

# BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE COMPARISON CHART

*Below, you will find a comparison of 1925, 1963 and 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. The article headings are from the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. The 1925 Baptist Faith and Message article headings and order have been denoted within the individual articles.*

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*I. The Scriptures*

*II. God*

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*IV. Salvation*

*V. God's Purpose of Grace*

*VI. The Church*

*VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper*

*VIII. The Lord's Day*

*IX. The Kingdom*

*X. Last Things*

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# Preamble

1925

*The report of the Committee on Statement of Baptist Faith and Message was presented as follows by E. Y. Mullins, Kentucky:*

## Your committee beg leave to report as follows:

Your committee recognize that they were appointed "to consider the advisability of issuing another statement of the Baptist Faith and Message, and report at the next Convention."

In pursuance of the instructions of the Convention, and in consideration of the general denominational situation, your committee have decided to recommend the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, revised at certain points, and with some additional articles growing out of present needs, for approval by the Convention, in the event a statement of the Baptist faith and message is deemed necessary at this time.

The present occasion for a reaffirmation of Christian fundamentals is the prevalence of naturalism in the modern teaching and preaching of religion. Christianity is supernatural in its origin and history. We repudiate every theory of religion which denies the supernatural elements in our faith.

As introductory to the doctrinal articles, we recommend the adoption by the Convention of the following statement of the historic Baptist conception of the nature and function of confessions of faith in our religious and denominational life, believing that some such statement will clarify the atmosphere and remove some causes of misunderstanding, friction, and apprehension. Baptists approve and circulate confessions of faith with the following understanding, namely:

1. That they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptist body, large or small, for the general instruction and guidance of our own people and others concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, viz., repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
2. That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. As in the past so in the future Baptist should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient at any time.
3. That any group of Baptists, large or small, have the inherent right to draw up for themselves and publish to the world a confession of their faith whenever they may think it advisable to do so.
4. That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.
5. That they are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other realms of life.

1963

*Committee on Baptist Faith and Message*

## The 1962 session of the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in San Francisco, California, adopted the following motion:

"Since the report of the Committee on Statement of Baptist Faith and Message was adopted in 1925, there have been various statements from time to time which have been made, but no over-all statement which might be helpful at this time as suggested in Section 2 of that report, or introductory statement which might be used as an interpretation of the 1925 Statement."

"We recommend, therefore, that the president of this Convention be requested to call a meeting of the men now serving as presidents of the various state conventions that would qualify as a member of the Southern Baptist Convention committee under Bylaw 18 to present to the Convention in Kansas City some similar statement which shall serve as information to the churches, and which may serve as guidelines to the various agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention. It is understood that any group or individuals may approach this committee to be of service. The expenses of this committee shall be borne by the Convention Operating Budget."

Your committee thus constituted begs leave to present its report as follows:

Throughout its work your committee has been conscious of the contribution made by the statement of "The Southern Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1925. It quotes with approval its affirmation that "Christianity is supernatural in its origin and history. We repudiate every theory of religion which denies the supernatural elements in our faith."

Furthermore, it concurs in the introductory "statement of the historic Baptist conception of the nature and function of confessions of faith in our religious and denominational life . . ." It is, therefore, quoted in full as a part of this report to the Convention:

1. "That they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptist body, large or small, for the general instruction and guidance of our own people and others concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, viz., repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
2. "That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. As in the past so in the future, Baptists should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient at any time.
3. "That any group of Baptists, large or small, have the inherent right to draw up for themselves and publish to the world a confession of their faith whenever they may think it advisable to do so.
4. "That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.

## The 1999 session of the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, adopted the following motion addressed to the President of the Convention:

"I move that in your capacity as Southern Baptist Convention chairman, you appoint a blue ribbon committee to review the *Baptist Faith and Message* statement with the responsibility to report and bring any recommendations to this meeting next June in Orlando."

President Paige Patterson appointed the committee as follows: Max Barnett (OK), Steve Gaines (AL), Susie Hawkins (TX), Rudy A. Hernandez (TX), Charles S. Kelley, Jr. (LA), Heather King (IN), Richard D. Land (TN), Fred Luter (LA), R. Albert Mohler, Jr. (KY), T. C. Pinckney (VA), Nelson Price (GA), Adrian Rogers (TN), Roger Spradlin (CA), Simon Tsoi (AZ), Jerry Vines (FL). Adrian Rogers (TN) was appointed chairman.

Your committee thus constituted begs leave to present its report as follows:

Baptists are a people of deep beliefs and cherished doctrines. Throughout our history we have been a confessional people, adopting statements of faith as a witness to our beliefs and a pledge of our faithfulness to the doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture.

Our confessions of faith are rooted in historical precedent, as the church in every age has been called upon to define and defend its beliefs. Each generation of Christians bears the responsibility of guarding the treasury of truth that has been entrusted to us [2 [Timothy 1:14](#)]. Facing a new century, Southern Baptists must meet the demands and duties of the present hour.

New challenges to faith appear in every age. A pervasive anti-supernaturalism in the culture was answered by Southern Baptists in 1925, when the *Baptist Faith and Message* was first adopted by this Convention. In 1963, Southern Baptists responded to assaults upon the authority and truthfulness of the Bible by adopting revisions to the *Baptist Faith and Message*. The Convention added an article on "The Family" in 1998, thus answering cultural confusion with the clear teachings of Scripture. Now, faced with a culture hostile to the very notion of truth, this generation of Baptists must claim anew the eternal truths of the Christian faith.

