹¹

¹ 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 4:25; Romans 5:18; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30

² Galatians 5:16-18

³ Ezekiel 36:26-27

⁴ 2 Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 2:8-10

⁵ Romans 8:2, 13

⁶ 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23

⁷ 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Peter 1:14-19

⁸ Philippians 2:12-13; Philippians 3:12-21; James 2:14-26

⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:31

¹⁰ Matthew 3:8; Matthew 7:16-20; John 8:31; Hebrews 6:9-12

¹¹ 1 Thessalonians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 13:10-12; 1 John 3:2

THE CHURCH

We believe that all who repent of their sins and place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit into one united body,¹ the Church, of which Jesus Christ is the Head,² and which is His bride.³ We believe that the members of this one spiritual body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies.⁴

We believe that the Head of the Church is Jesus Christ and those serving as leaders in the Church are elders (also called bishops and pastors) who must fit the biblical qualifications of that office.⁵ Those who serve as deacons (who serve the physical needs of the body) must also fit the qualifications of that office.⁶ We believe the purpose of the Church is to glorify God,⁷ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, build itself up in the faith,⁸ by instruction in the Word,⁹ by prayer,¹⁰ prayer,¹⁰ by fellowship,¹¹ by keeping the ordinances of baptism¹² and the Lord's Supper,¹³ and by advancing and communicating the Gospel to the entire world.¹⁴

We believe that God has given gifted men to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry.¹⁵ God also has given each member of the body of Christ spiritual gifts that are sovereignly bestowed.¹⁶ It is essential that every believer discover, develop, and employ their gifts for the edification of the body and the accomplishment of the work of Jesus Christ in the world.¹⁷

¹ Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:11-14

² Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 4:15

³ Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 3:12; Revelation 21:2, 9-10

⁴ Acts 2:38-47; Hebrews 10:24-25

⁵ 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 20:38; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Hebrews 13:7, 17

⁶ 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Philippians 1:1; Acts 6:1-7

⁷ Ephesians 3:10, 21

⁸ Jude 20-21

⁹ 1 Timothy 4:13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Ephesians 4:11-13

¹⁰ Matthew 21:13

¹¹ Hebrews 10:24-25; Romans 12:4-8

¹² Matthew 28:19

¹³ Luke 22:19

¹⁴ Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8

¹⁵ Ephesians 4:11-13

¹⁶ Romans 12:4-8

¹⁷ 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:4-12

+THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

We believe that our gracious God, on account of our weakness and infirmities, has ordained for us the two ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper to be a sign and seal of His promises to us,¹ and to be pledges of the good will and grace of God towards us, and also to nourish and strengthen our faith, which He has joined to the word of the gospel. These ordinances beautifully present to our senses both that which He signifies to us by His Word, and that which He works inwardly in our hearts, thereby assuring and confirming in us the salvation which He imparts to us. For they are visible signs and seals of an inward and invisible thing, and by these means, God works in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore these signs are not empty or insignificant symbols, for Jesus Christ is the true object presented by them.²

¹ Cf. Romans 4:11; Genesis 9:13; 17:11

² Cf. Colossians 2:11, 17; 1 Corinthians 5:7

+BAPTISM

We believe and confess that Jesus Christ has instituted the ordinance of Baptism, by which we are visibly received into the Church of God¹ and separated from the world, that we may be wholly identified with Him whose name we bear. This Baptism also serves as a gracious testimony to us of our union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.² Therefore Jesus has commanded all those who are His to be baptized with water,* “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”,³ signifying to us that just as surely as water washes away the filth of the body, so also has the blood of Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, internally cleansed our souls of their sins,⁴ and regenerated us from children of wrath to children of God.⁵ Therefore, the Ministers, on their part, administer the ordinance, and that which is visible, but our Lord gives that which is signified by the ordinance, namely, the invisible grace of washing, cleansing, and purging our souls of all unrighteousness; renewing our hearts and filling them with all comfort; giving to us a true assurance of His fatherly goodness; putting on us the new man, and putting off the old man with all His deeds. Therefore, we believe that only confessing Christians ought to be but once baptized, since we cannot be born twice. This Baptism benefits us not only at the time when we are immersed in the water, but also through the whole course of our life. Baptism is not a saving or justifying grace, rather, it is a sign and seal of salvation already received by faith alone.⁶

*We believe that with regard to the mode of Baptism, the historical and theological precedent of the Scriptures is that of full immersion in water. We believe that under certain extreme circumstances where immersion is not and will not be physically possible, Baptism may be legitimately administered by pouring or sprinkling.

¹ Acts 2:41; Ephesians 4:4-5 (Cf. 1 Corinthians 12:13)

² Romans 6:1-11; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:8-15

³ Matthew 28:18-20

⁴ Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:20-21; Hebrews 10:22

⁵ Titus 3:4-7

⁶ 1 Corinthians 1:17; Luke 23:39-43; Romans 3:23-26; Acts 10:44-48; 16:29-33; 8:30-39; 8:13,23

+This article is essentially a Baptist revision of the corresponding article in the Belgic Confession of 1561.

+THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe and confess that our Savior Jesus Christ instituted the ordinance of the Lord's Supper,¹ to nourish and support those whom He has already regenerated and incorporated into His family, which is His Church. Now those who are regenerated have in them a twofold life, the one bodily and temporal,² which they have from the first birth, and is common to all men; the other spiritual and heavenly, which is given them in their second birth,³ and is effected by the word of the gospel.⁴ In like manner, God has given us earthly bread for the support of the body. But for the support of our spiritual and heavenly life, He has sent a living bread, which descended from heaven, namely, Jesus Christ, who nourishes and strengthens the spiritual life of believers, when they eat Him, that is to say, when they apply and receive Him by faith, in the Spirit.⁵ In order to represent to us this spiritual and heavenly bread, Christ has instituted an earthly and visible bread as a visible sign of His body⁶ in which He actually bore our sins on the cross,⁷ and wine as a visible sign of His blood which was shed for the remission of our sins.⁸ This is to testify to us, that, as certainly as we receive and hold these signs in our hands, and eat and drink them with our mouths, by which our bodies are nourished, we also do as certainly receive by faith (which is the hand and mouth of our soul) the true body and blood of Christ our only Savior in our souls, for the support of our spiritual life.⁹ This feast is a spiritual table, at which Christ communicates Himself with all His benefits to us, and gives us to enjoy both Himself and the merits of His sufferings and death, nourishing, strengthening, and comforting our souls. Only true believers are made partakers of Christ in the Lord's Supper. The ungodly may receive the signs to their condemnation, but they do not receive the thing signified.¹⁰

Lastly, we receive this holy ordinance in the assembly of the people of God, with humility and reverence,¹¹ keeping among us a holy remembrance of the death of Christ our Savior¹² with thanksgiving,¹³ and a proclamation of His death until he returns,¹⁴ making confession of our faith and of the true Gospel. Therefore, no one ought to come to this table without examining himself; lest by eating of this bread and drinking of this cup unworthily he eat and drink judgment on himself.¹⁵ In this regard, we should especially remember that since there is only one bread, participation in the Lord's Supper is always a solemn and public statement of our commitment to maintain the unity of the body.¹⁶

¹ Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

² John 3:6

³ John 3:5

⁴ John 5:25

⁵ John 6:22-59

⁶ Matthew 26:26

⁷ 1 Peter 2:24

⁸ Matthew 26:27-28

⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:16; Ephesians 3:17

¹⁰ Acts 8:13, 23

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 11:17-34; 1 Corinthians 10:17; Acts 20:7

¹² Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25

¹³ Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:26

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 11:27-32

¹⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:17, 11:19-22, 27-29

+This article is essentially a Baptist revision of the corresponding article in the Belgic Confession of 1561.

ANGELS

We believe that angels are created beings, and therefore are not to be worshipped.¹ Although they are a higher order of creation than man,² they are created to worship and serve God³ and to serve God's people.⁴

We believe that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin.⁵ He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator, involving numerous angels in his fall,⁶ and introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve.⁷ We believe that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God⁸ and God's people,⁹ the prince of this world who was defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,¹⁰ and he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire.¹¹

¹ Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:8-9

² Hebrews 2:6-7; 2 Peter 2:11

³ Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14

⁴ Daniel 6:22; Luke 16:22; Hebrews 1:14

⁵ Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:12-19; 1 John 3:8

⁶ Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:12-19; 2 Peter 2:4

⁷ Genesis 3:1-15; Cf. Revelation 20:2; John 8:44

⁸ Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

⁹ Ephesians 6:11-17; 1 Peter 5:8

¹⁰ Ephesians 2:2; Romans 8:34-39; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 12:1-11

¹¹ Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10

DEATH

We believe that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness,¹ that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Jesus Christ,² that there is a separation of soul and body,³ and that such separation will continue until the resurrection, when our soul will be united with our resurrection body to be glorified forever with the Lord.⁴ Until that time, the souls of the redeemed remain in joyful fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.⁵

We believe that the souls of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hell,⁶ where they are kept under punishment and torment until the resurrection,⁷ when the soul and a resurrected body are united.⁸ They shall be judged and cast into the lake of fire, cut off from the presence of God forever.⁹

¹ Revelation 6:9-11; Philippians 1:21-24; 2 Corinthians 5:8

² Philippians 1:21-24; Luke 23:43

³ Revelation 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Matthew 10:28

⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:5-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-17

⁵ Philippians 1:21-24; Luke 23:43; Luke 16:22, 25

⁶ Luke 16:19-26

⁷ Revelation 20:10-15; John 5:28-29

⁸ John 5:28-29; Daniel 12:2

⁹ Revelation 20:10-15; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

THE AGE TO COME

We believe that Jesus Christ will return bodily to this earth¹ to be glorified in His saints,² saints,² to destroy His enemies³ and to vindicate and reward the redeemed with eternal salvation.⁴ At the coming of the Lord, the dead in Christ shall rise first; and then those believers who remain alive until the coming of the Lord will also receive their resurrection bodies and meet the Lord in the air.⁵ All believers since creation will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to be rewarded according to their deeds while on earth,⁶ after which they will inherit the kingdom for all eternity.⁷ The wicked dead will also be resurrected and judged according to their deeds.⁸ Satan and his angels and all those whose names were not found written in the book of life will be cast forever into the lake of fire to suffer eternal punishment away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,⁹ which is the second death.¹⁰

¹ Acts 1:9-11

² 2 Thessalonians 1:10

³ 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; Revelation 19:11-21

⁴ Revelation 21:1-7

⁵ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54

⁶ Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10

⁷ Daniel 7:18, 27; Revelation 22:1-5

⁸ John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:12-13

⁹ 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

¹⁰ Revelation 20:10-15; Revelation 21:8