

## We believe...

As an interdependent, collaborative group of churches, the BFC holds to the following statement of beliefs. We hold our beliefs regarding the nature and character of God, the person and work of Jesus Christ, the need for salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone, and the authority and reliability of Scripture as primary doctrine. Individual believers who love Jesus Christ and believe that the Bible is God's Word may differ on secondary matters. For the sake of unity and clarity of teaching, we believe it is important to state clearly where the BFC stands doctrinally.

Christians who share our commitment to Jesus and the Bible and wish to partner with the BFC in pursuit of Christ's mission may have reservations or differing personal views regarding secondary issues. We welcome these brothers and sisters in Christ into our fellowship with the understanding that doctrinal unity is critical to the mission of each local BFC church. We ask that all leaders and members of BFC churches submit to the following doctrinal statement of beliefs regardless of reservations or differences they may personally hold regarding secondary issues.

The following doctrinal statement serves as the primary statement of doctrine for every local church in the Berean Fellowship. Individual BFC churches are free to adopt additional doctrinal distinctives which must be made publicly available and be consistent with and supplemental to this statement.

## **BIBLE**

We believe the Bible, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety, is the only divinely inspired, inerrant, objectively true, and authoritative written Word of God. It is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The divine inspiration of Scripture extends to each word of the original manuscripts, but not to the various copies or translations of Scripture. The Bible should be interpreted literally, grammatically, contextually, and historically.

(Deut. 29:29; Matt. 5:17; John 10:35; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:21, 3:16)

## **GOD**

We believe there is only one God, the Creator, who is infinite and personal. He exists eternally in three distinct persons, revealed to us in Scripture as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is holy. God is love. God is just. God is all powerful, all knowing and ever present. He is the source of all that is good and is the only rightful object of worship.

(Gen. 1:1; Deut. 6:4; Job 42:1-2; Ps. 96:9, 115:3; Prov. 15:3; Isa. 6:3, 43:10-11, 44:6, 45:22, 66:1; Matt. 28:19; John 1:1, 4:24, 5:26, 10:30; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 3:26, 1 Cor. 3:16, 8:4; Heb. 4:13; 1 John 3:20, 4:8-10)

## **JESUS CHRIST**

We believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son who has neither beginning nor end. The Old Testament contains numerous prophecies of His coming. He was conceived in the flesh by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin named Mary, and is fully God and fully man. Jesus lived a sinless life that perfectly revealed God's love and truth. He died for our sins, was buried, and arose bodily from the dead on the third day. He ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of God the Father as our only mediator, high priest, and advocate.

(Gen. 3:15; Ps. 110:1-4; Isa. 9:1-7, 53:1-12; Mic. 5:2; Matt. 1:20-25; Luke 24:27; John 1:1, 17, 10:30, 14:3-6; Acts 1:11, 4:12; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:3-5, 20; Col. 1:16-19; Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 1:3, 4:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:22-24; Rev. 1:18)

## **HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe the Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Trinity. He is a person, not a force. The Holy Spirit's ministries include convicting all people of sin; calling, regenerating, indwelling, and baptizing believers into the Body of Christ at conversion; setting them apart to a holy life; and guiding, teaching, keeping, and empowering them day by day. The Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts to each believer according to His will for the building up of the church. We believe the primary evidence of the presence and filling of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit rather than a miraculous sign.

(John 3:5-8, 16:5-15; Acts 1:8, 5:3-4, 16:7-14; 1 Cor. 2:9-12, 3:16, 12:3-13, 13:8-11; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 1:13-14, 5:18; Heb. 2:3-4)

## **HUMAN RACE**

We believe that both man (Adam) and woman (Eve) were created in the image of God to enjoy a personal relationship with Him. As a result of deliberate disobedience they fell from their sinless state, and they and all their descendants became sinners. Consequently, no one can save himself or herself, and apart from the grace of God in Jesus Christ, all are condemned to eternal torment. All humans still bear the image of God and are therefore intrinsically valuable, but all humans are now broken image-bearers, in need of the restoration found in Christ. God distinguishes between the sexes, equally valuing men and women, who both reflect His image. God ordained marriage to be between one man and one woman as part of his design that some roles within the family and the church be distinctly male or female.

(Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18-25, 3:1-24; Matt. 19:3-9; John 3:16-18, 36; Rom. 2:12-16, 5:12-21, 6:23, 7:14-21; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:9-10; Jas. 3:9; Rev. 20:13-15)

## **SALVATION**

We believe we are saved solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ alone. This salvation was purchased through the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ who, by shedding his blood for sin, offers salvation as a free gift to every person without distinction. God is sovereign over salvation and yet each person is fully accountable for his or her response to the gospel. The person who has trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior is eternally secure, and can enjoy the assurance of salvation as guaranteed by Christ's victorious resurrection. We believe that at death those who have trusted in Jesus enter eternal glory and those that have not enter eternal torment.

(Matt. 25:46; John 1:12, 3:16, 10:27-28; Acts 16:31, 20:20-21; Rom. 3:21-28, 8:31-39, 10:9,12-15, 17; 1 Cor. 15:3-4, 17-22; Eph. 1:7, 2:4-9; Phil. 1:6; Heb. 2:14; 1 John 2:2)

## **SANCTIFICATION**

We believe that every believer has been set apart with a perfect standing before God. As believers yield themselves to the Holy Spirit, they will experience spiritual growth in holiness but not perfection in conduct in this life. Believers will battle the world, the flesh and the devil, but living by faith in Christ results in transformation of the heart and authentic righteous living. Future rewards are determined primarily by what motivates Christian behavior. Those whose behavior is an outflow of finding their identity in Christ will be rewarded.

(John 15:1-8; Rom. 6:13-19, 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 3:8-15, 10:13; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; 5:10; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 2:1-3; Phil. 1:6, 3:12; 1 Thess. 4:3; Heb. 10:10)

## **CHURCH**

We believe that Christ is the Head of the Church, which is His body, established to bring God glory. All who have trusted in Christ as Savior are members of this body. Christians should commit themselves to worship, prayer, instruction, fellowship, stewardship, and service in a local church. The church is responsible to represent Jesus Christ in the world through godly living and evangelism. All believers are commanded to participate in two church ordinances: believers' baptism, by immersion if possible, and the Lord's Supper; the bread and cup symbolizing Christ's body and blood.

(Matt. 26:26-29, 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, 2:41-42, 8:35-39; Rom. 12:9-13; 1 Cor. 11:23-34, 12:12-13; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Eph. 3:6-11, 4:11-13; Col. 1:18; Heb. 10:23-25; 1 Pet. 2:9-10)

## **SATAN**

We believe that Satan was created as an angelic being. Rebelling against God, he became the author of sin, our adversary and accuser, and the great deceiver of the nations. He was defeated by Christ's death and resurrection but continues to wield power in this world under God's sovereign control. In the end, he will be completely overcome by the Lord Jesus Christ and suffer eternal punishment in the lake of fire.

(Gen. 3:1,15; Job 1:6-12; Matt. 4:3-11; John 8:44; 1 Cor. 15:24; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:1-2; Col. 2:13-15; 1 John 3:8, 5:19; Rev. 12:7-12, 20:10)

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

We believe in the imminent, bodily, personal return of Jesus Christ. On a day known only to God, Jesus will return for his Church. God will reunite all human souls with resurrected, imperishable bodies. This will be followed by the final judgment of the wicked into the lake of fire and eternal life for God's children in a new heaven and a new earth, restoring all creation to a joyful, God-honoring state.

(Matt. 24:27-36; John 5:28-29; 14:3; Acts 1:7, 11; Rom. 8:1, 18-25; 1 Cor. 15:20-26, 35-57; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Col. 1:19-20; 1 Thess. 4:15-5:3; Rev. 11:15, 19:11-21:5).