Your committee respects and celebrates the heritage of the *Baptist Faith and Message*, and affirms the decision of the Convention in 1925 to adopt the *New Hampshire Confession of Faith*, "revised at certain points and with some additional articles growing out of certain needs . . ." We also respect the important contributions of the 1925 and 1963 editions of the *Baptist Faith and Message*.

With the 1963 committee, we have been guided in our work by the 1925 "statement of the historic Baptist conception of the nature and function of confessions of faith in our religious and denominational life . . ." It is, therefore, quoted in full as a part of this report to the Convention:

1. That they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptist body, large or small, for the general instruction and guidance of our own people and others concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, viz., repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
2. That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. As in the past so in the

## Preamble

5. "That they are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other realms of life."

The 1925 Statement recommended "the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, revised at certain points, and with some additional articles growing out of certain needs . . . ." Your present committee has adopted the same pattern. It has sought to build upon the structure of the 1925 Statement, keeping in mind the "certain needs" of our generation. At times it has reproduced sections of that Statement without change. In other instances it has substituted words for clarity or added sentences for emphasis. At certain points it has combined articles, with minor changes in wording, to endeavor to relate certain doctrines to each other. In still others — e.g., "God" and "Salvation" — it has sought to bring together certain truths contained throughout the 1925 Statement in order to relate them more clearly and concisely. In no case has it sought to delete from or to add to the basic contents of the 1925 Statement.

Baptists are a people who profess a living faith. This faith is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ who is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Therefore, the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is Jesus Christ whose will is revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

A living faith must experience a growing understanding of truth and must be continually interpreted and related to the needs of each new generation. Throughout their history Baptist bodies, both large and small, have issued statements of faith which comprise a consensus of their beliefs. Such statements have never been regarded as complete, infallible statements of faith, nor as official creeds carrying mandatory authority. Thus this generation of Southern Baptists is in historic succession of intent and purpose as it endeavors to state for its time and theological climate those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us.

Baptists emphasize the soul's competency before God, freedom in religion, and the priesthood of the believer. However, this emphasis should not be interpreted to mean that there is an absence of certain definite doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been and are now closely identified.

It is the purpose of this statement of faith and message to set forth certain teachings which we believe.

future, Baptists should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient at any time.

3. That any group of Baptists, large or small, have the inherent right to draw up for themselves and publish to the world a confession of their faith whenever they may think it advisable to do so.
4. That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.
5. That they are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other realms of life.

Baptists cherish and defend religious liberty, and deny the right of any secular or religious authority to impose a confession of faith upon a church or body of churches. We honor the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, affirming together both our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the Word of God.

Baptist churches, associations, and general bodies have adopted confessions of faith as a witness to the world, and as instruments of doctrinal accountability. We are not embarrassed to state before the world that these are doctrines we hold precious and as essential to the Baptist tradition of faith and practice.

As a committee, we have been charged to address the "certain needs" of our own generation. In an age increasingly hostile to Christian truth, our challenge is to express the truth as revealed in Scripture, and to bear witness to Jesus Christ, who is "*the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*"

The 1963 committee rightly sought to identify and affirm "certain definite doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been and are now closely identified." Our living faith is established upon eternal truths. "Thus this generation of Southern Baptists is in historic succession of intent and purpose as it endeavors to state for its time and theological climate those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us."

It is the purpose of this statement of faith and message to set forth certain teachings which we believe.

Respectfully Submitted,

*The Baptist Faith and Message Study Committee*  
*Adrian Rogers, Chairman*

## I. The Scriptures

1925

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge 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.

[Luke 16:29-31](#); [2 Tim. 3:15-17](#); [Eph. 2:20](#); [Heb. 1:1](#); [2 Peter 1:19-21](#); [John 16:13-15](#); [Matt. 22:29-31](#); [Psalm 19:7-10](#); [Psalm 119:1-8](#).

1963

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, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. It reveals 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. The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ.

[Ex. 24:4](#); [Deut. 4:1-2](#); [17:19](#); [Josh. 8:34](#); [Psalms 19:7-10](#); [119:11, 89, 105, 140](#); [Isa. 34:16](#); [40:8](#); [Jer. 15:16](#); [36](#); [Matt. 5:17-18](#); [22:29](#); [Luke 21:33](#); [24:44-46](#); [John 5:39](#); [16:13-15](#); [17:17](#); [Acts 2:16ff.](#); [17:11](#); [Rom. 15:4](#); [16:25-26](#); [2 Tim. 3:15-17](#); [Heb. 1:1-2](#); [4:12](#); [1 Peter 1:25](#); [2 Peter 1:19-21](#).

2000

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals 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. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

[Exodus 24:4](#); [Deuteronomy 4:1-2](#); [17:19](#); [Joshua 8:34](#); [Psalms 19:7-10](#); [119:11, 89, 105, 140](#); [Isaiah 34:16](#); [40:8](#); [Jeremiah 15:16](#); [36:1-32](#); [Matthew 5:17-18](#); [22:29](#); [Luke 21:33](#); [24:44-46](#); [John 5:39](#); [16:13-15](#); [17:17](#); [Acts 2:16ff.](#); [17:11](#); [Romans 15:4](#); [16:25-26](#); [2 Timothy 3:15-17](#); [Hebrews 1:1-2](#); [4:12](#); [1 Peter 1:25](#); [2 Peter 1:19-21](#).

