

-- DECLARATION OF FAITH --
of
BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
Kalispell, Montana

1. OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally and plenary inspired of the Holy Spirit and penned by Spirit-controlled men, and therefore, is truth without any admixture of error for its matter. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried. II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:19-21.

2. OF THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one and only one living and true God, and infinite Spirit, Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth; expressly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost (Spirit), equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. Exodus 20:2; 3:1; I Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 14:11; I John 5:7.

3. OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

We believe that He is the second person of the divine and eternal Trinity of God; that He willingly and voluntarily offered Himself for the sacrificial and vicarious work of redemption, that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost (Spirit), born of the Virgin Mary, thereby laying aside none of His deity, but becoming genuinely human, that becoming him as He was no less God, and being God He was no less human; that He went to the cross as a Representative and as a Redeemer of mankind, that He died for our sins in our room and our stead; that He paid the price of our pardon with His own precious blood; that He was buried and the third day rose again in a physical glorious, immortal body and ascended to the Father for our justification; that He walked among men on Earth for forty days and ascended to the right hand of God where He is today our Intercessor, Advocate and Great High Priest; that He will one day descend personally to receive His blood bought, regenerated Church in the air to present her to the Father in Heaven; that He will one day return in power and glory to judge all lawlessness and disobedience and set up His own kingdom and reign on the throne of David for one thousand years; that He will sit upon the Great White Throne to judge the wicked dead; and then turn all rule and authority back to the Father; that He was God's instrument in creation and redemption. John 1:1-14, 29; Hebrews 9:14-15; Luke 1-2; Romans 5:1-12; II Corinthians 5:19-21; I Corinthians 15:1-58; Hebrews 1:1-14; 10:19-24; I Thessalonians 4:16-18; Revelation 20:1-6; 11-15.

4. OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in creation; that in relation to the unbelieving

world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the divine agent in the new birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, comforts and helps the believer. John 14:16-17; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5-6; Ephesians 1:13-14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Romans 8:14-27.

5. OF THE DEVIL OF SATAN

We believe that Satan is a personal being, that he is a fallen angel, the fifth of the original Cherubim; that he is now the deceptive and hateful "god of this age", the author of all the powers of darkness, the accuser of the brethren, the enemy of God and of righteousness, of the souls of men; that he is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire; that he was and is the author of all sin. Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:13-19; Genesis 3:1-8; Matthew 4:1-10; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:1-10.

6. OF CREATION

We accept the Genesis account of creation and believe that man as well as all the universe came into being by the direct creation of God (Elohim) and not by any form of evolutionary process. Genesis 1-3; Isaiah 45:18; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-3; John 1:1-3.

7. OF THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was formed in the image of God in innocence and holiness, by the hand of God; that he by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but of choice, and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse. Genesis 3:1-6, 24; Romans 5:12-19; 1:18-32.

8. OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost (Spirit) in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and that He is both Son of God and God the Son. Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-21; Luke 1:35; John 1:4.

9. OF THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, Who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just for the unjust; Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that having risen from the dead He is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is in every way qualified to be a

suitable, a compassionate and all sufficient Savior. Ephesians 2:8,9; Acts 13: 38,39; 15:11; Romans 3:22-24; John 3:16-18; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:5-10; Hebrews 2:9-14; Isaiah 53:4-7; I John 4:10; I Corinthians 15:1-3; II Corinthians 5:19-21.

10. OF GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, having been forgiven all trespasses; that this divine nature and eternal life are the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life. John 3:3-7; II Corinthians 5:17; I John 5:1; Acts 16:30-33; II Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1; II Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:13; John 3:8.

11. OF JUSTIFICATION

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification:

a. That justification is the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness;

b. That it is bestowed not in the consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed to us. Acts 13:38-39; Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Romans 5:1-9.

12. OF FAITH AND SALVATION

We believe that repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus are the only conditions of salvation. Romans 5:1-9; 8:1; Acts 13: 38-39; Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9.

13. OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

We believe that the local church is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His word under the Holy Spirit's illumination; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word and spirit; that its officers are pastors and deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties, are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe the true mission of the Church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We believe that the local Church has the absolute right of self government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; that Christ Himself is its only Head, the one and only Superintendent through the Holy Spirit; that it is Scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local Church is final. Acts 2:41-42; I Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:11; Acts

20:17-28; II Timothy 3:17; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23-24; Acts 15:13-18.

14. OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is a prerequisite to the privileges of Church relationship. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe that any born again believer who is walking in fellowship with the Lord may partake. Acts 8:26-39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; I Corinthians 11:23-28.

15. OF THE SECURITY OF THE SAINTS

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6; John 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1:24-25; I Peter 1:3-5; John 5:24.

16. OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such, and only 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; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse and condemnation of sin, and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved, and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost. Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17-23; I John 5:19; Romans 7:6; Proverbs 14:12; Psalm 9:17; Luke 6:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21.

17. OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in things contrary to the revealed will of the Lord Jesus Christ Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth. Romans 13:1-7; II Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21-22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:20; 4:19-20; Daniel 3:17-18.

18. OF THE RESURRECTION: PERSONAL, VISIBLE, PREMILLENIAL RETURN OF CHRIST, AND RELATED EVENTS

We believe in:

A. The personal, bodily, resurrection of Christ. Matthew 28:6-7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6.

B. The personal, visible, bodily ascension of Christ. Acts 1:9-11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 12:2.

C. The present personal high priesthood of Christ. Hebrews 8:6; I Timothy 2:5; I John 1:7-9; 2:1-3; Hebrews 2:17; 5:9-10; 10:19-24.

D. The pre-tribulational resurrection (rapture) of the righteous, both dead and living, making up the true Church. I Thessalonians 4:13-17; I Corinthians 15; Philippians 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 5:1-11; II Thessalonians 1:1-12; Revelation 2:3-4.

E. The pre-millennial second coming of Christ to reign in power and glory. John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Isaiah 9:6-7; Zechariah 14:1-10; Matthew 24 & 25; Revelation 1: 5-7; 19:11-21.

F. The throne of David. Luke 1:32-34; Isaiah 9:6-7; Acts 2:29-30; Matthew 25:31-46.

G. The Millennial Reign. Matthew 25:31-46; I Corinthians 15:25; Isaiah 32:1; 11:4-5; Revelation 20:1-14.