

The Statement of Faith of

San Francisco Peninsula Baptist Association



Below is a summary of some of our basic beliefs:

1. **GOD** is the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the Universe. There is one God who reveals himself to us as the Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit. This mystery is commonly called the Trinity: each “person” of the Trinity exists simultaneously and has distinct personal attributes, but there is no division of nature, essence, or being in God.
2. **THE SCRIPTURES** were written by those who were divinely inspired. The Bible is the written Word of God, revealing God’s will for humanity. It is the basis for our faith and practice as individual Christians, as churches, and as an association of churches. The life and teachings of Jesus Christ are the criteria by which we interpret the Scriptures.
3. **MANKIND** was created in the image of God. All people sin; therefore, mankind is “fallen” from the position that God designed for it. God’s grace (gift of salvation) in Jesus Christ allows mankind to come back into fellowship with God. Because mankind is created in God’s image, and because Christ died for all, then all people are to be given dignity and respect.
4. **SALVATION** is the gift of God which we receive by faith in Jesus Christ who died for our sins. It involves fellowship with God and eternal life, beginning at the moment one entrusts himself to Jesus as Lord of his life and continuing on past this life, without end. God patiently seeks the salvation of all people, not desiring for any to perish. The “security of the believer” teaches that salvation, once received, cannot be lost; the believer is safe in the Father’s hand. However, a disobedient believer will be disciplined by the Heavenly Father.
5. **HEAVEN AND HELL** are eternal dwelling places. Heaven—the place where God’s people live with him forever—is a gift to the believer. Heaven is also a place where rewards are received. Salvation itself is a gift from God, and not a reward. Heaven’s rewards vary and are based on individual faithfulness in this life. Those who do not receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior in this life will spend eternity apart from the loving presence of God in hell. Hell is a place of suffering where the devil and his followers dwell.
6. **THE CHURCH** is a term that is used in two ways in the Scriptures. In the broadest spiritual sense, the Church is the body of Christ which includes all Christian believers of all ages. In a more tangible sense, the New Testament most often speaks of the church as a local body of baptized believers. All believers are members of the Church, and should express this through participation in the local church family of faith. Baptist churches are

accountable to the membership under the Lordship of Christ and as each member has a voice and vote in the life of the church. All members of the local church family of faith are to be treated with dignity and respect according to the principles of the Scriptures. All members, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or national origin are gifted by God to participate in building up the church. The local church should encourage the giftedness of the members.

7. **BAPTISM** is an ordinance of the church: Jesus set it aside (“ordained” it) as a reminder and as an act of obedience. Baptism is by immersion in water and is a statement of one’s faith in Jesus who died, was buried, and rose again. It is also a statement that one has died to sin and is raised to a new life in Christ, looking forward some day to the resurrection from the dead. Baptism portrays a faith already held within the person, and has no saving power in itself.
8. **THE LORD’S SUPPER** is the other “ordinance” of the church. In taking the Lord’s Supper (sometimes called “communion”), we remember especially the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross: the fruit of the vine reminds us of his blood that was shed, and the bread reminds us of his body that was given for us. Taking the Lord’s Supper together regularly as a church body also reminds us that we are united together by our common faith in Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross.
9. **THE KINGDOM OF GOD** is the Lord’s spiritual reign over the lives of all who give allegiance to him, whether they be living on earth or in heaven. It includes all who are in the Church, but also includes believers in God prior to the coming of Jesus Christ and the establishment of his Church.
10. **EVANGELISM** is every Christian’s privilege. We are all called to share personally with others how they may be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. By faithful giving, we also support the evangelistic efforts of our local churches, as well as the missions efforts of the Church in the United States and around the world.
11. **THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER**, or “soul competency,” means that every believer prays directly to God and may read the Bible to better understand the will of God. Other believers may help our understanding, but each one of us is able to stand before God without any intermediary other than Jesus Christ.
12. **SERVANT LEADERSHIP** is exemplified by the true nature of Jesus Christ. Jesus commanded that the Christian leader should not seek to rule over others, but rather to be the servant of all. The cross mandates laying down our rights for the good of others.

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