## II. God

1925

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

[Gen. 1:1](#); [1 Cor. 8:4-6](#); [Deut. 6:4](#); [Jer. 10:10](#); [Isa. 48:12](#); [Deut. 5:7](#); [Ex. 3:14](#); [Heb. 11:6](#); [John 5:26](#); [1 Tim. 1:17](#); [John 1:14-18](#); [John 15:26](#); [Gal. 4:6](#); [Matt. 28:19](#).

1963

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### 1. 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 children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in his attitude toward all men.

[Gen. 1:1](#); [2:7](#); [Ex. 3:14](#); [6:2-3](#); [15:11ff.](#); [20:1ff.](#); [Levit. 22:2](#); [Deut. 6:4](#); [32:6](#); [1 Chron. 29:10](#); [Psalm 19:1-3](#); [Isa. 43:3,15](#); [64:8](#); [Jer. 10:10](#); [17:13](#); [Matt. 6:9ff.](#); [7:11](#); [23:9](#); [28:19](#); [Mark 1:9-11](#); [John 4:24](#); [5:26](#); [14:6-13](#); [17:1-8](#); [Acts 1:7](#); [Rom. 8:14-15](#); [1 Cor. 8:6](#); [Gal. 4:6](#); [Ephes. 4:6](#); [Col. 1:15](#); [1 Tim. 1:17](#); [Heb. 11:6](#); [12:9](#); [1 Peter 1:17](#); [1 John 5:7](#).

### 2. God the Son

Christ 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. 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.

[Gen. 18:1ff.](#); [Psalms 2:7ff.](#); [110:1ff.](#); [Isa. 7:14](#); [53](#); [Matt. 1:18-23](#); [3:17](#); [8:29](#); [11:27](#); [14:33](#); [16:16,27](#); [17:5](#); [27](#); [28:1-6,19](#); [Mark 1:1](#); [3:11](#); [Luke 1:35](#); [4:41](#); [22:70](#); [24:46](#);

2000

*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. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.*

### A. 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 knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.*

[Genesis 1:1](#); [2:7](#); [Exodus 3:14](#); [6:2-3](#); [15:11ff.](#); [20:1ff.](#); [Leviticus 22:2](#); [Deuteronomy 6:4](#); [32:6](#); [1 Chronicles 29:10](#); [Psalm 19:1-3](#); [Isaiah 43:3,15](#); [64:8](#); [Jeremiah 10:10](#); [17:13](#); [Matthew 6:9ff.](#); [7:11](#); [23:9](#); [28:19](#); [Mark 1:9-11](#); [John 4:24](#); [5:26](#); [14:6-13](#); [17:1-8](#); [Acts 1:7](#); [Romans 8:14-15](#); [1 Corinthians 8:6](#); [Galatians 4:6](#); [Ephesians 4:6](#); [Colossians 1:15](#); [1 Timothy 1:17](#); [Hebrews 11:6](#); [12:9](#); [1 Peter 1:17](#); [1 John 5:7](#).

### B. God the Son

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## II. God

[John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Rom. 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; 8:9; Gal. 4:4-5; Ephes. 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Heb. 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Rev. 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.](#)

### 3. 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 judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the 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 fulness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

[Gen. 1:2; Judg. 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isa. 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matt. 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Rom. 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11; Gal. 4:6; Ephes. 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:19; 1 Tim. 3:16; 4:1; 2 Tim. 1:14; 3:16; Heb. 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Rev. 1:10; 22:17.](#)

world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

[Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.](#)

### C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the 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 guarantee that God will 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.

[Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.](#)

### III. Man

1925

Man was created by the special act of God, as recorded in Genesis. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" ([Gen. 1:27](#)). "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" ([Gen. 2:7](#)). He was created in a state of holiness under the law of his Maker, but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity inherit a nature corrupt and in bondage to sin, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors. [Gen. 1:27; Gen. 2:7; John 1:23; Gen. 3:4-7; Gen. 3:22-24; Rom. 5:12,14,19, 21; Rom. 7:23-25; Rom. 11:18,22,32-33; Col. 1:21.](#)

*Note: Article III was titled "The Fall of Man" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

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 his posterity inherit a 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 man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfil 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. [Gen. 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isa. 6:5; Jer. 17:5; Matt. 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Cor. 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Eph. 2:1-22; Col. 1:21-22; 3:9-11.](#)

2000

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's 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 his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfil 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 person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love. [Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.](#)

## IV. Salvation

1925

### IV. The Way of Salvation

The salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial office of the Son of God, who by the Holy Spirit was born of the Virgin Mary and took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience and made atonement for our sins by his death. Being risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in Heaven, and, uniting in his person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is in every way qualified to be a compassionate and all-sufficient Saviour.

[Col. 1:21-22](#); [Eph. 1:7-10](#); [Gal. 2:19-20](#); [Gal. 3:13](#); [Rom. 1:4](#); [Eph. 1:20-23](#); [Matt. 1:21-25](#); [Luke 1:35](#); [2:11](#); [Rom. 3:25](#).

### V. Justification

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of righteousness of all sinners who believe in Christ. This blessing is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but through the redemption that is in and through Jesus Christ. It brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other needed blessing.

[Rom. 3:24](#); [4:2](#); [5:1-2](#); [8:30](#); [Eph. 1:7](#); [1 Cor. 1:30-31](#); [2 Cor. 5:21](#).

### VI. The Freeness of Salvation

The blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel. It is the duty of all to accept them by penitent and obedient faith. Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner except his own voluntary refusal to accept Jesus Christ as teacher, Saviour, and Lord.

