

WHAT SOUTHERN

BAPTIST

BELIEVE

AND

WHY.

Believed and Taught by  
UNION BAPTIST CHURCH  
Kinniconick Road  
Vanceburg, Kentucky  
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I.....BEING A BAPTIST:

I am a Baptist because I am in harmony with these beliefs: THIS I BELIEVE:

- 1..I BELIEVE IN THE BIBLE. I believe in the verbal inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. I believe that the Bible reveals God, the fall of man, the way of salvation, and God's plan and purpose in the ages.

Baptists believe in the Bible as the all-sufficient guide of faith and practice. Each individual claims the right to interpret the Bible for himself under the Holy Spirit's guidance. He refuses to be bound by another's interpretations, either in the form of creed or confession of faith. Resolutions and statements of conventions have no authority over his conscience as he makes his appeal straight to the Bible. The Bible is full, final, comment is complete and only rule of faith and practice.

- 2..I BELIEVE in the competency of the soul in its dealing with God. This belief rules out infant baptism and all other forms of proxy religion. Each individual must repent and believe for himself, without the intervention of parent, priest or sacrament.

I BELIEVE that salvation is "by grace" plus nothing and minus nothing. The condition to salvation: REPENTANCE - FAITH.

- 3..I BELIEVE in the autonomy of the local church. Baptists have preserved the autonomy of the local church. They make the most persistent protest against ecclesiasticism in all its forms. The local church is sovereign and independent, answering to no authority except that of Christ. All denominational progress must be accomplished through voluntary co-operation. Any form of coercion is unthinkable.

One thing is sure, Baptist will not build an ecclesiasticism as long as they remain Baptists and hold to their fundamental beliefs. "When every church," as Dr. Gambrell used to say, "is a complete package wrapped up separately with the ends of the wrapper folded back and tucked in so that there is no place to tie anything onto it, or to tie onto anything," it would be impossible to get an ecclesiastical order going.

As I believe and see it, Baptists, under the leadship of the Holy Spirit, have developed a sane and efficient denominational life. Their task is now, as never before, is to maintain it; and this is going to be no easy matter.

- 4..I BELIEVE in the democracy of believers within the local church. Baptists have preserved the democracy of believers within the local church. Church officers are not rulers, but servants holding office by virtue of the vote of the congregation, and answerable to the whole congregation for every act. Members of the church are brethren in Christ, standing upon a plane of spiritual equality, regardless of wealth or intellectual attainment. The possession of unusual talents, whether of wealth or culture, is the sign of added responsibility for service.

- 5..I BELIEVE in the Deity and virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

- 6..I BELIEVE that we are justified by faith alone and are accounted righteous before God only through the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

- 7..I BELIEVE in the visible and personal return of Jesus Christ.

- 8..I BELIEVE in the everlasting conscious blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.

- 9.. I BELIEVE in the beautiful symbolism of baptism. Baptists have preserved the beautiful symbolism of baptism. Immersion in water is an acted picture of the sinner's death to the old life of sin, his burial in the watery grave, his resurrection to walk in newness of life. The ceremony recalls to our minds the immersion of Jesus in the Jordan, his death, burial and resurrection. It also points the finger of prophecy to the time "when the dead in Christ shall rise and the glory of his resurrection share."
- 10.. I BELIEVE in Religious Liberty. Baptists have always been the outspoken champions of religious liberty. Their belief in the separation of church and state leads them to the conviction that the state should not interfere with matters of religion except to protect every man in his right to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, or not to worship him at all. "Our fathers chained in dungeons dark" felt the need of such an attitude upon the part of the state. Now that we have come into full enjoyment of the rights for which our fathers suffered and died, we should be doubly zealous to see that, in communities where Baptists are in the majority, these rights are enjoyed by those of radically different faiths.
- 11.. I BELIEVE in the two church Ordinances. Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience in which we partake of the bread which represents His body, and the cup which represents "His blood shed for the remission of sins." Baptists believe that the Lord's Supper is symbolic. The bread and wine are but symbols of the broken body and spilled blood of Jesus. The Lord did not state when or how often we are to observe the Lord's Supper. He instituted it on Thursday night, and the early Christians observed it on the Lord's Day. Any New Testament baptized believer is eligible to partake of the Supper. None is worthy, except by the grace of God. The Lord's Supper is a repetitive ordinance, and is to be observed as a remembrance of that which the Lord did for our salvation (1Cor. 11:24-26) until He comes again. Authority. Jesus said, "This do." His authority is supreme. He is our Lord.
- 12.. I BELIEVE in Unity. Together we are laborers with God, cooperating for God's purpose that His Kingdom may come, His will be done on earth even as it is in heaven.

