

Ist Baptist Church of Versailles, Missouri

Articles of faith adopted and subscribed to by the members of the Ist Baptist Church in Versailles, Missouri, at the organization thereof on the 13th day of January A.D. 1868 by Bro. James Box, et al, as the only true Gospel teachings of Faith and practice as delivered by our Saviour and the inspired writing of the New Testament.

I. We believe the Holy Bible was written by men Divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of Heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and Truth, without any admixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the World, the true centre of Christian union, and the Supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

II. That there is one, and only one, true and living God, whose name is JEHOVAH the maker and supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth, inexpressibly glorious in Holiness: worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; revealed under the pursual and relative distinctions of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit; equal in every Divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of Redemption.

III. That man was created in a state of Holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that Holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now Sinners, not by constraint but choice, being by nature utterly void of that Holiness required by the Law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, and therefore under first condemnation to Eternal ruin, without defence or excuse.

IV. That the salvation of sinners is wholly on grace; through the mediational offices of the Law of God, who took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his Death, being risen from the Dead he is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all sufficient Saviour.

V. That the great Gospel blessing which Christ of his fullness bestows on such as believe in Him, is justification; that justification consists in the pardon of sin and the promise 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 His own redemption and righteousness 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.

VI. That the blessings of Salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on Earth except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

VII. That in order to be saved we must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; and is effected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its proper evidence is found in the Holy fruit which we bring forth to the Glory of God.

VIII. That election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the Free Agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is the most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, Holy and unchangeable that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, an active imitation of His free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it is ascertained by its effects in all who believe the Gospel; it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves our utmost diligence.

IX. That such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from mere professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation.

X. That the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy just and good, and that the inability which the scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them 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 visible Church.

XI. That a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his Laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his Word; that its only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

XII. That Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit; to flow forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, Our Faith in a crucified, buried and risen Saviour, with its purifying power, that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a Church relation; and to the Lord's Supper in which the members of the Church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by a solemn self-examination.

XIII. That the first day of the week is the Lord's day or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace both private and public; and by preparation for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

XIV. The Civil Government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society, and that magistrates are to be prayed for and conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus

Christ who is the only Lord of the conscience and the Prince of the Kings of the earth.

XV. That there is a radical and essential difference between the Righteous and the wicked, that such only as are through faith justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem: while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked and under the curse; and their destruction holds among men both in and after Death.

XVI. That the end of this world is approaching that at the last day Christ will descend from Heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will forever fix the final state of men in hell or Heaven, on principles of Righteousness.

COVENANT

As we trust we have been brought by divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the influence of his spirit to give ourselves up to him, so we do now solemnly covenant with each other, that God ennobling us we will walk together in brotherly Love; that we will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully warn, rebuke and admonish one another as the case shall require; that we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor omit the great duty of prayer, both for ourselves and for others; that we will participate in each others joys, and endeavor, with tenderness and sympathy, to bear each others burdens and sorrows; that we will earnestly endeavor to bring up such as may be under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; that we will seek divine aid to enable us to walk circumspectly and watchfully in the world; denying ungodliness and every worldly lust that we will strive together for the support of a faithful evangelical ministry among us; that we will endeavor by example and effort to win souls to Christ; and through life amidst evil report and good report seek to live to the Glory of Him who hath called us out of Darkness into his marvelous Light.