[Eph. 1:5](#); [2:4-10](#); [1 Cor. 1:30-31](#); [Rom. 5:1-9](#); [Rev. 22:17](#); [John 3:16](#); [Mark 16:16](#).

### VII. Regeneration

Regeneration or the new birth is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit, whereby we become partakers of the divine nature and a holy disposition is given, leading to the love and practice of righteousness. It is a work of God's free grace conditioned upon faith in Christ and made manifest by the fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

[John 3:1-8](#), [1:16-18](#); [Rom. 8:2](#); [Eph. 2:1,5-6,8,10](#); [Eph. 4:30,32](#); [Col. 3:1-11](#); [Titus 3:5](#).

### VIII. Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply

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

1. 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.

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 commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

2. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

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

[Gen. 3:15](#); [Ex. 3:14-17](#); [6:2-8](#); [Matt. 1:21](#); [4:17](#); [16:21-26](#); [27:22-28:6](#); [Luke 1:68-69](#); [2:28-32](#); [John 1:11-14,29](#); [3:3-21,36](#); [5:24](#); [10:9,28-29](#); [15:1-16](#); [17:17](#); [Acts 2:21](#); [4:12](#); [15:11](#); [16:30-31](#); [17:30-31](#); [20:32](#); [Rom. 1:16-18](#); [2:4](#); [3:23-25](#); [4:3ff.](#); [5:8-10](#); [6:1-23](#); [8:1-18,29-39](#); [10:9-10,13](#); [13:11-14](#); [1 Cor. 1:18,30](#); [6:19-20](#); [15:10](#); [2 Cor. 5:17-20](#); [Gal. 2:20](#); [3:13](#); [5:22-25](#); [6:15](#); [Ephes. 1:7](#); [2:8-22](#); [4:11-16](#); [Phil. 2:12-13](#); [Col. 1:9-22](#); [3:1ff.](#); [1 Thess. 5:23-24](#); [2 Tim. 1:12](#); [Titus 2:11-14](#); [Heb. 2:1-3](#); [5:8-9](#); [9:24-28](#); [11:1-12:8,14](#); [James 2:14-26](#); [1 Peter 1:2-23](#); [1 John 1:6-2:11](#); [Rev. 3:20](#); [21:1-22:5](#).

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*Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.*

*A. 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. 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 commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.*

*B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.*

*C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.*

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

[Genesis 3:15](#); [Exodus 3:14-17](#); [6:2-8](#); [Matthew 1:21](#); [4:17](#); [16:21-26](#); [27:22-28:6](#); [Luke 1:68-69](#); [2:28-32](#); [John 1:11-14,29](#); [3:3-21,36](#); [5:24](#); [10:9,28-29](#); [15:1-16](#); [17:17](#); [Acts 2:21](#); [4:12](#); [15:11](#); [16:30-31](#); [17:30-31](#); [20:32](#); [Romans 1:16-18](#); [2:4](#); [3:23-25](#); [4:3ff.](#); [5:8-10](#); [6:1-23](#); [8:1-18,29-39](#); [10:9-10,13](#); [13:11-14](#); [1 Corinthians 1:18,30](#); [6:19-20](#); [15:10](#); [2 Corinthians 5:17-20](#); [Galatians 2:20](#); [3:13](#); [5:22-25](#); [6:15](#); [Ephesians 1:7](#); [2:8-22](#); [4:11-16](#); [Philippians 2:12-13](#); [Colossians 1:9-22](#); [3:1ff.](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:23-24](#); [2 Timothy 1:12](#); [Titus 2:11-14](#); [Hebrews 2:1-3](#); [5:8-9](#); [9:24-28](#); [11:1-12:8,14](#); [James 2:14-26](#); [1 Peter 1:2-23](#); [1 John 1:6-2:11](#); [Revelation 3:20](#); [21:1-22:5](#).



#### **IV. Salvation**

convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour.

[Luke 22:31-34](#); [Mark 1:15](#); [1 Tim. 1:13](#); [Rom. 3:25,27,31](#); [Rom. 4:3,9,12,16-17](#); [John 16:8-11](#).

#### **X. Sanctification**

Sanctification is the process by which the regenerate gradually attain to moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in their hearts. It continues throughout the earthly life, and is accomplished by the use of all the ordinary means of grace, and particularly by the Word of God.

[Acts 20:32](#); [John 17:17](#); [Rom. 6:5-6](#); [Eph. 3:16](#); [Rom. 4:14](#); [Gal. 5:24](#); [Heb. 12:14](#); [Rom. 7:18-25](#); [2 Cor. 3:18](#); [Gal. 5:16,25-26](#).

## V. God's Purpose of Grace

1925

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners. It is perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. It encourages the use of means in the highest degree.

Rom. 8:30; 11:7; Eph. 1:10; Acts 26:18; Eph. 1:17-19; 2 Tim. 1:9; Psalm 110:3; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:5; John 6:44-45,65; Rom. 10:12-15.

### XI. Perseverance

All real believers endure to the end. Their continuance in well-doing is the mark which distinguishes them from mere professors. A special Providence cares for them, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

John 10:28-29; 2 Tim. 2:19; 1 John 2:19; 1 Cor. 11:32; Rom. 8:30; 9:11, 16; Rom. 5:9-10; Matt. 26:70-75.