II.....WHAT A BAPTIST CHURCH BELIEVES: THIS IS A BAPTIST CHURCH. May this truth make us loyal to all that true Baptists believe, and honor our Baptists forefathers who, fearing not the wrath of men in the consciousness of God's presence, believing that all people have a right to approach God without any ecclesiastical or State interference, wrote history in blood before they wrote it in ink.

This Baptist church membership believes;

In the right of the individual, not close ecclesiastical rights;

In personal faith, not proxy faith;

In the priesthood of all believers, not the priesthood of a class;

In free grace, not sacramental grace;

In the direct approach to God, not the indirect;

In believer's baptism, not infant baptism;

In the voluntary principle, not the coercive principle, in religion;

In the unity, sufficiency and sole authority of Scripture as the rule both in doctrine and polity;

In immersion only, as answering to Christ's command of baptism and to the symbolic meaning of the ordinance.

IN THE ORDER OF THE ORDINANCES, BAPTISM, AND THE LORD'S SUPPER, as of divine appointment, as well as the ordinances themselves;  
 In the right of each church member to a voice in its government and discipline;  
 In each church, while holding fellowship with other church, solely responsible to Jesus Christ;  
 In the freedom of the individual conscience, and the total independence of church and state;  
 We believe that in religion we have no priest but Christ;  
 We believe that in sin there is no sacrifice but Calvary.  
 We believe that in all things we have no authority but the Bible.  
 We believe in only one confessional and that confessional the "throne of grace."

Dr. Robert G. Lee, former pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church,  
 Memphis, Tennessee.

### III...WHAT WE BELIEVE: ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES:

#### 1..THE SCRIPTURES:

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired that it is truth without mixture of error; and that it is the standard by which all human conduct and creeds should be tried. 11Timothy 3:15-17.

15..And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

16..All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;

17..That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

#### 2..THE TRUE GOD:

We believe that there is one, and only one true and living God; that in the Unity of the God-head there are three persons: the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. John 4:24; 10:30

24..God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship Him in spirit and truth.

10:30.. I and My Father are one.

#### 3..THE FALL OF MAN:

We believe that man was created in holiness, but by voluntary transgression fell from that Holy state, in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners and are under condemnation of eternal ruin. Gen.1:27;Rom.5:12

Gen. 1:27. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Rom. 5:12. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

#### 4..THE WAY OF SALVATION:

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the atoning death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. Eph.2:8;Isa.53:4-5; Heb. 7:25.

Eph. 2:8..For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Heb. 7:25. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

#### 5..JUSTIFICATION: A Change of State. New Standing For God.

We believe that through justification the perfect righteousness of God is imputed to the believers in Christ Jesus. Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1-2.

Acts 13:39. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Roms. 5:1-2. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

#### 6..THE FREENESS OF SALVATION:

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel, and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner but his own depravity and rejection of the Gospel. John 3:16; Isa. 55:1

Isa. 55:1. Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

John 3:16..For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

#### 7..GRACE IN REGENERATION:

We believe that in order to be saved sinners must be regenerated or born again through the work of the Holy Spirit. John 3:3; 11Cor. 5:17

John 3:3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

11 Cor. 5:17..Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. Clothes-ill.

#### 8..REPENTANCE AND FAITH:

We believe that repentance and faith are inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God, and are essential steps in salvation. Mark 1:15; Romans 10:9

Mark 1:15..And saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Rom. 10:9..That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

REPENTANCE: A Change of Mind. New Mind About God.

FAITH: F-orsaking  
A-ll  
I  
T-ake  
H-im.

9..GOD'S PURPOSE AND ELECTION:

We believe that Election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which He graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and ~~saves~~ saves sinners; and that this is consistent with the free agency of man. Romans 8:28-31; 11 Peter 1:10-11.

Rom. 8:28-31..And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29..For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30..Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31..What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

11 Peter 1:10-11..Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall;

11..For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The doctrine of Election is one of the most vital in the Bible. It is also one of the most misunderstood. The word "election" does not appear in the Old Testament, and is found only in six verses of the New Testament (Rom. 9:11; 11:5; 7,28; 1Thess. 1:4; 11 Peter 1:10) The word "elect" appears four times in the Old Testament, and sixteen times in the New Testament. The word translated "elect" is sometimes rendered "chosen."

