

First Baptist Church of Napoleon, Mi

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT:

1. THE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE:

- a. The inspiration of the Bible is God's superintendency of the human authors so that, using their own personalities, background, education, etc., they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man. Not only is the Bible inspired, but it is authoritative and is our only authority of life and practice (Joshua 1:8). We believe in the verbal inspiration of scripture. Verbal inspiration means that the Holy Spirit guided in the choice of the words used in the original writings. However, the Holy Spirit chose words from the author's vocabulary, retaining the human writers personal characteristics (II Peter 1:21).
- b. We believe in the plenary inspiration of Scripture. Plenary inspiration means the full or total inspiration, which opposes those who believe in partial inspiration (II Timothy 3:16). We believe in the infallibility of Scripture. The Bible contains no errors as to statement of fact. The Bible records everything accurately.
- c. We believe that the Authorized King James version of the Bible is the most accurate translation of the original text that is available, that it contains no errors as to fact, that God has preserved it through the years, and we can say with confidence when we hold it in our hand or hide it in our heart, that it is The Word of God! To maintain clarity and continuity, all teaching and preaching in this church shall be done from this text.

2. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD:

a. THE NATURE OF GOD -

- i. God is Spirit (John 4:24). He is invisible without body or parts and without limitations.
- ii. God has personality. This includes intelligence (Romans 11:33-34), will (Ephesians 1:11), reason (Isaiah 1:18), self-consciousness (Exodus 3:14), self-determination (Genesis 1:26-27) and emotions (Ephesians 4:30).
- iii. God is a unity or oneness (Deuteronomy 6:4; I Timothy 2:5).
- iv. God is a trinity (Genesis 1:1; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22; II Corinthians 13:14; I John 5:6-8).

b. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD -

- i. The attributes of God include omniscience (Psalm 147:4-5), omnipotence (Job 42:2; Matthew 19:26), omnipresence (Jeremiah 23:23-24), eternal (Psalm 90:1-2), immutable (James 1:17), sovereign (Ephesians 1:8-9), holy (Leviticus 11:44), righteous (Romans 1:18), loving (I John 4:8), grace (I Peter 5:10), just (Acts 17:31) and truth (John 14:6).

c. THE TRINITY -

- i. The Trinity is taught in both the Old and New Testament. In Genesis 1:26 it says, "...Let us make man in our image..." According to Genesis chapter one and John chapter one, God the Father, God the Son and
- ii. God the Holy Spirit were all involved in creation. The New Testament teaches more clearly the doctrine of the Trinity at Christ's baptism (Luke 3:22), the great commission (Matthew 28:19) and the Apostolic Benediction (II Corinthians 13:14). The Trinity is one God manifested in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

d. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT -

- i. The Holy Spirit has personality. This is seen throughout Scripture as He reproves (John 16:8), teaches (John 14:26; I John 2:20-27), speaks (Galatians 4:6), intercedes (Romans 8:26-27), appoints men to specific services (Acts 13:2), ministers in regeneration (John 3:6), seals (Ephesians 4:30), baptizes (I Corinthians 12:13), fills (Ephesians 5:18) and comforts (John 14:16-17). The Holy Spirit can be sent into the world (John 14:16; 16:7), grieved (Ephesians 4:30), quenched (I Thessalonians 5:19), lied to (Acts 5:3) and disrespected (Hebrews 10:29). All these show the personality of the Spirit of God - Intellect, Emotion, and Will. The Holy Spirit is Deity. He is called God (Acts 5:3-4; I Corinthians 3:16). He has the same attributes of God (Job 33:4; Psalm 139:7-8; Luke 1:35; I Corinthians 2:10-11; Hebrews 9:14).
- ii. The Holy Spirit has a work in creation, the Old Testament and during Christ's earthly life. Genesis 1:2 states that the Holy Spirit participated in the creation of the world and Genesis 2:7 states that He participated in the creation of man (Job 33:4). In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit would indwell men for special tasks (Genesis 41:38; Numbers 27:18; Judges 3:10; I Samuel 10:9), and then would leave (Judges chapters 14 - 17). He also inspired the prophets to write (II Peter 1:20-21). During Christ's time on earth, men could now receive the indwelling of the Spirit by asking (Luke 11:13). It was not until Christ returned to heaven that He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell believers permanently (John 14:15-26). The Holy Spirit has an active ministry in this present age.
- iii. The following is our belief on the present ministry of the Spirit of God in this age.
 1. Salvation - The Holy Spirit convicts (John 16:7-11), regenerates (Titus 3:5), baptizes (I Corinthians 12:13), seals (Ephesians 1:13-14), indwells (I Corinthians 6:19-20) and fills (Ephesians 5:18).
 2. Sanctification - The Holy Spirit is actively working in the life of believers, conforming them to the image of Christ (Roman 8:28-30). The believer can receive victory over sin by the power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ (Romans 6).
 3. 3) Gifts - Gifts are given to the believer when he is saved, sovereignly as the Holy Spirit wills (I Corinthians 12:11). There are gifts that are still given today and some that have ceased with the completion of Scripture and the death of the apostles. The gifts of the Spirit are listed in (Romans 12; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4).
 4. Tongues - Tongues was one of the gifts given at Pentecost (Acts 2). It was a sign gift given for unbelieving Jews and to confirm the Words spoken by the apostles (Mark 16:16-20). We believe the gift of tongues ceased with the completion of Scripture and passing of the apostles (I Corinthians 13:8).
 5. Healing - Healing was also a sign gift. Although, the Holy Spirit still heals today, it is not a gift given to men, and came to an end with the death of the apostles and completion of Scripture. God's present method of healing is found in (James 5:13-16).
 6. Baptism - We are baptized by the Holy Spirit at the time of salvation into the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13). This is a once for all ministry, not to be repeated (Ephesians 4:5).
 7. Filling - The filling of the Holy Spirit is commanded in (Ephesians 5:18) and is conditional upon the believers yielded spirit to the Word of God.

If the believer yields his heart to the Spirit of God through the Word of God (I Corinthians 3:16), examines himself, confesses and repents of sin (I Corinthians 11:28), and begins to live in obedience to the Spirit (Acts 5:32), the Spirit of God will control his actions as well as his attitudes and this is "Spirit Filling".

e. THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST:

i. THE TWO NATURES OF CHRIST (DEITY AND HUMANITY) -

1. Christ's Deity - Divine worship is given to Christ (Matthew 4:10; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:6). He is given divine names such as God (John 1:1; 20:28), Lord (Romans 10:9; Philippians 2:11), Son of God (Mark 1:1; Luke 1:35), etc. Jesus has the attributes of God and holds these divine offices - Creator, Upholder, Forgiver of sin, Giver of eternal life, Judge, Resurrector of the dead. Jesus Christ has divine equality with God, He is equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19), the expressed image of the Living God (Hebrews 1:3). We believe that Jesus Christ is God Incarnate (God in human flesh) "For in Him (Christ) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead..." (Colossians 2:9).
2. Christ's Humanity - Christ was not only Deity, but he was humanity. He was 100% God and 100% man. He had a human birth (Matthew 1:20-23), human growth (Luke 2:40), human appearance (John 4:9), human limitations (Matthew 4:2) and human names (Acts 2:22), etc.

ii. THE VIRGIN BIRTH - Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary by the conception of the Holy Spirit as taught in Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:16-23, and Luke 1:34, 35.

iii. THE ATONEMENT -

1. Atonement is extensively an Old Testament word. In the New Testament it means "reconciliation" (Romans 5:9-11). Reconciliation means a change in relationship with God because of Christ's finished work on the Cross where, He bridged the gap between God and man (II Corinthians 5:19-20). Atonement has come to mean the total significance of Christ's death.