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Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 19:5-8; 1 Sam. 8:4-7, 19-22; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 31:31ff.; Matt. 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22, 31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45, 65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32; Rom. 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36; 1 Cor. 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephes. 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Col. 1:12-14; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2:10, 19; Heb. 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 1:2-5, 13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

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*Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.*

*All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.*

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7, 19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22, 31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45, 65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10, 19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5, 13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

## VI. The Church

1925

A church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Its Scriptural officers are bishops, or elders, and deacons.

[Matt. 16:18](#); [Matt. 18:15-18](#); [Rom. 1:7](#); [1 Cor. 1:2](#); [Acts 2:41-42](#); [5:13-14](#); [2 Cor. 9:13](#); [Phil. 1:1](#); [1 Tim. 4:14](#); [Acts 14:23](#); [Acts 6:3,5-6](#); [Heb. 13:17](#); [1 Cor. 9:6,14](#).

*Note: Article XII was titled "The Gospel Church" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

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 the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation, members are equally responsible. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

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

[Matt. 16:15-19](#); [18:15-20](#); [Acts 2:41-42,47](#); [5:11-14](#); [6:3-6](#); [13:1-3](#); [14:23,27](#); [15:1-30](#); [16:5](#); [20:28](#); [Rom. 1:7](#); [1 Cor. 1:2](#); [3:16](#); [5:4-5](#); [7:17](#); [9:13-14](#); [12](#); [Ephes. 1:22-23](#); [2:19-22](#); [3:8-11,21](#); [5:22-32](#); [Phil. 1:1](#); [Col. 1:18](#); [1 Tim. 3:1-15](#); [4:14](#); [1 Peter 5:1-4](#); [Rev. 2-3](#); [21:2-3](#).

2000

*A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.*

*The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.*

[Matthew 16:15-19](#); [18:15-20](#); [Acts 2:41-42,47](#); [5:11-14](#); [6:3-6](#); [13:1-3](#); [14:23,27](#); [15:1-30](#); [16:5](#); [20:28](#); [Romans 1:7](#); [1 Corinthians 1:2](#); [3:16](#); [5:4-5](#); [7:17](#); [9:13-14](#); [12](#); [Ephesians 1:22-23](#); [2:19-22](#); [3:8-11,21](#); [5:22-32](#); [Philippians 1:1](#); [Colossians 1:18](#); [1 Timothy 2:9-14](#); [3:1-15](#); [4:14](#); [Hebrews 11:39-40](#); [1 Peter 5:1-4](#); [Revelation 2-3](#); [21:2-3](#).

*Note: Article VI was amended in 2023 at the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in New Orleans to:*

*A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its two scriptural offices are that of pastor/elder/overseer and deacon. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder/overseer is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.*

*The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers*

## VI. The Church

*from every tribe, and tongue, and people,  
and nation.*

*[Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.](#)*

## VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

1925

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The act is a symbol of our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Saviour. It is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the use of bread and wine, commemorate the dying love of Christ.

[Matt. 28:19-20](#); [1 Cor. 4:1](#); [Rom. 6:3-5](#); [Col. 2:12](#); [Mark 1:4](#); [Matt. 3:16](#); [John 3:23](#); [1 Cor. 11:23-26](#); [1 Cor. 10:16-17,21](#); [Matt. 26:26-27](#); [Acts 8:38-39](#); [Mark 1:9-11](#).

Note: Article XIII was titled "Baptism and the Lord's Supper" in the 1925 BF&M.

1963

*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 Saviour, 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 testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.*

*Being a church ordinance, it is 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, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.*

[Matt. 3:13-17](#); [26:26-30](#); [28:19-20](#); [Mark 1:9-11](#); [14:22-26](#); [Luke 3:21-22](#); [22:19-20](#); [John 3:23](#); [Acts 2:41-42](#); [8:35-39](#); [16:30-33](#); [Acts 20:7](#); [Rom. 6:3-5](#); [1 Cor. 10:16,21](#); [11:23-29](#); [Col. 2:12](#).

2000

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[Matthew 3:13-17](#); [26:26-30](#); [28:19-20](#); [Mark 1:9-11](#); [14:22-26](#); [Luke 3:21-22](#); [22:19-20](#); [John 3:23](#); [Acts 2:41-42](#); [8:35-39](#); [16:30-33](#); [20:7](#); [Romans 6:3-5](#); [1 Corinthians 10:16,21](#); [11:23-29](#); [Colossians 2:12](#).

## VIII. The Lord's Day

1925

The first day of the week is the Lord's day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and by refraining from worldly amusements, and resting from secular employments, works of necessity and mercy only excepted.

[Ex. 20:3-6; Matt. 4:10; Matt. 28:19; 1 Tim. 4:13; Col. 3:16; John 4:21; Ex. 20:8; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:1; Matt. 12:1-13](#)

1963

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[Ex. 20:8-11; Matt. 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Col. 2:16; 3:16; Rev. 1:10.](#)

2000

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

[Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.](#)

## IX. The Kingdom

1925

The Kingdom of God is the reign of God in the heart and life of the individual in every human relationship, and in every form and institution of organized human society. The chief means for promoting the Kingdom of God on earth are preaching the gospel of Christ, and teaching the principles of righteousness contained therein. The Kingdom of God will be complete when every thought and will of man shall be brought into captivity to the will of Christ. And it is the duty of all Christ's people to pray and labor continually that his Kingdom may come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

[Dan. 2:37-44; 7:18; Matt.](#)

[4:23; 8:12; 12:25; 13:38,43; 25:34; 26:29; Mark 11:10; Luke 12:32; 22:29; Acts 1:6; 1 Cor. 15:24; Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 17:20-21; John 3:3; John 18:36; Matt. 6:10; Luke 23:42.](#)

