

Statement of Faith and Covenant of Lighthouse Baptist Fellowship

The Bible is the sole and final source of all we believe. We believe our Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and it is included below.

The Bible

We believe that the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is the inerrant, infallible, verbally inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21) and is to be the sole rule of faith and practice (Matthew 4:4; John 17:17; Romans 10:17).

God

We believe that God is the one true God (Isaiah 44:6) and that He possesses one divine essence which is entirely indivisible (Deuteronomy 4:39, 6:4; John 17:3; 1 Timothy 2:5). Within the Godhead unity, there are three eternal distinctions or persons: God the Father (Matthew 11:25), God the Son (John 1:1, 18; Hebrews 1:8), and God the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). These three persons of the Trinity are coexistent, coeternal, and coequal (Matthew 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:2).

Creation

We believe that God created the universe out of nothing (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3) in six literal days (Genesis 1-2) and continues to exercise His sovereign control over it (1 Chronicles 29:11), preserving it until the day of judgment (Colossians 1:17; 2 Peter 3:7).

Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is God's divine Son (John 1:1, 14; Colossians 1:16-17; Galatians 4:4). He is coequal, coeternal, and coexistent with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20). We believe in His incarnation (John 1:1, 14; Luke 2:1-20; Philippians 2:7-8) and virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:16, 22-23) that He is eternal in His existence (Colossians 1:15-18), yet at the time of His incarnation was entirely God and entirely man: one person with two distinct natures (John 1:1-14; Romans 1:3-4); that He never sinned (Hebrews 4:15); and that He shed His blood vicariously (Isaiah 53; 1 Peter 2:23-25) for mankind (2 Corinthians 5:21). He died, was buried, and arose bodily the third day from the grave (1 Corinthians 15:3-4), ascending back to heaven forty days after His resurrection (Luke 24:50-51). He currently makes intercession for believers (Hebrews 4:14; 7:24-25) and is the Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18-19). He will physically return for His own at the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; Acts 1:11) and for unbelievers in judgment at His second coming (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity (John 14:16, 26). He is coequal, coeternal, and coexistent with God the Father and God the Son (Matthew 28:19-20). He is not simply a force but is a person with characteristics such as intellect (Romans 8:27; 1 Corinthians 2:11), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), and emotion (Romans 15:30; Ephesians 4:30). We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and that 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; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14) We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. Ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, although God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

Man

We believe that God instantaneously created man without sin (Ephesians 4:24) in His own image (Genesis 1:27; 2:7) and that Adam willingly chose to transgress God's law (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-7), bringing sin and judgment upon the entire human race (Romans 3:9-12, 23; 5:12, 19). Thus, man is born with a sinful nature (Romans 5:12) which apart from the saving grace of Jesus Christ will bring forth God's eternal judgment (Romans 6:23; John 3:16).

Sin

We believe that sin began in heaven with Satan leading a rebellion against God among the angels (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:14-19) and upon earth when Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the garden of Eden (Romans 5:12). We define sin as the transgression of God's law or will (1 John 3:4). We believe that sin brings physical (Genesis 2:17; Romans 5:12), spiritual (Romans 5:21; Ephesians 2:1, 5), and eternal death (Matthew 25:41; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 21:8) upon man.

Salvation

We believe that salvation cannot be earned through merit or good works (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). We believe a person must repent of his sinfulness before God and personally place his faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ to inherit eternal salvation and that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Isaiah 53:5-6; 1 John 1:29; 1 John 2:2). We believe at the time of a man's conversion he is freed forever from the penalty of sin (Romans

5:1, 10; Hebrews 10:10). From that moment on, God seeks to transform him into the image of Christ (Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:8-12) and upon his death or the Lord's return frees him from the presence of sin (1 John 3:2).

The Church

We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again believers who have been Scripturally baptized by immersion after salvation. (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27; Acts 2:38-41). We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11). We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or controls, and any affiliations, societies, organizations, associations, or agencies this church affiliates with to further the objectives stated in the Purpose Statement are not authoritative in matters of church practice or belief. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4) We recognize water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:36-38; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). We believe in two church offices: pastor (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13). We believe in the separation of the believer from sin and the world (1 John 2:15-17; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 5:11); in separation from false teachers and in separation from disobedient brethren (Matthew 18:15-18; Titus 3:9-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13).

Eschatology

We believe in that blessed hope, the personal, imminent return of Christ, Who will rapture His church 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. (Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13)

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; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6) 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. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)

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 that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

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. We believe that we must obey the state unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith at which time we must obey God rather than the state. (Matt. 22:15-22; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Titus 3:1-2; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

Human Sexuality

(1) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born 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. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

(2) We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman for life. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

Family Relationships

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12) We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit

herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used by God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 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, unexcused taking of unborn human life. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

Love

We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)

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. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32; Matt. 18:15-17)

Missions

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that 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 the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)