



# Statement of Faith

These were taken in part from the Abstract of Principles (1858) written by James P. Boyce, the principal founder of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**THE SCRIPTURES.** The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.

**GOD.** There is but one God, the Maker, Preserver and Ruler of all things, having in and of Himself all perfections, and being infinite in them all; and to Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence and obedience.

**THE TRINITY.** God is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

**PROVIDENCE.** God, from eternity, decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and all events; yet not in any way as to be the author or approver of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures.

**ELECTION.** Election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life-- not because of foreseen merit in them, but of his mere mercy in Christ-- in consequence of which choice they are called, justified and glorified.

**THE FALL OF MAN.** God originally created man in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity [i.e. descendants] inherit a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

**THE MEDIATOR.** Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, rose again on the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He lives forever to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest, and King of the church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

**REGENERATION.** Regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who makes alive those who are dead in trespasses and sins, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone.

**REPENTANCE.** Repentance is an evangelical grace, wherein the Holy Spirit makes a person aware of the manifold evil of his sin, so that he humbles himself with godly sorrow, detesting sin, and abhorring [i.e., hating] self, with a purpose and endeavor to walk before God so as to please Him in all things.

**FAITH.** Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatsoever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all other saving grace, and leads to a life of holiness.

**JUSTIFICATION.** Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners who believe in Christ, from all sin, through the satisfaction that Christ has made. It is given not for anything wrought in them or done by them, but on account of the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, they receive and rest in Him and His righteousness by faith.

**SANCTIFICATION.** Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified by God's Word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of Divine strength, which all saints seek to obtain, pressing after a heavenly life in cordial [i.e., willing] obedience to all Christ's commands.

**PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.** Those whom God has accepted in the Beloved, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

**THE CHURCH.** The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular societies or churches; and to each of these churches He has given needful authority for administering the order, discipline and worship which He has appointed. The regular officers of a church are Elders and Deacons.

**BAPTISM.** Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in water in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of his giving himself up to God, to live and walk in newness of life.

**THE LORD'S SUPPER.** The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with bread and wine, and to be observed by His churches till the end of the world. It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate His death, to confirm the faith of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge, and renewal of their communion with Him, and of their church fellowship.

**THE LORD'S DAY.** The New Testament Church gives the example of assembling on the Lord's Day (i.e. Sunday) for the reading and teaching of the Word of God, worship, prayer, and mutual encouragement - stimulating one another to love and good deeds. It is fitting to view the Lord's Day as a celebration of Christ's resurrection and the redemption of His people. It is also fitting to give special care to the day and to use it properly for rest and personal devotion.

**CIVIL LIBERTY.** Civil magistrates being ordained of God, subjection in all lawful things commanded by them ought to be yielded by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. If in any matter we are required by government to disobey God's commands, we must obey God rather than men.

**THE RESURRECTION.** The bodies of men after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God - the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked, to be reserved under darkness to judgment. At the last day, the bodies of all the dead, both just and unjust, will be raised.

**THE JUDGMENT.** God has appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when every one shall receive according to his deeds: the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment; the righteous, into everlasting life.