*Note: Article XXV was titled "The Kingdom" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

The kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

[Gen. 1:1; Isa. 9:6-7; Jer. 23:5-6; Matt.](#)

[3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-](#)

[21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Rom. 5:17; 8:19; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Col. 1:13; Heb. 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Rev. 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.](#)

2000

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[Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-](#)

[6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-](#)

[21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.](#)

## X. Last Things

1925

### XV. The Righteous and the Wicked

There is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and wicked. Those only who are justified through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit are truly righteous in his sight. Those who continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked and are under condemnation. This distinction between the righteous and the wicked holds in and after death, and will be made manifest at the judgment when final and everlasting awards are made to all men. [Gen. 3:19](#); [Acts 13:36](#); [Luke 23:43](#); [2 Cor. 5:1,6,8](#); [Phil. 1:23](#); [1 Cor. 15:51-52](#); [1 Thess. 4:17](#); [Phil. 3:21](#); [1 Cor. 6:3](#); [Matt. 25:32-46](#); [Rom. 9:22-23](#); [Mark 9:48](#); [1 Thess. 1:7-10](#); [Rev. 22:20](#).

### XVI. The Resurrection

The Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus rose from the dead. His grave was emptied of its contents. He appeared to the disciples after his resurrection in many convincing manifestations. He now exists in his glorified body at God's right hand. There will be a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. The bodies of the righteous will conform to the glorious spiritual body of Jesus. [1 Cor. 15:1-58](#); [2 Cor. 5:1-8](#); [1 Thess. 4:17](#); [John 5:28-29](#); [Phil. 3:21](#); [Acts 24:15](#); [John 20:9](#); [Matt. 28:6](#).

### XVII. The Return of the Lord

The New Testament teaches in many places the visible and personal return of Jesus to this earth. "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." The time of his coming is not revealed. "Of that day and hour knoweth no one, no, not the angels in heaven, but my Father only" ([Matt. 24:36](#)). It is the duty of all believers to live in readiness for his coming and by diligence in good works to make manifest to all men the reality and power of their hope in Christ. [Matt. 24:36](#); [Matt. 24:42-47](#); [Mark 13:32-37](#); [Luke 21:27-28](#); [Acts 1:9-11](#).

1963

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in heaven with the Lord. [Isa. 2:4](#); [11:9](#); [Matt. 16:27](#); [18:8-9](#); [19:28](#); [24:27,30,36,44](#); [25:31-46](#); [26:64](#); [Mark 8:38](#); [9:43-48](#); [Luke 12:40,48](#); [16:19-26](#); [17:22-37](#); [21:27-28](#); [John 14:1-3](#); [Acts 1:11](#); [17:31](#); [Rom. 14:10](#); [1 Cor. 4:5](#); [15:24-28,35-58](#); [2 Cor. 5:10](#); [Phil. 3:20-21](#); [Col. 1:5](#); [3:4](#); [1 Thess. 4:14-18](#); [5:1ff.](#); [2 Thess. 1:7ff.](#); [2](#); [1 Tim. 6:14](#); [2 Tim. 4:1,8](#); [Titus 2:13](#); [Heb. 9:27-28](#); [James 5:8](#); [2 Peter 3:7ff.](#); [1 John 2:28](#); [3:2](#); [Jude 14](#); [Rev. 1:18](#); [3:11](#); [20:1-22:13](#).

2000

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. [Isaiah 2:4](#); [11:9](#); [Matthew 16:27](#); [18:8-9](#); [19:28](#); [24:27,30,36,44](#); [25:31-46](#); [26:64](#); [Mark 8:38](#); [9:43-48](#); [Luke 12:40,48](#); [16:19-26](#); [17:22-37](#); [21:27-28](#); [John 14:1-3](#); [Acts 1:11](#); [17:31](#); [Romans 14:10](#); [1 Corinthians 4:5](#); [15:24-28,35-58](#); [2 Corinthians 5:10](#); [Philippians 3:20-21](#); [Colossians 1:5](#); [3:4](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:14-18](#); [5:1ff.](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.](#); [2](#); [1 Timothy 6:14](#); [2 Timothy 4:1,8](#); [Titus 2:13](#); [Hebrews 9:27-28](#); [James 5:8](#); [2 Peter 3:7ff.](#); [1 John 2:28](#); [3:2](#); [Jude 14](#); [Revelation 1:18](#); [3:11](#); [20:1-22:13](#).



## XI. Evangelism and Missions

1925

It is the duty of every Christian man and woman, and the duty of every church of Christ to seek to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life. It is also expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods sanctioned by the gospel of Christ.

[Matt. 10:5; 13:18-23; 22:9-10; 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; 16:19-20; Luke 24:46-53; Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-2,21,39; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2,30-33; 1 Thess. 1-8.](#)

*Note: Article XXIII was titled "Evangelism and Missions" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

[Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 19:5-6; Isa. 6:1-8; Matt. 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30,37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Rom. 10:13-15; Ephes. 3:1-11; 1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Tim. 4:5; Heb. 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Rev. 22:17.](#)

2000

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

[Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.](#)

## XII. Education

1925

Christianity is the religion of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is therefore a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. An adequate system of schools is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people. The cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches.

[Deut. 4:1,5,9,13-14](#); [Deut. 6:1,7-10](#); [Psalm 19:7-8](#); [Prov. 8:1-7](#); [Prov. 4:1-10](#); [Matt. 28:20](#); [Col. 2:3](#); [Neh. 8:1-4](#).