iv. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST -

1. We believe that Christ's resurrection was a real physical, bodily resurrection. He said to His disciples, "touch me" (Luke 24:39; John 20). His resurrected body was a supernatural body which could not die (I Corinthians 15; Revelation 1:8). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most important Doctrines of Scripture. "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain and ye are yet in your sins." (I Corinthians 15:17). If the resurrection of Christ is not true the truthfulness of the Word of God is lost (Luke 24:46), Christ is not the God He claims to be (Romans 1:3-4), regeneration is not possible (I Peter 1:3) and the Power of Sin and Satan is still unbroken (Hebrews 2:14-18). But, Praise be to God, Jesus is alive!

v. THE PRESENT INTERCESSION OF CHRIST -

1. The purpose of Christ's intercession is because He knows our limitations and as our high priest He prays for us and presents our petitions before the Father. He is our go-between (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; I John 2:1-2). Christ's intercession is on the behalf of the saved, not the unsaved (John 17:9).

3. CREATION:

- a. We do not believe in evolution, theistic evolution or the gap theory. We believe the triune God created the world in six literal, 24 hour days. God spoke it and it was so (Genesis 1:1-2; chapter 2).

4. ANGELS:

a. GOOD ANGELS -

- i. The creation of good angels is seen in Job 38:6-7 and Colossians 1:16. They were created before the world and created in a holy state (Jude 6). They are spirit beings (Hebrews 1:14). They cannot reproduce (Mark 12:25), they do not die (Luke 20:36), they have great power (II Peter 2:11). They are distinct from men (Psalm 8:4-5), and are confirmed in a holy state and will always serve the Living God (Mark 8:38).

b. EVIL ANGELS -

- i. Evil angels were created at the same time as good angels but did not keep their holy estate, but chose to leave their holiness in Satan's heavenly rebellion against God. One third of the angels left with Satan (Revelation 12:1-9), and are now confirmed in a state of evilness (I Timothy 4:1-2). These angels are known as Demons, some of which are free to serve their master Satan, while others are reserved in chains of judgment (II Peter 2:4; Jude 6). The destiny of evil angels is the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41).

- ii. We do not believe a believer can be demon possessed for "greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world..." (I John 4:4) We can only be indwelt by one spirit and that is the indwelling Spirit of God, who has sealed us unto the day of redemption.

c. SATAN -

- i. Satan was created by God along with all the other angels but he fell from his state of holiness in rebellion against God (Isaiah 14:12-20). His nature is the same as the evil angels in that he is confirmed in evilness (I John 3:8). He is a murderer and a liar (John 8:44), an accuser (Revelation 12:10) and an adversary (I Peter 5:8). He is destined to spend 1,000 years in the bottomless pit and then be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:1-10).

5. MAN: HIS CREATION IN THE IMAGE OF GOD, HIS FALL AND NATURE:

- a. Image and likeness are interchangeable terms (Genesis 5:3), indicating that man was created in a natural and moral likeness of God. When man sinned, he lost the moral likeness, which was his sinlessness, but the natural likeness of intellect, emotion and will, he still retained (Genesis 9:6; James 3:9). Man and woman were created in sinless perfection, but they fell from this position. Eve was deceived and Adam sinned knowingly (I Timothy 2:14). The sin was more than merely eating forbidden fruit; it was disobeying the revealed Word of God, believing the lie of Satan, and placing their will above God's. Now the whole world is plunged into sinful darkness (Romans 5:12). Man's nature is made up of body, soul, and spirit. The body returns to dust at death, but the soul and spirit live on (Ecclesiastes 12:7). All mankind possesses a sinful nature as a result of Adam's fall (Romans 5:12). We believe in the total depravity of man. We are by nature sinners, depraved and without God (Ephesians 2:3). The Scriptures fully describes man's corruption. Man's intellect (Romans 1:28; II Corinthians 4:4), his conscience (I Timothy 4:2), his will (Romans 1:28), his heart (Ephesians 4:18), and his total being (Romans 1:18-3:20), are all corrupted and totally depraved.

6. THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION:

- a. ELECTION -

- i. Election means “chosen of God”. God is absolute sovereign and by His own will, and according to His foreordained plan and through His foreknowledge and grace, has chosen a people unto Himself (I Peter 1:1-9). God’s part in election is foreordination and predestination according to His foreknowledge, in which men are made accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:3-12 ;). God draws us to salvation (John 6:44). Man’s responsibility is to accept, by faith, God’s finished work in the person of Jesus Christ (John 1:12; Romans 10:9-13).
 - b. JUSTIFICATION -
 - i. Christ’s death makes us acceptable before God (Romans 3:24-25; II Corinthians 5:19-21; Ephesians 1:6; Colossians 1:13). Justification means to “declare one just or righteous” before God.
 - c. REGENERATION -
 - i. This means to be divinely born; as in born of God, born into the family of God. If we are a child of God, God is then our Father. We have been born-again, born from above, regenerated (John 1:13; James 1:18; I Peter 1:23; I John 3:9; 4:7).
 - d. CONVERSION -
 - i. Including repentance and faith - Repentance is to change one’s mind about who Christ is and realize our sinful condition (Luke 13:3). Faith is “a positive response to God’s truth”. When we change our minds about Christ and our sinful condition and respond positively to God’s truth, believing, receiving, and repenting of our sinfulness, then we can experience “new birth” or conversion (Acts 20:21; Romans 2:4; 10:9-17).
 - e. UNION WITH CHRIST -
 - i. We, as believers, have been joined to Christ as “part of His body” (I Corinthians 12:27). We are also “joint heirs” with Christ (Romans 8:17).
 - f. SANCTIFICATION -
 - i. At the time of salvation the Lord sets us apart from the power and penalty of our sin and the Holy Spirit continues to conform us into the image of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:8-9; I Corinthians 6:11; Ephesians 4:24). We do not believe in a so- called “second blessing”. The second blessing is some type of second work of grace. Our salvation was complete in Christ and He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. We do not believe in eradication of the old or sinful nature in this life. The sin nature is still alive and doing evil. We must reckon ourselves dead unto sin (Romans 6:1-23). Paul teaches that the old sin nature is still present in the lives of believers (Romans 7:15-21).
 - g. ETERNAL SECURITY -
 - i. At the time of salvation the believer is made eternally secure in Christ, never to lose his salvation (John 10:29; Romans 4:21).
- 7. THE CHURCH:
 - a. THE BODY OF CHRIST -
 - i. The body of Christ has been called the universal church. It includes all believers in the dispensation of the church. At the time of salvation, the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13, 27).
 - b. THE LOCAL CHURCH -
 - i. Its Members - The members of the local church must profess salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, must give evidence of a desire to live a consistent Christian life, must be willing to abide by the church constitution, and must be baptized by immersion.

