

THE DOCTRINES OF OUR FAITH!

XIII. OF THE CHURCH

We believe that a Baptist Church is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; said church being understood to be the citadel and propagator of the Divine and Eternal Grace; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers of ordination are pastors (Elders, Bishops), whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures; we believe the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission: First, to make individual disciples; Second, to build up the church; Third, to teach and instruct as He has commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order; we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is scriptural for true churches to co-operate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its co-operation; on all matters of membership of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

We believe that a Baptist Church is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel, said church being understood to be the citadel and propagator of the Divine and Eternal Grace; Acts 2:41; "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." NOTE—the word translated church is from the Greek word "ecclesia" (ek="out of," kaleo="to call") thus the word means an assembly of called-out ones. The twelve apostles were called out by the Lord Jesus (Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16;) and there were added others after the Lord returned to heaven so that Acts 1:15 states there were about an hundred and twenty. To these were added about 3,000 as the above scripture states. Acts 2:42; "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

observing the ordinances of Christ; I Corinthians 11:2; "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you."

governed by His laws; exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; Ephesians 1:22-23; "And hath put all things under His (Christ's) feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Ephesians 4: 11 "And He (Christ) gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelist; and some pastors and teachers;" I Corinthians 12:4.8-11;

that its officers of ordination are pastors (elders or bishops) whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the scriptures; Acts 14:23; "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Acts 6:5-6; "And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, the laid their hands on them." Acts 15:23; "And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:" Acts 20:17-28; I Timothy 3:1-13; I Peter 5:1-4;

we believe the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission: First, to make individual disciples (winning people to Christ); **Second, to build up the church** (baptizing new converts and bringing them into the fellowship); **Third, to teach and instruct as He has commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order:** Matthew 28:19-20; "And Jesus came and spake unto 'them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye. therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 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."

We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; Colossians 1:18; "And He (Jesus Christ) is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence." Ephesians 5:23-24; "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

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 every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; Acts 15 :22; "Then pleased it the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:" Jude 1:3-4; II Corinthians 8:23-24; I Corinthians 16:1; "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." (Witnessing, Preaching, Teaching, Tithing, Giving to missions above the tithe, and Faith Promise giving to Missions are all ways of furthering the spread of the Gospel!) Proverbs 11 :30; "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise." Daniel 12:3; "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for

ever and ever." Psalm 107:2; "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." Acts 5:42; "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Malachi 3:10; "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Leviticus 23:32; "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD." I Corinthians 16:2; "Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Luke 6:38; "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." II Corinthians 9:6-15; I Samuel 1:11; "And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head." (She could not give a child to the Lord until the Lord first gave a child to her. Faith Promise Giving is giving to the Lord a certain amount that you do not have. You then pray and ask the Lord to give you that amount and when He does, you give it to missions!)

on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final. I Corinthians 5: 11-13; I Corinthians 6: 1- 3 ;