*Note: Article XX was titled "Education" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

The cause of education in the kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian schools is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

[Deut. 4:1,5,9,14](#); [6:1-10](#); [31:12-13](#); [Neh. 8:1-8](#); [Job. 28:28](#); [Psalms 19:7ff.](#); [119:11](#); [Prov. 3:13ff.](#); [4:1-10](#); [8:1-7,11](#); [15:14](#); [Eccl. 7:19](#); [Matt. 5:2](#); [7:24ff.](#); [28:19-20](#); [Luke 2:40](#); [1 Cor. 1:18-31](#); [Eph. 4:11-16](#); [Phil. 4:8](#); [Col. 2:3,8-9](#); [1 Tim. 1:3-7](#); [2 Tim. 2:15](#); [3:14-17](#); [Heb. 5:12-6:3](#); [James 1:5](#); [3:17](#).

2000

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

[Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14](#); [6:1-10](#); [31:12-13](#); [Nehemiah 8:1-8](#); [Job 28:28](#); [Psalms 19:7ff.](#); [119:11](#); [Proverbs 3:13ff.](#); [4:1-10](#); [8:1-7,11](#); [15:14](#); [Ecclesiastes 7:19](#); [Matthew 5:2](#); [7:24ff.](#); [28:19-20](#); [Luke 2:40](#); [1 Corinthians 1:18-31](#); [Ephesians 4:11-16](#); [Philippians 4:8](#); [Colossians 2:3,8-9](#); [1 Timothy 1:3-7](#); [2 Timothy 2:15](#); [3:14-17](#); [Hebrews 5:12-6:3](#); [James 1:5](#); [3:17](#).

### XIII. Stewardship

1925

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to him. We have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in our possessions. We are therefore under obligation to serve him with our time, talents and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to us to use for the glory of God and helping others. Christians should cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally, contribute of their means to advancing the Redeemer's cause on earth.

[Luke 12:42](#); [16:1-8](#); [Titus 1:7](#); [1 Peter 4:10](#); [2 Cor. 8:1-7](#); [2 Cor. 8:11-19](#); [2 Cor. 12:1-15](#); [Matt. 25:14-30](#); [Rom. 1:8-15](#); [1 Cor. 6:20](#); [Acts 2:44-47](#).

*Note: Article XXIV was titled "Stewardship" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

[Gen. 14:20](#); [Lev. 27:30-32](#); [Deut. 8:18](#); [Mal. 3:8-12](#); [Matt. 6:1-4, 19-21](#); [19:21](#); [23:23](#); [25:14-29](#); [Luke 12:16-21, 42](#); [16:1-13](#); [Acts 2:44-47](#); [5:1-11](#); [17:24-25](#); [20:35](#); [Rom. 6:6-22](#); [12:1-2](#); [1 Cor. 4:1-2](#); [6:19-20](#); [12](#); [16:1-4](#); [2 Cor. 8-9](#); [12:15](#); [Phil. 4:10-19](#); [1 Peter 1:18-19](#).

2000

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

[Genesis 14:20](#); [Leviticus 27:30-32](#); [Deuteronomy 8:18](#); [Malachi 3:8-12](#); [Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21](#); [19:21](#); [23:23](#); [25:14-29](#); [Luke 12:16-21, 42](#); [16:1-13](#); [Acts 2:44-47](#); [5:1-11](#); [17:24-25](#); [20:35](#); [Romans 6:6-22](#); [12:1-2](#); [1 Corinthians 4:1-2](#); [6:19-20](#); [12](#); [16:1-4](#); [2 Corinthians 8-9](#); [12:15](#); [Philippians 4:10-19](#); [1 Peter 1:18-19](#).

## XIV. Cooperation

1925

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure co-operation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over each other or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Individual members of New Testament churches should co-operate with each other, and the churches themselves should co-operate with each other in carrying forward the missionary, educational and benevolent program for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary co-operation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. It is permissible and desirable as between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such co-operation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and his Word as revealed in the New Testament.

[Ezra 1:3-4](#); [2:68-69](#); [5:14-15](#); [Neh. 4:4-6](#); [8:1-4](#); [Mal. 3:10](#); [Matt. 10:5-15](#); [20:1-16](#); [22:1-10](#); [Acts 1:13-14](#); [1:21:26](#); [2:1,41-47](#); [1 Cor. 1:10-17](#); [12:11-12](#); [13](#); [14:33-34,40](#); [16:2](#); [2 Cor. 9:1-15](#); [Eph. 4:1-16](#); [3 John 1:5-8](#).

*Note: Article XXII was titled "Co-Operation" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure co-operation for the great objects of the kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should co-operate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary co-operation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Co-operation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such co-operation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and his Word as revealed in the New Testament.

[Ex. 17:12](#); [18:17ff.](#); [Judg. 7:21](#); [Ezra 1:3-4](#); [2:68-69](#); [5:14-15](#); [Neh. 4](#); [8:1-5](#); [Matt. 10:5-15](#); [20:1-16](#); [22:1-10](#); [28:19-20](#); [Mark 2:3](#); [Luke 10:1ff.](#); [Acts 1:13-14](#); [2:1ff.](#); [4:31-37](#); [13:2-3](#); [15:1-35](#); [1 Cor. 1:10-17](#); [3:5-15](#); [12](#); [2 Cor. 8-9](#); [Gal. 1:6-10](#); [Eph. 4:1-16](#); [Phil. 1:15-18](#).

