

# What We Believe

The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all we believe. With this in mind, we believe that the following statements of faith accurately represent the teachings of the Bible, and therefore, are the position of Providence Baptist Church.

## **The Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbal, plenary inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed, and therefore are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and divine revelation of God to man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official translation used by pastors, officers, and teachers in all church-related ministries (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21).

## **The Godhead**

We believe in God, the one and only true God, who is manifest in three distinct Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit with each being co-equal, co-eternal, and co-existent with the other; that God is an infinite Spirit Whose main attributes are omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience; love, mercy, and compassion; truth, justice, and righteousness; sovereignty, eternality, and immutability. The chief of His attributes being absolute holiness.

## **The Person and Work of Christ**

(1) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; II Corinthians 5:19-21; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8).

(2) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, bodily resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:18-36; Romans 3:24-25; I Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:3-5).

(3) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; Romans 8:34; I John 2:1-2).

## **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

(1) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12: 12-14; II Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14).

(2) We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 1:17-18; 5:18; I John 2:20, 27).

(3) We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry (Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12:4-11, 28; Ephesians 4:7-12).

(4) We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing (I Corinthians 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22).

## **The Total Depravity of Man**

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and, man is totally depraved, and, of himself utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-19).

## **Salvation**

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

## **The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers**

(1) We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 38-39; I Corinthians 1:4-8; I Peter 1:4-5).

(2) We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

## **The Church**

(1) We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons (I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27).

(2) We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).

(3) We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Romans 16:1, 4; I Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; I Peter 5:1-4).

(4) We recognize baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as the scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

## **Separation**

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God (Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; II Timothy 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11).

## **The Second Advent of Christ**

We believe in the personal, imminent return of Christ. The rapture is prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom, which was promised to the nation of Israel (Psalm 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; I Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

## **The Eternal State**

(1) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13).

(2) We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6).

(3) We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15).

## **The Personality of Satan**

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin, and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

## **Creation**

We believe that God created the universe, and we reject evolution as an unscriptural theory of origin (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11).

## **Civil Government**

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home; 2) the church; and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14).

## **Dispensationalism**

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life, which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations--the law, the church, and the kingdom--are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (Genesis 1:28; I Corinthians 9:17; II Corinthians 3:9-18; Galatians 3:13-25; Ephesians 1:10; 3:2-10; Colossians 1:24-25, 27; Revelation 20:2-6).

## **Human Sexuality**

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (Genesis 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

## **Divorce and Remarriage**

We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until the death of one of the spouses. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the office of pastor or deacon (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; I Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

## **Abortion**

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, un-excused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44).

## **Missions**

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all people so there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to all people and not wait for them to come to us (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:20).

## **Lawsuits Between Believers**

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (I Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32).

## **Giving**

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe the tithe is an Old Testament standard of giving however, the New Testament pattern for giving is systematic, proportional and sacrificial, as God has prospered, out of a heart of gratitude. We believe this higher standard of giving serves to support the church, relieve those in need and spread the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of all giving. This is known as the principle of grace giving throughout the New Testament. (Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; I Timothy 5:17-18; I John 3:17). (See Article XII for designated gifts.)