"Election" does not mean that God acts out of His own will to the neglect of man's will. Nor does it refer to the salvation of a few or the election of individuals. It is no excuse for fatalism. Election is not mechanical. It involves a God who is love and a man who is morally responsible. It never appears in the Bible as a violation of human will.

Thus there are two elements involved in election. God is sovereign in that He can do that which He wills and which is in accord with His nature. He is not only omnipotent; He is love. Furthermore, man, made in God's image, possesses free will. He has the power of choice (Gen. 3:1-6), is capable of a sense of guilt (Gen. 3:7), and is responsible for his choices (Gen. 3:8-24). To our finite minds God's sovereignty and man's free will appear to conflict. But in the infinite mind of God there is no conflict.

10..SANCTIFICATION.

A Change of Service. Separation Unto God.

We believe that sanctification is a progressive process by which the believer is made partake of God's holiness, and that this process begins in regeneration. 1Thess. 4:3; and Philipians 2:12.

1Thess. 4:3..For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.

Phil. 2:12. And that it the standard by which all human conduct. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

The primary meaning of the verb which is translated, "to sanctify," is "to hallow, to purify, to consecrate." The noun derived from the verb

ceremony of separating from a common to a sacred use, or of devoting and dedicating a person or thing to the service and worship of God."

#### 11. THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS:

We believe that only real believers endure to the end, and that they are kept by the power of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Rom. 8:38-39; 1Timothy 1:12.

Rom. 8:38..For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39..Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1Tim. 1:12..For the which cause I also suffered these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Yes, Baptists believe that such as are real believers, "Being rooted and grounded in love," "Rooted and built up in him and established in the faith," shall endure to the end. We think the Scriptures abundantly prove this doctrine.

Again, our case is clearly made out, but as if to make assurance doubly sure, Jesus says: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who hath given them unto me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand. (John 10:28-29).

I like the term "preservation" better than "perseverance." The former indicates the power by which we are kept, the latter the result of that keeping. "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." 1Peter 1:5.

Two children talking, one said; "How is it we are not lost and left and forgotten as we go through this life?" The other answered; "God reaches down his hand, we take hold on his hand, and he leads us all the way through life." "But," said the first, "we go to sleep and could not hold on to God's hand." The answer came; "I got that wrong. God takes hold of our hand and he does not go to sleep." "Kept by the power of God."

#### 12. A GOSPEL CHURCH:

We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers bound together in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; and that Jesus committed the ministry of His Gospel to His Churches. Acts 2:41-42; Matthew 28:20

Acts 2:41-42..Then they that gladly received his word were baptized and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. 42..And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Matt..28:20..Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen.

"Christ is the head of the church," the "one Lawgiver in Zion," and no man nor set of men can rightfully change what he has established and fixed.

The word translated "church" originally meant "called out," "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25)

We believe that Christ, and Christ alone, is the head of the church. Read Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:24.

### 13.. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of Father, Son, Holy Ghost, and on the authority of the New Testament and New Testament Church; that baptism is a prerequisite to the Lord's Supper and only such as have been scripturally baptized are proper subjects for the Lord's Supper. Acts 8:36; Matt. 28:19; 1Cor. 11:26.

Acts 8:36..And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

Matt. 28:19..Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

1Cor. 11:26..For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

Paul says, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" Now if you believe Paul, or the Holy Spirit, when he says "one Lord, one faith, one God," why doubt his word or contradict him when he says "one baptism? If immersion is baptism, then sprinkling and pouring are not baptism. Only one is, can be, right.

### 14.. THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH:

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, and is to kept sacred to religious purposes. Acts 20:7; Exodus 20:8

Acts 20:7..And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Exodus 20:8..Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

### 15.. THE WORLD TO COME:

We believe at the last day Christ will descend from heaven and raise the dead; that a solemn judgment and separation will then take place, and that his judgment will fix forever the final state of men in Heaven or Hell. Acts 1:11; Matt. 13:49; 25:31-46.

Acts 1:11..Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Acts 24:15..And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

Matt. 13:49..So shall it be at the end of the world: the angles shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.

### 16.. THE ATONEMENT:

We believe in the atonement made by Christ as the only basis of salvation, the only means of reconciliation, the only ground of justification.



Man is by nature a sinner, guilty, condemned, lost, and but for the atonement made by Christ, helpless and hopeless.  
 Baptists believe that no many cometh to God except through Jesus Christ.  
 Venture on him, venture freely,  
 Let no other trust intrude.  
 None but Jesus, not but Jesus,  
 Can do helpless sinners good.

