

WHAT WE BELIEVE AT HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

The following statements represent our essential beliefs:

I. THE SCRIPTURES

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, and therefore it is wholly without error. It reveals the depths of God's love and the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. It is sufficient as our only infallible rule of faith and practice.

1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Matthew 5:18, 24:35; John 10:35; Hebrews 4:12; Psalm 119:89

II. GOD

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

**Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4; Matthew 28:19;
2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Timothy 2:4**

God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all-powerful, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become His children through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

**Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 4:6; John 1:12;
Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9**

God the Son

God is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, hence the God-Man. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself the demands and necessities of

human nature and identifying Himself completely with mankind, yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, partaking of the nature of God and of man, and in whose person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

**John 10:30, 14:9; 1 John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2; Philippians 2:5-8;
1 Timothy 2:5**

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement. He calls men to the Savior and effects regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

**1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Ephesians 4:30; Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4, 28:25-26;
1 Corinthians 12:1-6; Hebrews 10:14-15; John 16:7-14**

III. MAN

Man was created by the special act of God, in His own image, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning, man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice, man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence; whereby all men inherited a sin nature and an environment inclined toward sin, and as soon as they are capable of moral action become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring a man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore every man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

**Genesis 2:7,15-25; James 3:9; John 3:36; Romans 3:23, 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14;
Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 1:8**

IV. SALVATION

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, repentance and faith, sanctification, and glorification.

Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and surrender of one's entire person to Him as Lord and Savior. Justification is the declarative act of God by which, on the basis of the sufficiency of Christ's atoning death, He pronounces every believer to be righteous, that is, to have fulfilled all of the requirements of the law. Justification brings the believer into a personal relationship of peace and favor with God.

Acts 20:20-21; Romans 5:1

Sanctification is the experience, beginning at the new birth, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward Christ-likeness through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit indwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the believer's life.

**Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2,30, 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11;
1 Peter 1:2**

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Romans 8:16-17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3

V. RESURRECTION

There will be a final resurrection for all men, the just and unjust. Those who surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ during this life will be raised to everlasting life in Heaven, but those who did not surrender their lives to Jesus Christ in this life will be raised to everlasting condemnation in Hell.

Acts 24:15; Hebrews 9:27; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:15, 21:8

VI. THE CHURCH

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend this message of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

The church is an autonomous body with each member equally responsible. It operates under the Lordship of Christ following Scriptural teachings. Two offices serve the church. It is led and overseen by men in the office of pastor/elder and served by men in the office of deacon.

The New Testament speaks also of the church body as the body of Christ, which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages.

**1 Corinthians 12:12-13; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8;
Ephesians 1:22, 4:15; Colossians 1:18**

VII. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior; the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a public testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's supper.

The Lord's supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, remember the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

**Acts 2:38-42, 8:36-39; Romans 6:1-11; Acts 2:41-42;
1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:23-32**