*Note: Article XIV was titled "Co-Operation" in the 1963 BF&M.*

2000

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

[Exodus 17:12](#); [18:17ff.](#); [Judges 7:21](#); [Ezra 1:3-4](#); [2:68-69](#); [5:14-15](#); [Nehemiah 4](#); [8:1-5](#); [Matthew 10:5-15](#); [20:1-16](#); [22:1-10](#); [28:19-20](#); [Mark 2:3](#); [Luke 10:1ff.](#); [Acts 1:13-14](#); [2:1ff.](#); [4:31-37](#); [13:2-3](#); [15:1-35](#); [1 Corinthians 1:10-17](#); [3:5-15](#); [12](#); [2 Corinthians 8-9](#); [Galatians 1:6-10](#); [Ephesians 4:1-16](#); [Philippians 1:15-18](#).

## XV. The Christian and the Social Order

1925

Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ regnant in his own life and in human society to oppose in the spirit of Christ every form of greed, selfishness, and vice; to provide for the orphaned, the aged, the helpless, and the sick; to seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth and brotherly love; to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and his truth. All means and methods used in social service for the amelioration of society and the establishment of righteousness among men must finally depend on the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus.

[Luke 10:25-37](#); [Ex. 22:10,14](#); [Lev. 6:2](#); [Deut. 20:10](#); [Deut. 4:42](#); [Deut. 15:2](#); [27:17](#); [Psalm 101:5](#); [Ezek. 18:6](#); [Heb. 2:15](#); [Zech. 8:16](#); [Ex. 20:16](#); [James 2:8](#); [Rom. 12-14](#); [Col. 3:12-17](#).

*Note: Article XXI was titled "Social Service" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in his own life and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus. The Christian should oppose in the spirit of Christ every form of greed, selfishness, and vice. He should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and his truth.

[Ex. 20:3-17](#); [Lev. 6:2-5](#); [Deut. 10:12](#); [27:17](#); [Psalm 101:5](#); [Micah 6:8](#); [Zech. 8:16](#); [Matt. 5:13-16,43-48](#); [22:36-40](#); [25:35](#); [Mark 1:29-34](#); [2:3ff.](#); [10:21](#); [Luke 4:18-21](#); [10:27-37](#); [20:25](#); [John 15:12](#); [17:15](#); [Rom. 12-14](#); [1 Cor. 5:9-10](#); [6:1-7](#); [7:20-24](#); [10:23-11:1](#); [Gal. 3:26-28](#); [Eph. 6:5-9](#); [Col. 3:12-17](#); [1 Thess. 3:12](#); [Philemon](#); [James 1:27](#); [2:8](#).

2000

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

[Exodus 20:3-17](#); [Leviticus 6:2-5](#); [Deuteronomy 10:12](#); [27:17](#); [Psalm 101:5](#); [Micah 6:8](#); [Zechariah 8:16](#); [Matthew 5:13-16,43-48](#); [22:36-40](#); [25:35](#); [Mark 1:29-34](#); [2:3ff.](#); [10:21](#); [Luke 4:18-21](#); [10:27-37](#); [20:25](#); [John 15:12](#); [17:15](#); [Romans 12-14](#); [1 Corinthians 5:9-10](#); [6:1-7](#); [7:20-24](#); [10:23-11:1](#); [Galatians 3:26-28](#); [Ephesians 6:5-9](#); [Colossians 3:12-17](#); [1 Thessalonians 3:12](#); [Philemon](#); [James 1:27](#); [2:8](#).

## XVI. Peace and War

1925

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the pure gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of his teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of his law of love.

We urge Christian people throughout the world to pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace, and to oppose everything likely to provoke war.

[Matt. 5:9,13-14,43-46](#); [Heb. 12:14](#); [James 4:1](#); [Matt. 6:33](#); [Rom. 14:17,19](#).

*Note: Article XIX was titled "Peace and War" in the 1925 BF&M.*

1963

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love.

[Isa. 2:4](#); [Matt. 5:9,38-48](#); [6:33](#); [26:52](#); [Luke 22:36,38](#); [Rom. 12:18-19](#); [13:1-7](#); [14:19](#); [Heb.12:14](#); [James 4:1-2](#).

2000

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The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love.

Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

[Isaiah 2:4](#); [Matthew 5:9,38-48](#); [6:33](#); [26:52](#); [Luke 22:36,38](#); [Romans 12:18-19](#); [13:1-7](#); [14:19](#); [Hebrews 12:14](#); [James 4:1-2](#).

## XVII. Religious Liberty

1925

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and he has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to his Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to the church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

*Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; Gal. 3:9-14; John 7:38-39; James 4:12; Gal. 5:13; 2 Peter 2:18-21; 1 Cor. 3:5; Rom. 6:1-2; Matt. 22:21; Mark 12:17.*

1963

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

*Gen. 1:27; 2:7; Matt. 6:6-7,24; Matt 16:26; Matt 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Rom. 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Gal. 5:1, 13; Phil. 3:20; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19*

2000

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

*Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1, 13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.*

## XVII. Religious Liberty

1925

*Note: The 1925 BF&M did not specifically address this topic.*

1963

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents. [Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18-25; 3:1-20; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Josh. 24:15; 1 Sam. 1:26-28; Ps. 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Prov. 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Eccl. 4:9-12; 9:9; Mal. 2:14-16; Matt. 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; 1 Tim. 5:8,14; 2 Tim. 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7.](#)

*Note: This article was added to the 1963 BF&M through an amendment in 1998.*

2000

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents. [Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.](#)