#### WHAT I BELIEVE

So often I have been asked to give a very brief statement on our fundamental beliefs as Baptists. - I give you the following:

- 1..That the Scripture of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; that they are the only sufficient and authoritative rules of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.
- 2..That there is but one God, and to Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence and obedience.
- 3..That God is revealed as the Trinity, each with distinct personal attribute but without division of essence, nature or being.
- 4..The Providence decrees or permits all things to come to pass and governs all but is not the author of sin or the destroyer of free wills.
- 5.. That election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life,- because of foreseen merit in them but of his mere mercy in Christ,-in consequence of which choice they are called, justified and glorified.
- 6..That God created man in His own image, but by temptation man transgressed and fell from his original holiness, and posterity inherited the corrupt nature.
- 7..That Jesus Christ is the begotten Son of God and divinely appointed mediator between God and man; that He suffered, died, was buried and arose again on the third day; that He ascended and now sits on the right hand of the Throne of God, to make intercession for His people.
- 8..That regeneration is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit; that it is a renewed nature wherein the regenerate love and practice holiness.
- 9..That repentance is an evangelical grace within a person by the Holy Spirit is made sensible of the manifold evil of sin and endeavors to walk before and please God in all things.
- 10..That faith is belief of whatsoever is revealed in God's Word concerning Christ.
- 11..That Justification is God's acquittal of sinners who believe in Christ through the satisfaction Christ has made.
- 12..That the regenerate are sanctified by the Spirit of God dwelling in them.
- 13..That those God has accepted and sanctified will never totally or finally fall away from the state of grace, through they may fall through temptation and neglect into sin whereby they grieve the Spirit they are renewed again unto repentance--- (Perseverance of the saints)
- 14..That Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, whose membership is composed of all His true disciples, who are commanded to assemble and exercise the authority with which vested.

15..That Baptism by emersion is obligatory in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and in the remission of sins and is a prerequisite to Church membership though not a necessary act of salvation.

16..That the Lord's Supper is commemorative of His death, and a confirmation of faith of Christians.

17..That the Lord's Day is a Christian institution for regular observance, and should be employed in exercise of worship and spiritual devotion, public and private.

18..That individuals are free moral agents who may enjoy liberty of conscience, God alone being Lord of conscience.

19..That there will be a resurrection of the dead whose bodies have returned to dust but whose spirits have been with God; that the righteous will rise with Him and the wicked will be reserved to judgement, and on the last day the bodies of all will be raised.

20..That God will render judgment when the wicked will be cast into everlasting punishment and the righteous into everlasting life.

21..We believe, last but not least, in entire religious liberty, the separation of Church and state, a free church in a free state. Neither must trespass upon the distinct rights and function of the other.

22..That the mission of the Church is to witness to Him before the world, evangelize the lost, baptize the saved, and to teach, develop and put to work in God's vineyard those who have been saved, and baptized into the churches. Matthew 28:19,20.

23..I believe in the Deity and virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

24..I believe in the visible, personal, and return of Jesus Christ.

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If you have trouble with a few of our doctrinal words, maybe this will help you:

1..REPENTANCE:

A Change of Mind. New Mind about God.

2..CONVERSION:

A Change of Life. New Life For God.

3..REGENERATION:

A Change of Nature. New Heart For God.

4..JUSTIFICATION:

A Change of State. New Standing For God.

5..ADOPTION:

A Change of Family. New Relationship  
Toward God.

THE BIBLE:

1.. Receive It.

2.. Own It.

3.. Know It.

4.. Use It.

5.. Live It.

6.. Memorize It.

7.. Give It To Others.

THY WORD:

The Best Book.

In My Heart. The Best Place.

6..SANCTIFICATION:

A Change of Service. Separation Unto God.

7..GLORIFICATION:

A Change of Place. New Condition With God.

If we Baptists BELIEVE THESE THINGS I have enumerated to be the Truth of God, then it is our mission to "fill the world with our doctrine." This is my prayer--GOD HELP US TO GIVE OUR ALL TO FOREVER KEEP THESE CONVICTIONS ALIVE!

LIFE READING:

I am my neighbor's Bible;  
He reads me when we meet,  
Today he reads me in my home,  
Tomorrow in the street..

He may be relatives and friend,  
Or sight acquaintance be;  
He may not even know my name,  
Yet he is reading me.

WE OUGHT TO ACT LIKE A  
CHRISTIAN AS WELL AS BELIEVE  
LIKE ONE!

REMEMBER: There is no right way to do the wrong thing.