- ii. Its Officers - The pastor is the one who oversees the entire administration of the church affairs. He shall be assisted by others such as assistant pastor, youth pastor, etc., if the church grows to where these officers are needed. The deacons will serve in the physical properties of the church, building, ground, repairs, etc. (Acts 6:1-4), so that the pastor may spend time in the Word and prayer. The pastor, assistants, and deacons shall also watch over the spiritual welfare of the church. They shall be involved in visitation, evangelism and the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, etc.
- iii. Autonomous Church - The local church has the absolute right of self-government free from any interference of any hierarchy, individuals or organization. The one and only head is the Lord (Colossians 1:18).
- iv. Indigenous Church - The church is self-propagating. It is made up of local members, not outsiders. It is not governed by outsiders, but by local members.
- v. Its Ordinances - Ordinances are not a means of bestowing grace but are done in obedience and remembrance of our Lord. The ordinances are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The ordinances have been given to the church for the entire dispensation of the Church Age. The requirement for baptism is profession of faith in Christ Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20). The requirement for the Lord's Supper is salvation, baptism, and a desire to confess all known sin unless one desires to drink damnation (judgment) unto himself (I Corinthians 11:17-34).
- vi. Its Discipline - The church shall have the right at any time to dismiss from its membership any member who may be found guilty of willful violation of the church constitution and by-laws. The procedure in the case of church discipline shall be in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17.
- vii. Its Relationship To Other Churches Of Like Faith - Fellowship will only take place between churches of like faith (doctrine) and practice (Acts 2:41-47; 4:32).
 - 1. Primary Separation - This is separation from all religious apostasy, all sin, worldly pleasures, practices and associations such as National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Movement, Charismatic Movement, Neo-evangelicalism, Liberals, etc.
 - 2. Secondary Separation - The church will not fellowship with fundamentalists that associate with neo-evangelicals, liberals, etc. This would be entertaining apostasy which is displeasing to God.
 - 3. Personal Separation - Saved people should not engage in worldly pleasures, practices, and associations. This would bring reproach upon our Saviour (Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; II Corinthians 6:14-17; II Timothy 2:1-5; I John 2:15-17; II John 7-11).
- viii. Its Purpose and Commission - The purpose of the church is the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12-13). Their commission is to win the lost, baptize them, and bring them into the local church and train them to go out and disciple others (Matthew 28:19-20).
- ix. Separation Of Church And State - We believe very strongly in the separation of Church and State. Each have a definite and distinct sphere of responsibility (Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:1-7).

8. THE DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS:

a. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST -

- i. We believe that five dispensations have passed, we are now in the sixth dispensation. The Church Age is probably towards its end. We believe in the pre-tribulation, pre-millennial rapture of the Church; that is, that Christ's second

coming is imminent. Christ will first resurrect the dead in Christ and then translate the living in Christ. Then begins the great tribulation period lasting 7 years (3 1/2 years of peace and 3 1/2 years of Christ's righteous judgments being poured out on the unbelieving world). Christ will then come with His saints in the Revelation and will set up His glorious Kingdom (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 10:37; Jude 14-15; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4-7).

b. THE ETERNAL DESTINY OF MAN -

- i. We believe in the bodily resurrection of man, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 5:13). 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 and 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).
- ii. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in constant misery until the second resurrection when with the 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 (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15).

9. CIVIL GOVERNMENT:

- a. Civil government was established by God in Genesis 8:20 - 9:7, and Exodus 19:5-7. Romans 13 teaches us that government officials are the ministers of God and as long as government does not go contrary to the direct teaching of God's Word, we are to be in subjection to that authority (Acts 4:18-20; 5:29). We should pay taxes, vote in elections, and get involved in local as well as national politics. If government officials are the ministers of God, why are God's people afraid to be those ministers? As believers, we should not stand by while the unsaved, ungodly, humanistic, atheists and liberals take over this great nation of ours. We must take our place of responsibility as citizens of the state. We may give allegiance to the state, but our supreme loyalty belongs [goes] to God and His Word.

10. THE PERMANENCY OF THE MARRIAGE COVENANT:

- a. We believe that marriage is an unbreakable Covenant relationship (Malachi 2:13-16). When a man and woman take the sacred vow of marriage (Ecclesiastes 5:4-6) this vow unites them as one flesh in the eyes of God (Matthew 19:5-6). We believe that marriage is "till death do us part" (Romans 7:1-4). If a marriage separation does take place because of a divorce, the Scriptures clearly teach that one is to remain unmarried, or be reconciled to his or her husband or wife (I Corinthians 7:10-14). If one does remarry after a divorce they have committed adultery in the eyes of the Lord and have broken God's law of marriage (Romans 7:3; I Corinthians 7:39). This, like any sin can be forgiven by the "blood of Jesus Christ" (I John 1:7), but there will be life long consequences as a result of violating God's standard for marriage.